

# The Project Sourcebook

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Dedicated to everyone who has tried to make a difference.

Not dedicated to James Hudnall

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Produced and Published by Crucible Design.

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Project Sourcebook, the first supplement for The 23rd Letter. This book is primarily aimed at GMs who wish to know more about government involvement with psionics in the 23rd Letter World.

To maintain surprise and mystery, Player access to its contents should be controlled. Several important or significant Projects are described in detail, their motives, resources and personnel are discussed, with stats for NPCs included. The information on each Project may be useful for Players who are creating characters within that Project and the GM may wish to extract that relevant information for use within his game without providing access to the remainder of the materials.

Essays on defunct Projects have been provided for historical interest. Of course, Players seeking novelty may use this information to run scenarios set in the past (please note the Disclaimer below). We have also included a list of paramilitary hardware, vehicles and other goodies.

The information in this publication will hopefully enable the GM to add greater depth to adventures, whether the Player Characters (PCs) are Project employees or adversaries. However GMs may invent their own Projects and alter, twist and otherwise change all the information given in this book as they see fit. Erudite readers may notice some inconsistencies between facts stated in this this book and reality. Remember the 23rd Letter World is very similar, but not quite identical to our own. This can be a distinct advantage when adapting incidents in the real world for use in the game.

That doesn't mean there isn't a Project watching you...

## Disclaimer

Crucible Design will not approve or support any attempt to run campaigns where Players portray members of the Euphrates, Debrechen or Krystall Projects. We're not saying "Don't do that" but they could be perceived as being the "baddies" in any given scenario.

# Running a Project Campaign

A Project-based campaign is as flexible as the Players want. The GM may choose themes as desired. PCs working for a Project are relieved of many of the worries of Network members or other independent Espers. As they are not on the run, living out of safehouses or mobile homes, lack of money should be less of a problem and equipment will be provided. Of course a devious GM may run a campaign where the PCs are on the streets and don't know that they are really working for a Project...

A Project employee will draw a salary, probably live in a home of some comfort and work alongside a regular team of professionals from a government building. With the GM's discretion they may have access to additional resources as needed. Why they do this is up to the players and GM to decide. A PC may be a patriot proudly serving his nation as best as he can or a virtual prisoner coerced into the dirty business by the regime and looking for the chance to escape. Most PCs will probably fall between these extremes.

Adventures for Project PCs may be gung-ho romps with lots of guns, action and clear villains. In this case the PCs are heroes and will probably believe themselves to be in the right. As an alternative, the adventures may involve simply surviving in a grim bureaucratic nightmare where every decision will hurt someone. Yet another option is for the PC's team to be investigators of paranormal events employing their talents in the obfuscation and debunking of psychic abilities. There is no correct style of campaign, but it is recommended that GMs occasionally surprise the Players by running a different type of adventure from usual. This should both stretch the Players (including the GM) and reduce the possibility of boredom setting in. The featured Projects should fit into any kind of campaign from Technothriller to Gothic Horror. We have run convention games featuring Project adventures based on movies as different as Predator and The Witches of Eastwick so GMs ought to be able to please any kind of Player.

# World of Conflict

*"Sure it's violent, but that's the way we love it- violent, violent, violent!"*

*Death Race 2000*

There are no major international wars being fought currently. This does not mean the world is at peace. There are brutal and persistent wars in the former Soviet republics in central Asia, there is civil strife in Africa, while governments in central America struggle against revolutionary guerrillas and the private armies of drug barons. Elsewhere a host of other conflicts over dwindling resources or ancient tribal hatreds threaten to explode into violence.

The nastiest conflict in the public eye is the Israeli Civil War. Although the armoured battles between the so-called Democrats and the Zealots have ended in mutual exhaustion and neither side currently has the resources to launch a major offensive, hundreds still die every week. The two sides (four sides if you count the remaining Palestinians and the occasional Jordanian army operation) exchange artillery and sniper fire regularly, the Democrats launch regular air strikes while the less well-equipped Zealots retaliate with terrorist attacks. This vicious war between two highly committed, well armed and mean-spirited enemies has led to horrors as bad as anything from World War II. Violence persists at such a level that most humanitarian organisations have withdrawn.

An air and naval blockade restricts the fighting to Israel, Palestine and northern Jordan, and deters the other Arab nations from becoming involved. Major efforts to recover the six nuclear weapons lost in the chaos of the opening weeks of the conflict are continuing. American concern over these missing bombs has led to a sizeable contingent of US Special Forces serving with the NATO/ANZAC peacekeeping force, the clumsily named COMHUMFORISR (COMBined HUMANitarian FORces in ISRAEL). The operation to find the bombs is called FIND CANDY, and Nevada Project personnel have participated. Service with COMHUMFORISR is very unpopular as all the combatants have shown no qualms about killing its personnel when it suits them. The only reason the foreign troops stay there to aid recovery of the nuclear weapons. The worry is that they may not be the only force searching for the weapons.

An increasingly wealthy, confident and aggressive Peoples' Republic of China has begun to throw its weight around while tightening the screws on its own people. Five years ago, the new Chinese premier declared a Free Asian Peoples' Alliance for trade and defence. Signatories to this treaty include Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia and Myanmar (Burma). FAPA is an organisation for the furthering of its members' mutual interests, there is no unifying doctrine other than a clear intention to ignore Western opinion. For example, FAPA member states vote en bloc against human rights resolutions in the UN. This new alliance is threatening to solve a variety of territorial disputes with force, although no fighting appears imminent. In response other Asian nations are beefing up their armed forces and requesting Western support. This has led to the interesting possibility of the Americans being offered bases in Vietnam. The media is beginning to refer to "Cold War II" in the region. Certainly the US and Allied Nations are attempting to create intelligence networks in the area.

The Russian-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has stood still since the 2001 military coup. If the country was not such a basket-case, the situation would be frightening. However the endemic corruption, gangsterism and its rock-bottom economy has prevented the CIS from being regarded as an overwhelming threat. This has been reinforced by the Russian Army's inept performance in the rebellious provinces. Just in case, NATO countries continue to spy on the CIS and this is reciprocated by the GRU (the CIS military intelligence agency).

Wars are not the only threat to peace. The past fifteen years has seen a remarkable increase in well-armed and violent organisations throughout the democratic nations. Mass unemployment, post-millennial jitters and uncertainty over geo-political reorganisations have all led to an atmosphere where there are many people who see hope only in harming others. Then the Powers and criminal organisations, such as the Russian and Sicilian mafias, saw potential in using terrorism as a cover for their activities. Last but not least, a range of wealthy and barking mad religious cults are racing to trigger their own version of Armageddon.

Almost every region in Europe has its separatist terrorist group, seeking independence from the greater nation state. The spectacular collapse of the

European Union into its original states has only fuelled the fires of rebellion. These nationalist organisations' ideologies vary from neo-fascist to Pol Potist, some co-operate and others are bloody rivals. Then there are other groups in favour of the status quo and prepared to kill to keep it. Dozens of innocents are killed every year by terrorists with environmental and anarchist demands.

The American people and government are opposed by a bizarre range of home-grown terrorists, varying from the Amerika S.S. Korps to the Zion Warriors. Most are extremely right-wing politically but there are exceptions such as the Red Panthers (a tiny cell of Stalinists in New York) and the Friends of Non-Human Life (a group of wealthy and murderous nihilists). A particularly worrying organisation calls itself the Green Mountain Men. Based on the East Coast, it has around 10 000 members, varying from white trash to university lecturers, some of which operate in well-organised cells. It blames the US government and United Nations for a wide range of 'crimes' such as spreading the HIV and HMD virii, abducting white children for their organs (transplanted into inferior races) and allowing non-whites civil rights. The Mountain Men raise money by membership subscriptions, robberies, extortion rackets and legal front companies. This group has recently launched a nation-wide murder campaign against individuals it regards as unacceptable (just about everybody who isn't a sad WASP inadequate with a gun obsession). The FBI tries to keep this and all the other groups it is aware of under surveillance, sometimes planting agents in their midst, but many dangerous organisations escape their notice. Of course, many are too disorganised to present a serious threat, but must be watched just in case. Telepaths are regarded as valuable assets in these observation and infiltration missions.

All the wealthy countries' citizens face terrorism from international groups such as the Green Flag Commandos, former Israeli factions and the Celestial Enlightenment cult. As the ex-Israeli groups may have nuclear weapons, and Celestial Enlightenment almost got away with setting off an Ebola outbreak (and some believe succeeded in contaminating blood supplies with HMDS) they are taken especially seriously. Retaliatory raids on countries which tolerate terrorist bases are becoming increasingly common. Espers are very useful on these missions as they can pinpoint the locations of terrorist leaders and other key targets.

Meanwhile the Network carries out occasional violent operations, the Projects respond, and occasionally capture its members, yet still its leaders and their long term plans remain utter mysteries...

## Why Projects exist

The Calcutta Protocols expressly prohibited governments from utilising espers or even researching their powers. Inevitably, in an atmosphere saturated with paranoia, these forbidden researches continued. In fact, the signing of the Protocols actually triggered the creation of many Projects, as previously sceptical governments realised that there was something in this arcane field.

The newly formed Projects were covert, while the original Projects sank out of sight and did their best to conceal their activities. New security measures varied from the elaborate and expensive to the petty and bureaucratic. Overnight Japan's Cherry Blossom Project moved its headquarters from a government laboratory outside Osaka to an underground bunker on a desolate coastline. Meanwhile a memo was circulated through the Whitechapel Project, forbidding the use of the word 'Esper' to describe psychics in documents. It was suggested that they instead be described in writing as 'Twenty-third Letter persons'.

Most Projects exist to further their nation's political agenda by paranormal means. This is usually by aiding the intelligence, military or security communities. With technological advancement, the espers have become more and more important. For example, in the 1970s, the American National Security Agency could extract virtually all the intelligence required by 'conventional' means. Its satellites could suck in transmissions from all over the world, while its codebreakers could crack the most sophisticated cipher in hours. Espers were merely a useful luxury. The best guarded secrets in the world flowed in faster than the analysts could cope. But in the 1990s, things changed. New commercially available encryption programs enabled the poorest Third World state to hide data in codes impossible to crack by the fastest possible computer inside the lifetime of the universe. Radio and microwave links were replaced by fibre-optic landlines which no satellite could listen to. Suddenly telepaths and remote viewers were desperately needed. Similarly, there was a time

when the world's anti-terrorist forces had the edge over their opponents by virtue of their superior training, equipment and élan. They also had the advantage of complete surprise. But the newest generation of terrorists was smarter, had survived battlefields in Asia, eastern Europe and the Middle East and learned from the experience. They knew about surveillance devices and how to counter them, had studied the techniques of GSG9, the SAS and Delta Force and knew where to place the motion sensors, sentries and booby traps. After Britain's SBS lost a dozen soldiers trying to retake a North Sea oil rig occupied by the New European Order Army (a relatively weak neo-Nazi group, stiffened by ex-Yugoslavian mercenaries), it was clear that a new approach was needed. Senior staff from Projects were invited to inspect special forces and their advice eagerly sought.

## The Projects and the Terata

*Listen up people! We got an announcement. The rules of engagement on Bughunts is changin'. Way it was, we had to walk up to them and say "Hello there Mr Slimebeast, we's here to take you with us, don' worry, we're not gonna shoot you. In fact, if you wanna screw around with my head just right I'll even blow my buddies an' me away for you!" But now, if we see somethin' squelchin' about looking like a cross between a skinned cat an' a starfish, we got permission from the top to fire first. In fact we can use our mortars, Barretts, airstrikes even, to shot their ugly mutant butts off before they even see us comin'. Ain't that peachy or what?*

*Staff Sergeant Rodney Dibbs, Nevada Project*

The Terata are almost universally hated and feared by Projects. Most attempt to eliminate them where possible, although the Nevada Project made several attempts to capture Terata. These operations, known as Bughunts never succeeded in taking a Terata prisoner, but many casualties were suffered. After a particularly bloody failure in 1998, when two Nevada teams opened fire on each other and a third's members all committed suicide under a Terata's control, the rule of engagement changed. Now, the troops are ordered to kill the Terata immediately, with whatever weapons they think best, up to and including chemical weapons.

## The Projects and the Network

*"The Network is a joke. The average Network cell is a group of sad no-hopers and pillocks. We're talking about a 15 year old girl with a pony fixation who can sometimes read your aura and only shows up when Mummy drives her to the safe house, a school swot who, if he really tries hard, can telekinetically pop his own zits and there's Sid Yobbo who doesn't have most of the normal mental powers never mind the paranormal ones. Anyway his time is split between the Network and the Young Offenders' Centre. The leader's usually a bolshie long-term unemployed prat who's going to bring down capitalism by bending the PM's cutlery and then there's always old Mrs Buggins and her cat. Of the lot, the cat is probably the greatest threat to national security."*

*Brian Tupper, Whitechapel Project*

*"Believe me the greatest threat society faces today is not HMD, pollution or nuclear terrorism but the Network. Frankly the idea of there being thousands of espers out there without the training or discipline to control their powers is frightening. And they're not afraid of us. They want us to fear them. We've always lost a few personnel to them, but the trickle is becoming a flood. We must take action or we may lose everything. Everything."*

*Sylvie Miller, Western Project*

Whether they fear the Network or are contemptuous of it most Projects oppose the Network, simply because they do not control it. Some Projects carry out murderous operations against the Network, others seek to observe and legally restrict it. Governments usually support this, especially as in their reports Projects will deliberately confuse the Network with the Terata and terrorist organisations.

The Network uses the principle of Leaderless Resistance as espoused by many domestic terrorist and paramilitary groups through the ages. for their model to be successful, especially when their operational groups (cells) are linked to a central command structure, a mechanism must be created that will secure the leadership from prosecution yet permit directed action and operational independence for the cell.



The identities of cell members are known only within the cell and by their immediate superior. Training and equipping is done within the cell and all communications and encoding are also internalised. Cells therefore have an unlimited amount of operational independence and all orders are carried out as the cell sees fit within their sphere of influence. Individuals within the cell are experts within their own field and each one is informed with all the operational information they require to perform their function.

Due to the psychic communication channels it has proved much harder to track and trap the Network compared to other self-proclaimed resistance. Some communiques can be intercepted through conventional means such as phone-taps, letter-opening, monitoring of USENET conspiracy and survivalist groups and CARNIVORE but none of these have borne any success in tracking down the Network. The greatest successes have simply been through double-agents and precognitive reports which are frequently vague and can leave operatives woefully under-equipped to deal with Network offensives.

The Projects deal with the Network the same way that they deal with any racist group with a dangerous paramilitary agenda.

Many Projects have attempted to plant their own operatives inside the Network, but have been surprisingly unsuccessful. It is not possible to simply inform an agent of his mission and send him out into the world hoping he will encounter the Network. Special care and some of the most powerful psychics within the Projects have been used to create convincing cover stories and construct appropriate memories which must, by nature, be capable of defating Network telepaths. Double-agents, with knowledge of their true agenda psychically wiped from their memory, are employed and even pursued by Project operatives with the same zeal as any of their intended targets. These agents, often powerful psychics themselves, will suffer the same interrogation and prosecution if caught by their former colleagues. Only the most dedicated patriots are therefore chosen for the job and motivational impulses and "sleepers commands" must be used to ensure the flow of information and the safety of Project resources. This method has shown the only true successes in the war against the Phantom Cells of the Network.

## The Projects and the Powers

*These guys really get to me. I mean, we work our balls off trying to do a job, and then you get some yuppie twat doing half the work and getting twice the money. Most of the time we can't even touch them for it, because they haven't "broken the law". This is what we get for almost twenty years of privatisation in this country.*

*Frank Lewis, analyst, Whitechapel Project.*

*There can be no doubt that the corporate interests in this country represent a serious threat to our domination of psychic research. There was a time when the scientific and academic community were willing to co-operate for a minimum investment. With the growth of a competitive market, so to speak, we find ourselves constantly forced to devote more time and resources to details which are only a small part of the overall picture. It is only a matter of time before action must be taken on a governmental level to limit these private concerns, otherwise we risk a security compromise.*

*Anna Sterling, director, Western Project.*

To say that the Projects and the Powers were in direct competition would be an vast oversimplification of the situation that exists between them. The Powers that the Projects are able to monitor have very specialised concerns and as such, they present a much less united front than most other enemy Projects. A correspondingly smaller budget is allocated to tracking and recording their activities. This is not to say that they are not taken seriously.

The revelation of the extent of Strategic Defence Laboratories holdings caused ripples across many of the various Projects' perceptions of what these corporations were capable of. Others, such as the Cherry Blossom Project in Japan, had discovered this threat much earlier. The next step was to contain this growth. This is where many perceive to be the main area of conflict. There is a finite amount of esper potential in an area, and in order to harness this, the two "official" bodies (i.e. the Project and the Power) would inevitably come into conflict. In reality, it is usually not nearly as dramatic as it sounds, and corresponding friction has been minimal in many cases. Cherry Blossom leads the way in this field with draconian measures allowed under Japanese law. The Western and Whitechapel

Projects are much more discreet and as a result are not nearly as successful.

On the part of the Powers, their motives are not clear. Profit and monopoly would be the two ultimate ends they strive for, but their exact tactics are sometimes unclear. It would seem from their low profile in the public eye that they wish to avoid a direct action against the Projects (which they would lose). Rather, through their much greater material holdings and resources, they can influence events through the one region where the Projects are weakest - politics. The scandal surrounding the financing of the 2006 Presidential electoral campaign and the General Election in Britain of the same year shows just what control the Powers could exert over the Projects' political masters. The battle lines remain to be drawn.

## Terminated Projects

Several Projects are known to be inactive. Some of them are worthy of note

### Pre-World War Two Projects

#### Projekt Krystall (1936-45)

This was an attempt to harness psychic powers by the S.S. The Project was directed by Heinrich Himmler, who allowed his obsession with the occult and supernatural to shape it. Magicians, mediums and Nordic mystics with impeccable Aryan backgrounds were favoured and so many genuine espers were ignored. Time and effort were wasted placing curses on the Nazis' enemies and seeking artefacts and documents reputed to have occult powers and knowledge. In the early years little scientific method was applied, this changed when the biologist Albrecht Bernhardt became involved. He convinced Himmler that psychic abilities existed in all races, but eugenics could ensure that all Aryans would be psychic superhumans and that psychic powers could be removed from lesser races.

Bernhardt's approach to this masterplan was not subtle; the Reich and its occupied territories were scoured for tall, blonde men and women with psychic powers. Once found, they were recruited into Sonderkommando K, a secret unit of the S.S.

There they were excused from combat duties and provided with the best food and quarters and encouraged to produce children. The first of the Sonnenkinder was born in 1942, and when Germany surrendered there were about 60 of them. All records of them were destroyed in the bombing of Berlin and their fates are still unknown. Most other records of this project vanished about the same time, although some later showed up in Moscow.

At the same time as this breeding program, Bernhardt was visiting concentration and labour camps to pick out inmates with psychic powers. These people were killed, usually in the course of sickening experiments to determine the brain area where psychic powers originate. In 1945 Bernhardt fled west and surrendered to the British army in Hamburg. Since Project Krystall was little known at this time and none of Bernhardt's victims had survived, he was not passed on to the War Crimes Tribunal and was never named for the genocidal monster he was.

#### The Debrechen Project (1939-1945)

*Comrades! The Party requires than the dacha beyond those woods must be seized before nightfall. Furthermore, Comrade Stalin has decided that the Fascist criminals hiding there must be captured alive regardless of the resistance offered. None must escape! Our wise Great Leader has warned us to beware of vile enemy trickery and unusual secret weapons. Any man who shows cowardice or lack of Socialist commitment in the face of the enemy will be severely punished, no matter what enemy treachery we face. Understood? Good. Forward!*  
*Commissar Belyakov, April 1945*

The wartime German secret service, the Abwehr, had its own project to exploit psychic powers. No code name was ever applied to it, as it was never treated as being a separate entity.

Debrechen is a small town in Hungary, outside it lies a large mansion where the Abwehr trained its Brandenburger commando units. When the bombing of Berlin became too severe in 1943, the head of the Abwehr, Admiral Canaris, had the thirty or so espers moved there for safety.

This was because the espers were providing useful information. The Abwehr concentrated on recruiting men with remote viewing skills. As early as October 1939, they were tracking the British fleet

and finding weak spots in the French defensive lines. They were responsible for a series of intelligence coups throughout the War. However they could only discover secrets where they knew secrets to exist, so for example they were never able to warn how advanced British radar technology was in 1940, or discover that the Enigma codes were compromised.

Several espers with more physical skills such as pyrokinesis, healing and telepathic domination were located and experiments to discover their uses in warfare were carried out. The Abwehr did not have the resources to make a proper scientific study of their potential. In the end some espers were sent on Brandenburger raids for combat evaluation. Their only theatre of operations was the Eastern Front, and the missions were small scale affairs to sabotage railway lines and bridges or take prisoners for interrogation. The Brandenburger Kampfgruppen were an elite and initially resented the inclusion of these odd misfits who were promoted into their ranks and could not hope to match their physical fitness or experience. Yet the attached precogs, remote viewers and telekinetics proved their worth. Impossible operations succeeded because German commando teams avoided enemy patrols and ambushes, injured Germans recovered from mortal wounds and Soviet troops were distracted by strange thoughts and events at crucial moments. Of course there were many losses too, and these minor successes did little to slow Nazi Germany's defeat. Like Debrechen's intelligence coups, they also went unnoticed by the Nazi High Command, as Canaris jealously concealed his assets for use should he ever come into direct confrontation with Hitler.

However, the Soviet government did discover what they were facing when one of the last, futile Brandenburger raids went badly wrong and a German with strong implant skills was captured. After he used his power in an abortive escape bid, an alert NKVD interrogator contacted Moscow. He didn't know what he'd found, but knew that his superiors should be told. The wretched prisoner held nothing back, and readily demonstrated his powers. Soon the Soviets knew that here was a whole new area of military endeavour. As with jet aircraft, the atomic bomb and missiles, the USSR could not be allowed to fall behind its allies. A surprise raid into Hungary ahead of the advancing Red Army captured virtually all the surviving personnel at Debrechen. The prisoners were

studied, the psychic researchers were interrogated to death, the non-psychic Brandenburgers were executed for war-crimes and the surviving psychic personnel served in the KGB and Stasi for many years afterwards.

## **Defunct American Projects**

Between 1945 and 1978 every agency within the US intelligence community dabbled with espers. These Projects had varying amounts of official support and achieved varying levels of success. They tended to concentrate on one particular esper ability and ignore others that didn't interest them. Some of these are worth mentioning.

### **PKOMICRON (CIA 1953-62)**

This was an attempt to see if esper powers could be used for espionage. It was administered by a CIA psychologist, Dr Phillip Biers, who wanted to evaluate psionic potential as a brain-washing and mind-control tool. More because of unsuitable subjects than anything else his experiments failed, however he uncovered several telepaths who were taken on as agents by the CIA, which used them mainly as human lie-detectors while interrogating defectors and captured foreign spies. Biers died in 1976 but his work was continued and expanded upon by the Western Project. By controlled use of drugs, electroconvulsive therapy and telepathic implants, a person can experience reality however the Project wishes. This is the beginnings of the field of Psychotectonics, instrumental in creating deep-cover agents and the Mind Shield (see 23rd Letter rulebook, pages 54-55 and later in this book)

### **Crystal Blaze (NRO 1973-78)**

The National Reconnaissance Office performs analysis on all images from US spy satellites and aircraft. As a low cost substitute for this expensive hardware, NRO scientists were interested in the use of remote viewers. They found several impressive specimens, but discovered their powers to be too erratic to be used exclusively. The dozen espers involved were kept on and regularly consulted when results could not be obtained by conventional sensors. The Western Project gladly accepted these people into its Strategic Observation Office.

## Project Buck (US Army 1964-65) and Project Loop (US Army 1979-1989)

Cpl Bobbie Korkheimer, an army payclerk, was famed in his unit for an ability to predict sports results. His commanding officer was so impressed that sent a memo on the subject to a friend in the Pentagon. As a result Korkheimer's precognition was studied officially. Initially he was very successful, foreseeing a number of world events, but then he blew it. A demonstration in front of Army top brass was going very well, until a general asked him when the war in Vietnam would be over. When told it would continue into the 1970s, the general angrily denounced the Project as a waste of time. Korkheimer was returned to his unit the next day. Luckily for him he wasn't asked who was going to win in Vietnam.

Shortly after its founding, the Nevada Project attempted to locate Korkheimer but failed. That was because the Network found him first. Since 1972, he has lived under the name of Robert Berry and that is the name his wife and family believe he was born with. After thirty years of raising funds for the Network by predicting sport and financial results and cautious gambling, Bobbie Berry retired to Miami, Florida where he still lives. He is mostly content, but occasionally wakes up grasping and drenched with sweat after his dreams have carried him forward to a holocaust yet to be.

Support: Robert 'Bobbie' Berry  
(formerly Bobbie Korkheimer)

Age: 67

Affiliation: The Network

Allies: Linda Berry (wife), the Miami Network cell

Enemies: there are some casino owners who would like a word with him

Equipment: fishing rod, box of tackle and bait

Description: Bald, very sun-tanned, enormous potbelly, fidgets constantly

END:3

REF:2

INT:3

STR:2

Psychic Ability: Precognition 4

Espionage: Veteran

Knowledge: Professional

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Competent

Later, the US Army agreed to cooperate with the Hoodoo Squad in an attempt to discredit the military uses of psionics in the eyes of the public and foreign governments. A dummy Project, called Project Loop, was established at Fort Meade and a none-too-bright colonel with an obsession with the paranormal and few friends in the army was placed in charge. This man, George Manston, was encouraged to recruit mediums, channellers, astrologers and other occultists, whilst being kept ignorant of the real Projects. Several known frauds and lunatics were directed his way, while genuine espers were recruited into the Western and Nevada Projects. Col. Manston, who made up for his lack of common sense with an astonishing enthusiasm, was acting in complete good faith. After millions of dollars had been squandered, with only some very dubious results and many, many packs of tarot cards to show for it, the story of the crazy army psionics Project was leaked to the press. A Congressional committee closed it down and Col. Manston resigned in disgrace. The Army looked rather stupid, but in exchange was allowed additional access to Western Project data.

Manston is still alive, but very elderly. He is bitter about how he was pilloried for doing his duty, and to this day does not realise that he was set up. He will eagerly do his best to help any PCs investigating American Projects, but probably will not be very useful. He is almost perpetually in a bad temper.

Support: George Sheldrake Manston

Age: 83

Affiliation: None

Allies: Noreen Manston (wife)

Enemies: neighbourhood kids

Equipment: rolled up newspaper, TV remote control

Description: full head of pure white hair, very stooped, heavily lined face

END:2

REF:2

INT:3

STR:1

Espionage: Competent

Knowledge: Competent

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Novice

Warfare: Competent

## 'The Spook Squad' (FBI 1946-78)

The FBI never officially recognised the existence of psychic powers. In fact, the Bureau's first and widely feared Director (and part-time transvestite) threatened to fire any agent 'wasting Bureau time on spooky tomfoolery'. Actually the Director knew psionics to exist but feared that it would take just one telepath to uncover his own colourful private life, so he wanted to suppress psychic research by his staff.

Despite this prohibition a number of FBI agents regularly consulted espers outside the agency in the course of investigations. Then there were several agents who knew themselves to be espers. These men kept each other aware of what was going on and looked out for new recruits. Among themselves they called this private network the "Spook Squad" and thanks to it many otherwise baffling cases were closed and dangerous criminals put behind bars. This had a dark side though, to hide the psychic involvement, it was occasionally necessary for the Squad to invent evidence against suspects to replace that obtained paranormally. After the original Director's death the FBI's attitude relaxed, and the Spook Squad operated more openly, although it was never recognised officially. In 1978 the Spooks were transferred into the Western Project.

## Project Marvel (US Naval Office of Intelligence 1968-78)

The USNOI saw psionics as a way of turning any recruit into a supersoldier. However they saw no point in creating such a being from scratch so they never attempted to genetically engineer one, sparing the world from more Terata. Some experiments were carried out to see if an esper with suitable powers could remove the normal human inhibitions against killing and perhaps also the very fear of death from a soldier. All that resulted were some very insane soldiers.

An even crazier series of experiments were performed to see if the human consciousness could be transferred into dolphins or orcas. The resulting creature would be the perfect underwater guard or saboteur. The results were again a series of horrific failures, some specimens escaped and caused mayhem, which was blamed on sharks. At present this work is being duplicated by the Cherry Blossom Project.

## Other defunct Projects

### The Jericho Project (1976-78)

#### *Item C.1*

*IA reported that documents uncovered in former Israel indicate that that nation's Military/Intelligence complex supported a Project which commenced in the mid-1970s (see Appendix 3). The fragmentary documents recovered indicate that a Subject with 'very impressive' telekinetic, remote viewing and extraction abilities was studied.*

*This individual is currently resident in the United States and is a figure of moderate wealth and public notice. However this should not be permitted to prevent the Subject from evaluation as potential Merchandise.*

*Attempts will be made to recover further material relating to the Israeli Project.*

#### *Action 12.1 Mr Sheppard/IA*

*LD will investigate the Subject, and if necessary, an acquisition will be planned.*

#### *Action 12.2 Ms Winters*

*-extract from minutes of a SRL Future Operations Planning Meeting*

In the mid-1970s the Israeli Defence Force invested considerable resources studying the military and intelligence uses of psionics. The star esper of this Project was a young man called Leon Schwimmer. Schwimmer was spotted while performing his mandatory military service. An indifferent soldier, Schwimmer had somehow found a niche as a performer in the concerts set up to entertain the troops. Here his undeniable charm made him a success performing as a mentalist. His gleaning of information about the lives of volunteers from the audience was astonishing as was his teleportation of pens and wallet from pockets, but his star turn was an amazing ability to cause glassware to spontaneously shatter by his touch. Col. Benjamin Levi, senior intelligence officer saw his show, and by the next evening Schwimmer was transferred from his unit to army intelligence headquarters. The dream of reading the intentions of Israel's many enemies directly from their leaders' minds was tantalising. Then perhaps enemy weapons could be

rendered impotent by minute telekinetically-induced flaws. Israel needed Schwimmer. The next day he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.

Under laboratory conditions Schwimmer's abilities were first verified and then studied. The intelligence officers and technicians were impressed by Schwimmer's powers and pleased by the effort and imagination he put into the Project. Schwimmer's brothers and sister were investigated and demonstrated similar powers, they were allowed to do their national service in the Project, now known as Jericho. The Schwimmer family were moved in to a comfortable suite of apartments in Tel Aviv. Schwimmer was sent throughout the armed forces to seek out others gifted like himself. He found very few, most of which were young women. One of them was Sarah, the daughter of the officer who originally spotted him.

Two years later it was all over. A large fortune had been spent on the Jericho Project, but apart from making the Schwimmer family's life more interesting nothing practical had been achieved. Leon Schwimmer's powers and those of his family were useless for any real intelligence or military use. Trials under simulated combat conditions were fiascos, and Schwimmer embarrassed himself and the Project in a demonstration to the highly sceptical army chief of staff. The Project was shut down and for years afterwards the career of anyone involved with it was blighted. Schwimmer was discharged from the army.

For Schwimmer (and his siblings) had no psychic powers. Schwimmer was a very accomplished conjurer with superb interpersonal skills, who had seen a good thing coming in the shape of the Jericho Project. If the army wanted a psychic, well, he would be the best psychic possible. Interestingly, as his superiors lost faith in them, Schwimmer came to believe in his own abilities.

Shortly afterwards Leon Schwimmer married Sarah Levi and started up his act again to nightclub audiences. He was very successful, and was spotted by Israeli television, soon he had his own show. His fame became international, and after his guest appearance on NBC's 'Marcus Venture's Magic Spectacular' in 1985, he was a household name throughout the western world. An autobiography followed, in which he suggested he might have been involved in a secret government project, but the same work also claimed that he was in contact

with Cytherians, and had been a high Priest in Lemuria in an earlier lifetime, so Mossad did not pay him a visit. When he and his family moved to California, he was interviewed by the Western Project and dismissed as a charlatan. The Western Project did regard him as asset (note: Schwimmer is not employed by this Project or is he even aware it exists), as his TV act and wacky claims tended to cheapen the image of psychics among the scientific community. Today he is best known as a author of books on the paranormal. He lives with Sarah and his teenage son Benjamin in Los Angeles.

The Israeli military intelligence community was deeply embarrassed by the Jericho fiasco. Fearful that the Israeli media would uncover the facts and produce stories on how millions had been wasted researching magic tricks and that senior intelligence operatives were fooled by a conjurer, the Jericho files were largely shredded and the remainder buried deep in the archives. They were scattered in the confusion of the ongoing Israeli Civil War. Some of the records have been discovered recently. Some copies of Levi's early optimistic reports are in the hands of the Whitechapel Project, the Institute of Space-Medico Engineering, Strategic Research Laboratories and Azazel. These documents describe Schwimmer as an accomplished psychic with astonishing telekinetic abilities. Whether or not these groups and individuals plan to use this information in any way is currently unknown.

Support: Leon Schwimmer

Age: 52

Affiliation: none

Allies: various media and entertainment people

Enemies: EASAS

Equipment: Various magic props

Stats Skill Base

END:2

REF: 3

INT:4

STR:3

Espionage: Novice

Knowledge: Novice

Social: Veteran

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Competent

# Active Projects

## The Snowbird Project (Canada)

*"This is a real bad one, Chris. Our man is smart, he's read all the books and knows what to do. This is the sixth dead body, and we've no description and zip forensic. I think we'd better call in outside help."*

*"You mean the Human Factors people. Remember that guy we met last year at the Organised Crime conference, he was okay at first but he was weird, I mean verging on looney tunes. What was his name? Begon with a D... Are you going to answer that phone?"*

*"They get results, though, I'm going to call them after this- Hello, Romano, Homicide- Gil Dodd? Hi Gil, funny we were just thinking about you..."*

Unusually for a Psychic Project, Canada's Snowbird Project began as an investigation into a completely separate unexplained phenomena. In the early 1950s, like the USAF, the Royal Canadian Air Force took the existence of UFOs as a serious possibility. If some party (perhaps the Soviets or escaped Nazis) had access to flying craft of amazing performance and were covertly entering Canadian airspace, then they presented a potential threat of an unknown magnitude. So the Ottawa government created a secret body to study these events. This was the Snowbird Office and was originally based at Hamilton, Ontario. Its personnel were seconded from the Canadian armed forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The inclusion of the Mounties may seem strange but at the time they were Canada's only counter-espionage agency.

The intention was to intercept and force down a saucer, but the main difficulty was detecting them early enough. NORAD's chain of northern early warning radars was still years from completion. Getting sufficient warning seemed impossible, until one of the RCMP officers had a bright idea. He had served as a bodyguard to the former Canadian prime minister Mackenzie King, who had regularly consulted psychics and mediums during his terms in office. Perhaps a psychic could predict UFO events, or detect the presence of saucers or maybe even determine their nature. The most convincing of these people were contacted and offered positions as consultants to the Snowbird Office. However, despite impressive test results, no psychic seemed capable of finding or tracking

flying saucers. Gradually it was realised that this was probably because there was no such thing. This could have been the end of the Snowbird Office, but the director was clever enough to change the focus of the organisation to the application of psychic powers for security, law enforcement and military purposes. After a couple of Snowbird espers were instrumental in breaking up a Soviet spy ring, its future was assured. By 1957, Snowbird became an official Project, independent of the military and RCMP. Today, Snowbird lends paranormal support to the Intelligence arms of the Canadian armed forces, the Secret Intelligence Service, regional police forces and, of course, the RCMP. These agencies may call on the Human Factors Institute at any time. As a result, the espers are used to a varied set of missions. A Snowbird esper may in her career help the Toronto police track armed robbers, keep a mafia capo under surveillance for the Mounties and watch the activities of a Chinese spy for the security service. Intelligence and military personnel are seconded to the Project to provide their expertise, but most of the staff (and all the espers) are civilians. If necessary, Snowbird espers who were to be sent into a risky situation would be accompanied by one of the soldiers or cops attached to the Project. As they are not expected to go into danger alone, Snowbird espers are given no firearms training, only rudimentary training in unarmed combat, essentially a self-defence course, and are taught just enough espionage tradecraft to recognise its use by others.

At present, the Snowbird Project is located in a nondescript brick building off Highway 17 in the eastern suburbs of Ottawa. It has large garden, partially wooded, surrounded by a wall. The plaque on the wall says it is the home of the Human Factors Study Institute, a quango formed to study criminal motivations. There are about sixty people working there, of which half are espers.

Snowbird is not supposed to operate outside Canada's borders, but this has occasionally been relaxed, for example, surveillance of suspects has lead to Snowbird operatives following suspects into the US, and more rarely Europe and Asia. With the appointment of the current director this has all stopped, as he has forbidden long distance travel as an economy measure. Snowbird is a small, efficient organisation, with a relatively straightforward agenda which tries to co-operate with the Projects of other friendly countries. As a result most others sneer at it. Snowbird regularly exchanges

information with the Randstadt Project, and is on speaking terms with the Whitechapel and Western Projects. However it is suspicious of the Osiris Project as it is suspected to operate covertly in Quebec and, perhaps surprisingly, openly hostile to the Carl Gustav Project. This follows an unfortunate incident in the Canadian Arctic when a Snowbird esper was killed, although it has never been proven it is widely believed that some experiment of the Scandinavians was responsible. There has not yet been any significant violence by the Network in Canada, so it is not regarded as a threat. From time to time, Network cells are kept under surveillance just in case. The Project is completely unaware of the presence of a growing population of Terata in Canada. In fact a small village in British Columbia is entirely populated by Terata and their servants.

Snowbird is involved in counter-intelligence and counter subversion (mainly against Canadian Network cells, native separatist organisations and the Liberté Pour Quebec terrorist group). It also assists in law enforcement. Police officers faced with difficult to solve cases may request the Project's assistance. Snowbird is lead by a government-appointed civil servant. Currently this position is held by a 52 year old lawyer called Douglas McDonald, whose facial resemblance to the actor John Lithgow misleads many people into believing that he must be an avuncular and amiable chap. In fact it would be hard to find a more petty and mean-spirited individual. His only real skill is an ability to play office politics and this has lead him to be promoted several levels beyond his competence. Under his uninspiring leadership, Snowbird has experiencing a steady drop in efficiency and morale. Depending on circumstances, PCs will find him bumptious and unhelpful ("I'm afraid I cannot approve this request for equipment, as I can identify many better uses for the budget. I suggest you make do with what you already have.") or whining and accusatory ("I'll be noting your conduct in my report, don't worry").

As a matter of fact McDonald is selling information on Snowbird to the Western Project. Once or twice a month he visits a coffee shop in a mall in Ottawa. In a particular cubicle in the restrooms he leaves a package of CD-ROM discs of Snowbird documents. In return \$30 000 is credited to a bank account in the Cayman Islands. His motive is simply greed, although he also gets a kick from believing himself to be a master spy. His Western Project control poses as an agent of the Russian GRU and has told

McDonald that as a reward for his services he has been made a colonel in that agency and will be given asylum in Russia if he needs to flee. If McDonald ever tries this the results should be interesting.

### **Snowbird NPCs**

Players working for or against Snowbird are likely to encounter Gilbert Dodd, currently Snowbird's most prominent esper. Dodd is a gaunt, bespectacled man with thinning fair hair worn in a ponytail. His usual clothing, worn in all weathers, are basketball boots, jeans, a black rollneck sweater and a fawn raincoat. Dodd simultaneously developed his powers and a complex set of mental delusions shortly after a traumatic divorce. By now his beliefs are so rambling and wide-ranging so as to be hard to summarise, but essentially he believes the world to be in the grip of an evil conspiracy of aliens, supernatural beings, cyborgs and secret religious cults. He believes there is an underground resistance in which Snowbird plays a minor part. Messages from the Resistance High Command are to be found in various movies, novels and role-playing games, all of which are studied avidly by Dodd. Snowbird's parapsychologists have warned that his illness and psychic powers are tightly bound, so once they assured themselves that he was not violent, he was allowed to persist in his fantasies without receiving treatment. His controller, an army officer called Martin Loughhead, cynically manipulates Dodd by pandering to his illness. To the best of his own knowledge, Dodd's duties are a small but vital part of a campaign against the "Evil Ones" and he performs all he is asked to do with great efficiency.

If PCs meet Dodd, and are trusted by him he may make veiled allusions to the Conspiracy and PCs unaware of his condition may find his talk of monsters and secret organisations rather plausible. Other Snowbird personnel simply nod and agree with him. He always carries an ornate antique knife in a scabbard concealed under his sweater. He saw this weapon, actually a replica of prop from a TV sci-fi show, in a junk shop and decided it to be the 'Lady Vivamus', an artefact of immense occult power, and purchased it immediately. Dodd believes it to be a demon-slaying blade, although it would be a bad move on his part to jab a Terata with the Lady. He is jealously proud of this weapon but will show it to trusted individuals. Anyone who shows suitable awe will be his friend for life.



Although he is often sad, as he hasn't seen his two sons since his wife left and took them to Vancouver, he is friendly and helpful. Dodd could be easily controlled by hostile espers who know of his delusions.

Martin Loughead is an army major permanently assigned to the Project. Wounded by a sniper in Bosnia, he walks awkwardly and painfully and is a heavy user of pain-killing drugs. Although very efficient, he is sour and unfriendly. He is balding with a ginger moustache.

Maggie Crozier is another powerful esper in the Project. A muscular, handsome woman with a shocking taste in costume jewellery and a ready laugh, she is fascinated by astrology and disarmingly frank about her personal life (two boyfriends and a girlfriend, all twenty years younger than herself). She carries a venomous hatred for drug pushers and murderers of children. She will tirelessly assist operations against these classes of criminal, even cases she has not been assigned too. She suffers from occasional asthma attacks. Despite her candour, she seldom speaks of her past, but most Snowbird operatives have heard of how Crozier's sister and infant niece died, The man responsible was Maggie's own partner, Greg Nahin, who lead a second life as a would-be major player in the Toronto narcotics underworld. Maggie turned him in. Subsequently she was spotted in a Snowbird recruiting test, and driven by her strange sense of justice signed up. Later still, Greg Nahin, was released after proving a model prisoner. He is currently in a refuse sack at the bottom of Lake Ontario, and if Maggie Crozier or any of the mind readers in Snowbird know this or how he got there, they aren't telling.

Support: Douglas McDonald  
Age: 49  
Affiliation: Snowbird Project (and Western Project)  
Allies: a variety of Canadian VIPs  
Enemies: Anyone who has worked for him  
END:3  
REF: 3  
INT:4  
STR:3  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Novice

Support: Gilbert Dodd  
Age: 28  
Affiliation: Snowbird Project  
Allies: Snowbird Project personnel  
Enemies: none (unless you include his fantasised Great Fungoid Elder Blasphemous Things)  
Equipment: Lady Vivamus  
END:4  
REF: 4  
INT:6  
STR:4  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 6  
Object-Reading: P, Intuition: C, Telelocation: P  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Professional  
Warfare: Novice

Support: Martin Loughead  
Age: 41  
Affiliation: Snowbird Project  
Allies: Gilbert Dodd  
Enemies: anyone who messes with him.  
END:2  
REF: 3  
INT:4  
STR:3  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Professional

Support: Maggie Crozier  
Age: 45  
Affiliation: Snowbird Project  
Allies: Snowbird Project personnel, her partners  
Enemies: the various people she has caught  
Equipment: Astrology books, Asthma inhaler  
END:3  
REF: 3  
INT:3  
STR:5  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 3  
Object-Reading: P, Intuition: P  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Novice

## The Institute of Space-Medico Engineering (China)

Perhaps one of the strangest Projects is the Institute of Space-Medico Engineering (ISME). The Chinese government freely admit that they are researching psychic abilities and have even published research papers detailing incredible successes in clairvoyance and psychokinesis. Investigation of their research and the people involved is strictly off-limits. The Peoples' Republic of China has never signed the Calcutta Protocols.

The only public image of the psychical research taking place within ISME is Yiu Weiqiang, the stone-faced psychic who made headlines in 1968 with his psychometric abilities. His picture was flashed across Western newspapers with restrained headlines such as "Yellow Peril create Killer Psychic Army!" While his test scores were indeed extraordinary for the time, his psychometric talents hardly constituted a "killer psychic army". Those who seek psychics can find him and his family hidden in the town of Changzhou in Jiangsu Province. Eighteen hundred psychics live in this town with their husbands, wives and children, congregating every day to work together in the development of their psychic talents. Most of the non-psychics are also employed by the Project and all reap the spoils of their research. For one month in the year Yiu Weiqiang and twelve others visit Beijing to give their report to Wu Shilin, the Head of the Council of National Interest. Perhaps in the future, the Institute will be charged with civil or even military duty but for now they have been told to live, learn and wait for further instructions.

The Institute is a pure research administration. It investigates every subject relevant to advanced science including providing research for the Space Program (China launched its first astronauts in 2000) and the Advanced Weapons Division. They induct all psychics for their own protection and it is a sure way for some poor families to taste some of the finer things in life. In Changzhou, psychics live in comfort, not in barracks. The Institute has several buildings, some of which are devoted to non-psychic studies. Of course the schools and medical centres in the town are run by the Institute. ISME has all the resources of a medium-sized town though a resourceful and well-informed psychic could conceivably obtain the support of the Military and the Space Program. They often have innovative

technology to solve common problems taken from Space-Medico research or the Weapons Division.

The Institute has very good relations with many non-psychic research foundations and centres in the West. It does not associate with other Projects, and its personnel are regarded as dangerous renegades by many other Projects. The American Projects are constantly attempting to infiltrate the Institute.

An encounter with ISME is unlikely in the extreme unless you are in Changzhou. Even so, it seems to be just a normal town filled with people going about their business. If psychic activity is detected within China's borders, a squad of Changzhou Police Officers are sent with relocation papers for the responsible esper and their family.

Changzhou psychics are not warriors. They train to improve their talents and to protect themselves and their country. China also has the largest Network presence with an estimated eight-thousand network members spread across the country. The ISME does not yet operate in the other Free Asian Peoples' Alliance states.

### ISME NPCs

Among the personalities in the ISME are:

Yiu Weiqiang is the head psychic in ISME and is thus responsible for the organisation and detection of psychics in Changzhou. He is stone-faced and smiles infrequently in public though he is a cheerful man, full of love for his wife, Jing-wei and his two daughters Tse and Juijuan. He will sacrifice anything to protect them.

Wu Shilin is the head of the Council of National Interest and is in direct control of the Institute. Research projects are not undertaken unless he decides that it is worthy of their attention. He is a cold fish who hides a secret envy of the psychics and arranged for them to have two offspring rather than the one the law demands.

Fong Xingjiang is a teenager with major psychic talents in the area of Psychometry and Remote Sensing. She is of marriageable age but her dreams carry her to other countries where she witnesses the Psilent War. She is impatient, full of hope and confidence and feels restricted by the idyllic quiet of Changzhou. If an escape door opened, she may dart through.

Support: Yiu Weiqiang  
Age: 47  
Affiliation: ISME  
Allies: All of Changzhou, his family.  
Enemies: None  
END: 3  
REF: 3  
INT: 3  
STR: 4  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry 5  
Telelocation P, Precognition P  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Competent

Support: Wu Shilin  
Age: 62  
Affiliation: ISME  
Allies: Council of National Interest  
Enemies: All Projects from the West.  
Equipment: Tidy suit, Party pin  
END: 2  
REF: 3  
INT: 6  
STR: 4  
FAT: 0  
STS: 0  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Veteran  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Unskilled

Support: Fong Xingjiang  
Age: 16  
Affiliation: Changzhou  
Allies: People of Changzhou  
Enemies: Walls of Changzhou  
END: 4  
REF: 5  
INT: 5  
STR: 5  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry 5, Telepathy 7  
Object-reading P, Telelocation P, Remote Sense V  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Professional  
Survival: Veteran  
Social: Competent  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Professional

## The Osiris Project (France)

*"Commissioner, there are two people in that flat. The man is injured but will be capable of returning fire with a pistol, the girl has a shotgun, but is likely that she has left the safety on. I shall need five of your men, armed with grenades and automatic weapons."*

*"Certainly, Monsieur Aurion, but the technicians have not yet set up their devices. May I ask how do you know these facts?"*

*"No, you may not. May I ask if you wish to remain a commissioner?"*

Those esper activities sanctioned by the French government are controlled by Project Osiris. This is a relatively important and powerful organisation. Its operatives appear to be able to call on the resources of the French armed forces, intelligence service (DGSE), security service (DST) and regional police forces.

The founding director of this Project was an ancient history buff and was fond of assigning codenames taken from antiquity, especially Dynastic Egypt. Although this man retired many years ago, this peculiarity has remained. Its headquarters is referred to as La Pyramide, operatives have codenames such as Kut, Anubis, Cheops and so on. La Pyramide is located in northern Paris. The anonymous building is officially a secure storage site for overflow from the national museums. The interior is decorated with ancient Egyptian artefacts borrowed from the museums. A number of limousines and vans are based there for the Project's use. If additional vehicles or aircraft are needed they are borrowed from the Defence Ministry or police forces.

Osiris is responsible for similar national security and intelligence missions as, for example, the Western Project. Osiris operatives have acted against Russian and other foreign agents, French, European and Middle Eastern terrorists and international crime syndicates.

A major *raison d'être* of Osiris is kept secret from many of its operatives. This is a very expensive undertaking, almost a project in itself called *Département Ozymandias*. This is nothing less than an attempt to enable the French State to avoid or, if necessary, survive Armageddon. In 1971 when it was still the early days of Osiris, its best regarded esper was a precog named Oscar Charteau who was able to predict world events with remarkable

accuracy. His superiors were so impressed by his powers that he put to work trying to chart world history, especially that relating to France, as far into the future as possible. Charteau lay for hours in a darkened room, straining to accept images from times yet to be. His every utterance was taped and he was encouraged to write down or sketch everything he saw. After a year he had produced a document which was codenamed the Rosetta Book. This was a compilation of his predictions, which varied in precision and importance. In this book he foretold the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Challenger explosion, the computer revolution, a woman calling herself Madonna being idolised in the 1980s (leading to some curious speculations about the future of Catholicism), the coming of two new plagues and the bombing of an Air France Concorde in 1979 (which was successfully averted by Osiris agents). All this was of great interest, tidbits from it have been used ever since to guide French government policies. However there was something ominous about Charteau's predictions. He was only occasionally able to produce exact dates, usually he could only give timings like 'about five years from today', but he was completely unable to see any events more than fifty years from then. Even more disturbingly, his visions of events immediately prior to this cut-off were of world-wide death and destruction. These made him very upset, so much so that his superiors feared for his sanity. Typical records from his notes included:

*"Suddenly, a fire came from everywhere. I say a fire yet nothing burned, but it was an inferno, bright and searing. And everywhere the people die. It will be as if God presses a button and switches off humanity. Everyone."*

*"I saw the streets of Paris. There were strange buildings and funny little cars. And the people, everywhere dead. People lying everywhere, even children. Only the dogs and birds were alive."*

*"Thank God! There are living people...but they are smiling. There is death everywhere, yet they laugh. I don't like them, I don't want to look at them..."*

Further investigation found that other powerful precogs world-wide also predict a holocaust in the not too distant future. So, it was decided, France must survive, so preparations must be made to avert the disaster or to live through it. Charteau was pressed to concentrate on the disaster and the events running up to it. He found this very

unpleasant, and had to be put under considerable pressure to co-operate. Other precogs were sought and to this day, precogs recruited by the Osiris project are automatically assigned to Ozymandias. Meanwhile Osiris recruited scientists from many disciplines to speculate on the cause of the disaster and how to respond to the threat. Every hypothesis from nuclear war to a world-wide suicide cult has been studied. There are also specialists drawing up plans for the post-apocalyptic period assuming there are survivors. In the near future, the Ozymandias Department will plant secret caches of arms, food, medicines and fuel throughout France for the use of the survivors. To ensure that there will be survivors, Ozymandias is considering placing carefully selected personnel (including espers) into cryosuspension for restoration to life after the disaster. Whether this is technologically feasible or not is uncertain.

At first thought, it would seem that possession of the Rosetta Book would give France a huge advantage in its political and military strategies, but this has not been the case. Ozymandias releases only very carefully selected items to its masters. This is because they do not want to make large changes to world events in case this invalidates other predictions. Of course as soon as they believe that they have determined the cause of the Ozymandias Event, everything will be done to prevent it up to and including use of the French nuclear arsenal.

All this would be easier if Charteau was still there, as no precog has yet matched his abilities. Sadly he murdered his wife and children before his own suicide. Investigators found he had painted a message on his bedroom wall just before he died. The message, which was surrounded by a spider's web-like design, is as puzzling in meaning as anything in the writings of Nostradamus. It is also the last sentence in the Rosetta Book.

*"On the last day the beautiful angel will not be alone, the Military man will be at his side."*

(Actually this is not a correct transliteration of the message. Charteau was poor at spelling and the writing was unclear. French-speaking PCs who study photos of the message may realise that 'homme Martial' actually should be 'homme Martien'. What he meant by this will remain mysterious.)

Access to copies of the Rosetta Book is carefully controlled. At the moment there are five complete hardcopies of it and three CD ROMs carrying the complete text. As a precaution one of the hard copies and one of the CDs are stored in a former missile silo in the Plateau d'Albion, another pair are in a safety deposit box in a Swiss bank. The rest are in Osiris' headquarters. The French Prime Minister and President each have an edited copy. Exerpts are released to Ozymandias personnel on a need to know basis. Anyone who stole a copy would be hunted mercilessly by the Osiris Project. Ozymandias occupies two floors of La Pyramide, ordinary Osiris personnel, are not allowed access to it and fraternization between the two groups of staff is discouraged.

### Osiris NPCs

Depending on their gender, the head of the Osiris Project (and Ozymandias Department) is code-named Ptolemy or Cleopatra. Currently, Gillian Firaud is Cleopatra. She is a government scientist originally recruited for Ozymandias. Presumably because she trained as an astrophysicist, she is fairly sure that the Ozymandias Event will be of extraterrestrial origin. Firaud, a red-haired woman of unremarkable appearance, is a competent administrator, but has little interest in the Project's military activities. To ensure security she will refuse any offer of help from foreign Projects. Her fear of her Project being infiltrated by the Americans or Germans verges on paranoia.

PCs from English-speaking backgrounds working with or against Osiris are likely to encounter one of its leading agents, Madelene Lavelle, who is fluent in several languages including English. Lavelle was discovered to be an esper while still at school, and was still in her teens when Osiris recruited her. She has always been dedicated to her work and became even more so when she was told of Ozymandias. She has a son and daughter of school age from a failed marriage whom she deeply wishes to survive or escape the disaster prophesied in the Rosetta Book. In looks, Lavelle (code-named Roxanne) is a tall, slim and rather beautiful woman who looks somewhat younger than her age. A fitness fanatic, she spends twelve hours a week swimming, running and exercising in a gym. Apart from her children who live with her, her main pleasures are literature and cinema, she is very well versed in the works of modern authors. If she was not serving the Project she would have been a poet or novelist. Her

character is somewhat grave, caring and honest although she can tell lies if necessary. Those who know her well value her friendship highly. She is lonely and believes that her children need a full-time father. Sometimes her conscience has conflicted with her work but so far she has succeeded in rationalising everything she has been called on to do as being for the common good. She is normally a thinker rather than a fighter.

Thankfully for Lavelle, no-one but the Osiris psychologists know that she has a potentially debilitating weakness, in the form of severe ophiophobia. Her children are Jean (aged 11) and Marie (aged 8). Marie is beginning to exhibit powers similar to her mother.

If the PCs wish to corrupt an agent of Osiris they should consider Rene Montbazet (codenamed Scarab), who urgently needs money. Short, with slightly bulging eyes, Montbazet is unprepossessing in looks, but his charm makes him popular and he is well-respected in the Project for his hard work and esper skills. However he has major character flaws, some of which are known, others are not. He has a wandering eye for women and spends his evenings trying to pick up female companionship. As well as frequenting bar and clubs, he also loiters about art galleries and museums where he believes he will meet a smarter and 'classier' type of woman. Intelligence and class are two qualities he lacks. His manner is superficially friendly and helpful and will attempt conversation with any lone attractive women. To impress his girlfriends he has been living considerably outside his means and is hugely in debt to several banks and credit card companies. His employers are unaware of this. Montbazet would be very receptive to offers of money for information. Alternatively he could be enticed to betray Osiris by a pretty woman. In both cases some work would be required to overcome his anxieties of being found out. The PCs may also realise that Montbazet does not really understand the concepts of trust and loyalty, so they should expect that he may attempt to double-cross them.

His flat is untidy, and the drawers and cupboards are starting to bulge with unread bank statements and demands for payment. Montbazet's only family is an elderly mother and he has no really close friends.

The best known, yet most enigmatic, person identified with the Osiris Project is the individual known as Aurion (codenamed Sphinx). Rival Projects and the Network have little firm details on this person. His full names, origin, past history and private life are yet to be discovered, but are presumably filed away in Osiris' records. Certainly to outsiders, he appeared to have stepped out of thin air and into Osiris. His role seems to be that of the Project's chief troubleshooter and he has been seen to operate throughout Europe and the Mediterranean countries. A tall white man with short grey hair and a neat beard and moustache, he appears to be in his early sixties, yet has been associated with the Project since the mid-1970s and has not changed in appearance at all in this period. He is always expensively and impeccably dressed. While operating with the French authorities, Aurion rarely speaks in his quiet voice, with a Corsican accent, other than to give orders, and appears to treat most others with contempt. Aurion can appear charming and friendly when he operates covertly, and does appear to be genuinely sympathetic to children. He is aided by his considerable aura of authority and a talent for intimidation. His combat skills are formidable, and he is said to be a powerful esper. French security personnel who have met him say that he appears to have an encyclopaedic memory of criminal, intelligence and Network information. During his career Aurion has used a variety of aliases and frequently poses as an inspector in the national police.

Aurion shows a complete disinterest in any kind of companionship. He lives alone in a luxurious flat in Paris where his sole visitor is his housekeeper. There has been a succession of these ladies over the years and during the 1980s one of them was interrogated by a team of Whitechapel operatives. They learned that M. Aurion was very polite, paid well, and interested only in music and painting. Although his collection of CDs is large, it comprises only recordings of the works of Mahler and Mozart. The housekeeper reported that he is a skilled artist and works in a variety of media. All Aurion's paintings and drawings depict arid desert or barren arctic landscapes which are completely devoid of human and animal life. His latest canvases are hung on the walls of the flat, while the older ones are destroyed.

Most Osiris Project operatives have not even seen Aurion, in that Project he is spoken of with a mixture of pride, awe and respect verging on fear.

Rene Montbazet is very afraid of him. Very rarely a team from the Project may work with him. PCs working alongside Aurion will find him sullen, impatient with their efforts and very competent. Unless the PCs are very skillful, he will make every attempt to work by himself. PCs in conflict with Aurion will find him a terrifying opponent. If they escape him, they should be regularly reminded that Aurion has a long memory and is still out there. They should not be allowed to casually kill Aurion, defeating him should be a major achievement.

Needless to say there are many rumours about Aurion, it has been said that he is a Terata, or that there have been a series of cloned Aurions or that he actually controls the Osiris Project. These tales are widespread even inside the Project. Whether these are true or not can be decided by the GM

Support: Gillian Firaud ('Cleopatra')

Age: 48

Affiliation:

Allies:

Enemies:

Equipment: Expensive, but drab suits

END: 3

REF: 3

INT: 5

STR: 2

Espionage: Competent

Knowledge: Professional

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Novice

Support: Madelene Lavelle ('Roxanne')

Age: 40

Affiliation:

Allies:

Enemies:

Equipment: Sig Sauer P220 (in her handbag)

END: 3

REF: 3

INT: 4

STR: 3

Psychic Ability: Telekinesis 2

Electronkinesis C, Probability N

Espionage: Professional

Knowledge: Professional

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Novice

Warfare: Competent

Support: Rene Montbazet ('Scarab')  
Age: 28  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
Equipment: Numerous Credit Cards, Packet of  
Condoms, SPAS-15 (under bed)  
END: 4  
REF: 4  
INT: 3  
STR: 4  
Psychic Ability: Telepathy 3, Reception C  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Competent

Support: Aurion ('Sphinx')  
Age: 62?  
Affiliation: Osiris Project  
Allies: Osiris Project personnel  
Enemies: European Network cells  
Equipment: Glock 20, Flick-knife  
END:6  
REF: 6  
INT:6  
STR:5  
Psychic Ability: Telepathy: 9+  
Extract: P, Remote Sense: C, Implant: P, others?  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Veteran  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Professional  
Technical: Professional  
Warfare: Veteran

## Geister Dreizehn (Germany)

Frank,

*First, I never sent this. You know how the Ice Maiden is. Anyway, my pal in the Agency's East Euro office sent me the following document. He got it from a source in some Slovak Green Anarchist cell, they've no known Network links and didn't know what to make of it. My buddy thought it might be important. The document consists of a few xeroxed pages of handwriting passed to them by a sympathiser. The writer (a male, mid-30s, Polish- sorry, best our Sensitives can do without touching the originals), who is AWOL, presumed XPD-ed, has a major thing about the Krauts, but it's the best detail I've seen on GSG-13. See what you think. If I can get any more from this source I'll share it with you.*

*You can show it to the General if you want but he'll go thermonuclear if sees the second paragraph, so maybe you better edit it first.*

Regards  
Jake

## The Fourth Reich's Psychic Stormtroopers

### Description

Grenschutzgruppe 13 was first sanctioned in 1982 as the dark arm of the elite unit GSG-9 (actually part of the Federal Border Guard) under the direct control of the central German government. After reunification in 1989, rumours of a STASI Project led to an investigation by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) which proved fruitless. Any STASI Project personnel were presumed to have been recalled to Moscow.

The members of GSG-13 must undergo rigorous training including karate, demolitions, parachuting, SCUBA, climbing, advanced driving, intrusion, surveillance and arctic survival. They also learn how to drive airport vehicles and pilot commercial aircraft. GSG-13 were nicknamed Geister 13 in 1989 due to their unusual nature of the troop specialisation. Each Tactical Unit consists of 30 men divided into five squads of one officer and five men. GSG-13 are supported by the same technical backup received by GSG-9. Electronic surveillance, dedicated satellite communications and access to "Kommissar II", the supercomputer located in the basement of the Criminal Investigation Department (BKA) in Weisbaden. Kommissar II contains a database of over 10 billion

pages of information on criminals, terrorists and, more recently, psychics.

An encounter with Geister Dreizehn is often fatal. They are not to be considered a soft target in the way that the US's Nevada Project has been. They do not tolerate weak troops and as a result they have a very strong force at the cost of dehumanising the psychics within the Unit and providing an added incentive for 'unsuitable' psychics to join the Network. A strong sense of national pride is embodied by the Geister Dreizehn operative, perhaps more so than in any other Project.

Geister Dreizehn will always press home a tactical advantage and can often turn the tables on a much stronger foe. They are also known to retaliate fiercely if roused and every soldier is a trained killer. They do not often operate outside German soil unless backing up another service and do not seem to employ a dedicated intelligence service, relying instead on the services of Geheimdienst, the psychic arm of the Federal Intelligence Service (BND).

### **Locations**

Geister Dreizehn operates out of the GSG-9 Operational Base near Munich where they also train their military and psychic abilities. The base lies on a 10 mile square area of hilly ground though a mockup airport has been constructed alongside the more common "FIBUA" village. Perhaps 400 troops train here at any one time with approximately 70 of those being psychics.

### **Objectives**

The Grenschutzgruppen operates to defend Germany from attack by terrorists and insurgents. GSG-13 was opened to expand the capabilities of this force and perhaps prevent terrorist activity before it actually occurs. They realise every other country has this new technology and for that reason they react badly to suspected psychic intrusions. There is a growing opinion that all psychics within the country, who have not already joined or who have been deemed unsuitable, be lobotomised to prevent their use by foreign or domestic powers seeking to cause unrest.

### **Resources**

As mentioned they have an efficient and up-to-date technical support though the biggest expenditure they are likely to use is the purchase of extra ammunition.

### **Personalities**

Colonel Otto Hansbrucker is the Commander of the Unit and is regarded as the nation's expert on PsychoTactics, the use of Psychic Powers in Armed Conflict. He is an average-looking man often described as charming and good company. He is unmarried, has no children and his only true friend in the world seems to be his dog, a German Shepherd named Willi.

Lieutenant Helga Ritter is the first woman to command a Geister Dreizehn unit. Her severe manner and striking good looks have not made her popular within the Grenschutzgruppen as a whole but her unit are unquestionably loyal. She is a tough uncompromising soldier with a taste for fast, German cars and a AAA grade in Marksmanship.

Alex Schenker is only a recent recruit but has already begun to make a name for himself within GSG-13. His talents manifested after he had already become an accomplished member of GSG-9. His recruitment into GSG-13 meant a downgrade in position but a great improvement in the challenge as he sees it.

### **Relationships**

Geister Dreizehn has poor relations with all other Projects. Some (like Whitechapel) are considered to be hostile.

### **Equipment**

Standard equipment include the H&K P8 pistol, the H&K G3 Sniper, the H&K MP5K, flashbang grenades and DT11B1 Assault grenades. Other kit includes black jumpsuits with Armour plate inserts, Cyclops NightVision and NATO Combat Harnesses.

During operations they may have access to more specialised equipment.



Support: Colonel Otto Hansbrucker    Age: 48  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 Equipment: Glock 20, Combat Knife  
 END: 4  
 REF: 5  
 INT: 5  
 STR: 5  
 Psychic Ability: Telepath: 5  
 Reception: P, Transmission: P  
 Espionage: Professional  
 Knowledge: Professional  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Veteran  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Professional

Support: Lieutenant Helga Ritter    Age: 31  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 Equipment: Glock 17, H&K MP5 (Police), H&K G11  
 END: 5  
 REF: 6  
 INT: 4  
 STR: 5  
 Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 7  
 Awareness: P, Intuitions: P, Kirlian Sight: N  
 Espionage: Professional  
 Knowledge: Novice  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Veteran  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Veteran

Support: Alex Schenker    Age: 26  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 Equipment: H&K MP5-SD3, H&K G3 Sniper  
 END: 4  
 REF: 7  
 INT: 3  
 STR: 5  
 Psychic Ability: BioFeedback: 6  
 BioRhythms: P, Pain Blocking: P  
 Espionage: Professional  
 Knowledge: Professional  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Veteran  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Professional

## The Euphrates Project (Iraq)

*Rashid: Ron, you must realise we're better off here. In America we were just tools of Wall Street. We didn't know better. Now I am serving God, the Great Leader and all our comrades here. And I am happier than I've ever been. I've found myself. I'm sorry the sarge and Ken aren't here. But I'm glad you are, we made the right choice.*

*Sears: (unintelligible)*

*Rashid: (15 second pause) I choose to forgive you for that. Look, I'd better go. We're going to celebrate the war between the Zionists in a few minutes. See you tomorrow, God go with you Ron.*

*(sounds of door opening, closing and locking)*

*Transcript of Tape Rashid 19665*

Few Third World nations can afford to maintain a Project but the Iraqi Republic is a rare exception. In the final quarter of the twentieth century that nation spent many billions of dollars trying to build a superpower war machine. The dictator in Baghdad had dreams of an empire greater than that of ancient Babylon. But within an hour of the first shots of the 1991 Oil War it was obvious that hardware alone would not be enough to build an empire. Thousands of tanks and 'planes were reduced to scrap by the Coalition forces. Thoughts of the fates of their crews barely troubled the leader as he brooded in his nuclear bunker. Iraq must have a new weapon, something subtle and impossible to counter. Something which could be hidden, unlike superguns and nuclear reactors, until the day when Iraq would have its vengeance on America and its lackeys.

Then the answer literally fell into his hands.

There were four survivors from the Nevada Project helicopter crash. Three were espers. All were prisoners of war.

These people had dragged themselves from the wreckage before the fire took hold. The non-psychic was a Sgt. Pitt, and his companions were Oertling, Young and Sears. All had injuries of varying severity, and had no equipment but that carried on their persons. Everything else, radios, food, first aid materials and weapons burned. Shock, pain and despair blunted the espers' powers. Nevertheless they made a valiant attempt to walk the barren mountain passes back to Turkey. Pitt was the most badly hurt and was walking with the help of a length of metal used as a crutch. They made

desperate attempts to signal the friendly aircraft which raced overhead, but bad weather blocked their efforts. Their fortunes sank even lower when a patrol of Iraqi soldiers surrounded them. Meaningful resistance was impossible, so the Americans gave themselves up. Their captors took them to the south. This was a slow process due to the Kurdish rebellion, and the Americans were not gently treated by the patrol. The war was over by the time they arrived in Baghdad and the other Coalition prisoners had already been returned. Nevertheless, there they underwent a brutal interrogation. No doubt the US would eventually be informed of their survival, but until then they could be treated as their jailers wished.

Sears should not be blamed for what he did when his turn came. Every human being has only a finite supply of strength and courage, and he and his comrades had used more of theirs in the past weeks than anyone should have to. He was a broken man. As soon as he was dragged before his torturers, he begged not to be hurt. In return he would show them something amazing. Using his last reserve of strength, he silenced his tormentors' laughter by levitating a water glass. Soon, an astonishing report was delivered to the presidential bunker. The Great Leader read it and acted. Iraq would have its secret weapon, and it would be codenamed Euphrates.

The Americans were given a choice, serve the Republic of Iraq or die. Just to show that this ultimatum was no idle threat, the comatose Pitt was shot before his comrades' horrified eyes. The espers agreed to their captors' demands, secretly planning to escape as soon as possible. They never did.

A series of threats, punishments and rewards was used to extract the information from the prisoners. Although Sears was the most co-operative, the three Americans told the Iraqis as much as they could. As a result the embryonic Iraqi Project learned the extent of psychic capability, and gained a rough knowledge of the Nevada Project circa 1990. None of the captives had a deep understanding of the science of psionics so the information they gave was incomplete and sometimes inaccurate. Based on the prisoners' debriefing, the Iraqi state scoured the nation for espers. They lacked (and still do not possess) the subtle methodology used in the West so only candidates with unmistakable esper talents were found and recruited. As a result Euphrates Project espers tend to be powerful, but skilled only in the more physical talents. Thanks to the

environment in the Project they tend to be fanatical supporters of the Great Leader and his regime. Some talents are regarded as dangerous and uncontrollable. Espers with Implant, Extract and Regent powers are executed. There is virtually no scientific investigation of psionics. Surviving Euphrates espers are given NCO ranks in the Republican Guard and wear standard fatigues marked with the Guard's red triangle patch. None are allowed to leave Iraq under any circumstances, and are escorted should they be required to leave the compound. Their food, accommodation and other conditions are otherwise superior to any other men of their rank. Their military equipment and training are adequate but not up to Western standards.

To work for Euphrates is to live in a paranoid nightmare. All personnel are encouraged to report any sign of disloyalty or slackness in their comrades. There are three scheduled political rallies per day, and there are frequent impromptu additional sessions. Every room and passageway carries a portrait of the Great Leader on its walls. People regularly vanish, and all records of their existence are expunged. For security reasons the Project physically relocates every six months or so. The Project is moved into various buildings such as schools, hospitals, barracks or prisons. The existing occupants are taken elsewhere for the duration of the Project's stay and are intimidated into silence. The intention is to draw no attention to the Project, so the buildings are kept secure and the local security forces are reinforced, but they do not, for example, surround the site with tanks or SAM batteries.

At present there are about thirty Espers in the Project, about the same number of military instructors and there are ninety Republican Guard soldiers assigned as the security detail (armed with AKMs, grenades and portable missiles are stored in an armoury). There are no women in the Project.

### **Euphrates NPCs**

For the past ten years, the Euphrates Project has been lead by Uday, the only surviving son of the Iraqi leader. Director Uday was severely injured by an assassination attempt in the 1990s and is confined to a wheelchair. He is not expected to succeed his father, who is developing Alzheimer's Disease (a well-guarded secret). The crippled Uday was given this position as a favour from his father.

The most likely successor to the Great Leader is Uday's cousin Hassan who is Chairman of the Party, and controls the secret police, al Mukharabat. Uday does not like this situation, so the talents of his espers are being used to remove his lesser opponents in the complicated world of Iraqi politics. Hassan will eventually be dealt with in the same way. More than half of the Project's personnel secretly report to al Mukharabat, although only a handful are actually agents of this organisation. Uday has successfully kept informers out of his inner circle of espers, bodyguards and aides.

Uday is regarded with a mixture of pity and terror by his more thoughtful subordinates. Although his injuries are well-known they must not be discussed openly. He talks to his officers from a luxurious armchair behind the desk in his office. When he must move by wheelchair, the area is cleared of all but his bodyguards. He strongly resembles his father in temper and appearance, like his father his hair and moustache are dyed black, however he is rather plump and favours Italian suits to military uniforms. He is obsessed with overcoming his disability and as a result any espers with healing powers are brought to him. By their efforts (and his own will-power), he has regained some feeling in his legs, but his injury is so severe and so old that he will never walk again. He will not accept this, and the unfortunate espers are usually executed after a few weeks of fruitless efforts.

Two of the former Nevada espers are still with Euphrates. Kenneth Young died of a heart attack in 1999. Ronald Sears is a clinical depressive and has made six suicide attempts. This condition is being treated with drugs, and his esper powers have declined to almost nothing, but despite this the Euphrates Project has retained him. In truth several senior Project officers feel sorry for him, and are hiding the fact that he is unlikely ever to be of use again. In view of the ruthless control over the Project, their compassion and courage has been remarkable. Oertling is the most cooperative, and has become a Moslem, taking the name Ahmed Rashid. Thanks to his current status and new-found beliefs he actually appears more self-confident and aggressive than he ever did when he was with Nevada. He does feel remorse for his comrades. Each day he spends several hours of his free time sitting with Sears, who rarely speaks to him. Rashid speaks fluent Arabic and acts as an instructor to new recruits. His status lies between that of a Project staff member and a prisoner.

Euphrates has existed for more than fifteen years, yet has not actually delivered a devastating blow to Iraq's enemies. In his more lucid moments the dictator expresses some impatience over this lack of progress. To secure his position Uday has decided that the time has come to demonstrate the power he controls. He is planning a spectacular action against one of Iraq's enemies, probably the US The exact action is yet to be decided but may be the killing of a political or military figure or a large number of civilians or destruction of a national symbol. If necessary a team of Euphrates espers will be sent abroad (suitably escorted, of course). Representatives of the Green Flag Commando terrorist group have been summoned to the Project to help select the target. In the course of these discussions, both parties have uncovered that the Nevada Project is lead by General Montell.

None of Iraq's enemies are aware that there is a psychic Project in that country, although the Euphrates codename has leaked out. The CIA has done sufficient investigation to decide that it was not the cover name of an NBC weapon project. However the name Euphrates is known to the US Projects.

Some Iraqi espers have escaped the Euphrates Project's trawls for recruits. This includes a high proportion of people that were not felt to be worth testing such as women, the elderly and the disabled. As all discussion of psychic abilities is banned from the state media, most of these people have little understanding of their powers and tend to hide them. The highly oppressive nature of the Iraqi state and its isolation from the outside world has led a perceived lack of Network activity in that country.

Support: Director Uday    Age: 45  
Affiliation: Euphrates Project  
Allies: his Bodyguards, the Great Leader,  
Enemies: his Subjects, the Green Flag Commando  
Equipment: Browning Hi-power (gold-plated)  
END:5  
REF: 3  
INT:3  
STR:5  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Competent

## Cherry Blossom (Japan)

RE: *Follow-up report on the activities of the 'Cherry Blossom' Project, 23.09.03*

CONFIDENTIAL

Attention: *Professor Sir Edward Foster*  
Subject: *Assessed motives and threats*  
cc: *Dr Rupert Rosbotham, Mr Peter Lee, Ms Justine Waddell, Mr Frank Lewis*

*In response to the series of inquiries made to my initial report on the discovery of a suspected second Project in the Free Asian Peoples' Alliance, it has come to my attention that the source of unsolicited 'Twenty-third Letter person' activity was instead located on the main island of Japan. This puts a serious new angle on the 'Twenty-third Letter person' situation in Asia. Until recently, it had been assumed that the Americans would be responsible for policing the Japanese interest in the 'Twenty-third Letter person' community, particularly their private concerns, but it would seem that events have conspired to outpace both of us. As yet we have no proof that the Americans or the Japanese know of our monitor operation in this area, therefore the field agents have been left in place. The activities of this group over the last decade has been to correct many of the suppositions that had existed in this organisations prior to such a detailed survey. The level of information that follows is considered 'Eyes Only'.*

'Cherry Blossom', as it has been code-named, appears to operate in an official capacity within the Japanese government, much as many of our civilian counterparts do. They hold considerable powers of detainment and arrest, though they are subject to the same restrictions as the police force in terms of undercover operations. The department ranks alongside the police force in government budgetary considerations, and they are subject to rigorous investigation by an external body every four years. They operate along similar lines to most domestic counter-espionage agencies (FBI, MI5, and the Surète), though they reserve the right to commandeer other civilian forces (notably the police force) to aid an investigation. As a footnote to this, they rarely do so as their relations with those bodies are less than cordial. In the eyes of the government, they are roughly equivalent to the Imperial Bodyguard in standing – indeed, there has been a considerable crossover in membership over the years. Officially, it would seem that His Imperial Majesty is unaware of their existence.

We estimate the current size of the Project to be around two hundred individuals, although the level of security surrounding their operations is of such a level as to make this approximate at best. They operate from a series of buildings which again makes the surveillance difficult though not impossible. Their main base of operations had been in the group of government buildings in Tokyo, occupying the same building as the Criminal Investigation Department of the Tokyo Police Force. I believe that this is a measure to maximise information flow on suspects and to disguise their personnel. They also have holdings in Kyoto, a scientific premises outside Osaka and one other location that is referred to by a Japanese code-name only. This is believed to be another research facility.

Key personnel are very difficult to highlight, since decisions within the organisation are undertaken by a complex series of committees. The head of research at the Osaka base was recently involved in a scandal involving a popular music singer and it was feared that this might have been part of wider action of private concerns against the power of 'Cherry Blossom'. Certainly, the gentleman in question, Dr Takano Owaru, has kept a very low profile since. Their head of security, resident in Tokyo, is another potential target. Suwora Hajime is an ex-Imperial bodyguard with a very distinguished service record. Unfortunately, there have been some low-level implications about the nature of his transfer and his close friendship with the Imperial Princess. In our opinion, there was nothing to it, but some tactical press manipulation could easily eliminate him should the need arise.

As regards the ordinary Project members, operatives undergo a tough mental and physical selection procedure, before embarking on three years of intensive training. This alone makes them formidable opponents, on a par with several nations Special Forces, though the concentration is on mental rather than martial prowess. Agents are not selected solely on 'Twenty-third Letter person' grounds, indeed the vast majority of members of Cherry Blossom are non-'Twenty-Third Letter person'. The prevailing feeling that we assessed on the Japanese test subjects in our last review would seem to hold true. Psychic powers are fine for animè characters, not ordinary people. Those 'Twenty-third Letter persons' that are selected are usually put into some specialised task force.

The highly effective nature of these operatives has made all 'Twenty-third Letter person' activities in the Japanese sphere of influence extremely difficult. Whilst we were initially concerned as to the private concerns that we knew to exist within Japan, we now have the additional problem of a presumed hostile state agency that has the power to take apart our operations there. It is my recommendation that we approach the Americans with this information and set-up a working party as soon as possible. If nothing else, then it provides an additional scapegoat for later use. The extent of their knowledge of 'Twenty-third Letter person' activities on a world basis is not known, but it would seem from the efficiency that they deal with threats of that nature that these people know what they are dealing with. Pressure on them to sign the Protocols should not be long in coming, given the dangerous possibility of external operations in the near future. The G7 situation should be brought to bear on them in the event of any difficulties.

For more background, please see the accompanying document from one of our agents in the field.

#### **A brief history of 'Cherry Blossom'**

The Project appears to have been the result of the actively expansionist regime that prevailed in pre-war Japan. At least one of the Emperor's ministers, Ryuichi Akane, had been educated in the West and had become fascinated with the work on parapsychology being done at Cornell and UCLA. Since he was later to become a member of the Imperial Japanese Administration and serve on several committees on science and education, he was able to put into practice a small but influential group concerned with testing for potential amongst key test subjects gleaned from the leading schools around Tokyo. The results were poor and the project was put on hold when the Imperial Government began its drive towards a 'Co-Prosperty Sphere' in the late 1930's. Akane was transferred to Military Intelligence and presided over a series of brutally effective counter-espionage operations in the (soon-to-be) People's Republic of China. He is best remembered for his part in diverting resources to a series of experiments in the immediate aftermath of the sacking of Nanking in 1937. He was called to account for several of these inhuman activities (the exact details of which are not established – see below) and was later posted back to Japan.

With the defeat of the Imperial forces and the occupation by Allied forces in 1945, Akane changed his identity to escape the fate of many of his former colleagues (i.e. death for war crimes). Surprisingly, he chose not to go back into hiding or exile and instead regained a position of authority in the Japanese scientific community, though still with a considerable amount of controversy surrounding his outspoken views on the human condition. He postulated in a series of articles given at a conference in Kyoto (though never published) that the human mind is forced to respond to threat in one of two ways, submission or adaptation. What he meant by adaptation was never made clear by his experiments since the results were not conclusive and many refused to co-operate with him in the first place. I enclose a copy of his findings taken from a series of papers (evidently notes made by a student or fellow of the University of Kyoto present) which came into my possession. Suffice it to say, there were those within the post-war administration who saw an outlet for his ideas in order to foster a stronger Japanese people. The education system and public welfare were two areas that saw the immediate effect of this and we still have the echoes of this policy down to the modern day. Akane himself died of natural causes in 1967.

It seems clear that 'Cherry Blossom' was the offspring of Akane's ideas. The police force and army had been hamstrung by the occupying powers and the only state policing force with any real power left was the Imperial Bodyguard. As a counter-intelligence agency, it did not hold much water, therefore the solution seemed clear. Under the joint aegis of the police and the armed services, willing candidates were selected to be the first of a new body, code-named Department 7 of the Internal Administration, which would put into effect these new ideas. They were to be conditioned physically, but especially mentally, to form a new weapon in the hands of the government, to show outside forces that Japan was still a great power in her own way and to prevent any more external influence than was absolutely unavoidable. The transformation into a Project was only a matter of time. Under the considerable duress of training, it was discovered that several of the candidates displayed talents that Akane had originally noted as 'anomalous' in the pre-war work. The exact nature of the testing of these individuals is not known, since Japan did not sign the Calcutta Protocols (or, perhaps, even for precisely that reason). This structure has undergone many

changes during the last thirty years, most notably towards a more active policy versus insurgents and private interests, but the rough shape that coalesced in the 1960's remains today. Unfortunately, their internal security has improved to the extent that we can assess very little of their current operating potential.

It should be noted with great care that they remain a very formidable organisation.

### Cherry Blossom NPCs

Dr Takano Owaru

A late middle-aged man whose work in the field of psychology led to his appointment as head of research at the Osaka Research Facility. His main area of expertise is the quantification of the human consciousness and the applications of this in the field of psionics. Although a brilliant scientist, Owaru has lately begun to experience his mid-life crisis. He dresses about twenty years younger than he should and dyes his hair. His recent affair with the popular singer, Kay, was mostly in his mind, though she did inform the police of his unsolicited attention. This scandal has merited a thorough investigation by his superiors.

Support: Dr Takano Owaru                      Age: 53  
Affiliation: Cherry Blossom Project (Osaka)  
Allies:  
Enemies: The press, 'Kay'  
Equipment: Leather biker suit, Sun-glasses, Yamaha motorbike  
END: 2  
REF: 2  
INT: 6  
STR: 2  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Veteran  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Professional  
Warfare: Novice

Suwora Hajime

A dedicated member of the Project for over two decades, Hajime was formerly in charge of Imperial Security in Kyoto. His close friendship with the female members of the Imperial family led to massive press speculation and his forced resignation. The government realised the potential they might lose (and the action he might take) and instead moved him sideways into 'Cherry Blossom'

as a security consultant. The level of internal security has improved immeasurably ever since. He operates out of the Tokyo offices, where he is respected by many of his peers. Unbeknownst to everyone, he maintains his friendship with certain members of the Imperial family through e-mail (taking a high risk in the process).

Support: Suwora Hajime                      Age: 36  
Affiliation: Cherry Blossom Project (Tokyo)  
Allies: Cherry Blossom staff, Imperial family  
Enemies: The press  
Equipment: Glock 19, Sun-glasses, Armour jacket  
END: 4  
REF: 5  
INT: 4  
STR: 4  
Espionage: Veteran  
Knowledge: Novice  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Veteran

Agent Tosoro Mifune

Mifune is a police liaison for the Project in Kyoto. His brief is to aid the police in any investigation involving potential psi involvement. In recent years, this has included a number of serial killers and possible Powers operations, although Mifune has struggled to make a connection to the relevant corporations. Although he does not know it, Mifune is in serious danger since his investigations have drawn unwanted attention. Nevertheless, he is a keen agent and will not give up until his curiosity is satisfied. He is in his late twenties and tends to wear dark suits (even when off-duty).

Support: Agent Tosoro Mifune                      Age: 29  
Affiliation: Cherry Blossom Project (Kyoto)  
Allies: Cherry Blossom staff in Kyoto  
Enemies: Many Powers  
Equipment: Glock 19, Laptop, Sun-glasses  
END: 3  
REF: 4  
INT: 5  
STR: 4  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 6  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Professional  
Warfare: Competent

## The Randstadt Project (the Netherlands)

This Project is a large organisation which takes its name from the Randstadt region of northern Holland where it is based. Its ethos differs from that of its counterparts in that they tend not to react to intrusions onto their soil and they also seem very well informed about other Projects. This ability to collate information seems to be considerably greater than that of their neighbours.

A typical encounter with the Randstadt Project might consist of lengthy surveillance followed by overt observation; in essence informing the transgressor that their activities are no longer secret. Cases of actual aggression are very rare though their successes can be attributed to their superior intelligence-gathering. Even where there has been actual conflict Randstadt seems keen to brush the incident under the carpet and seldom are demands heard for the ransom of prisoners. Captured psychics describe being held in a large empty warehouse thoroughly dosed with Psilence for about a week before being driven to the airport and deported to their apparent country of origin.

The apparent lack of invasive investigation is the main worry of other organisations such as Whitechapel and the Western Project. Information gathering is so important to their work that they fear Randstadt greatly. Perhaps the Dutch have developed awesomely powerful psychometrists and telepaths with what might be considered a modest investment in psychic resources? The truth can not be fathomed by outsiders.

Randstadt started in 1981 as a small unit within a beleaguered University psychology faculty. A talented pyrokinetic convinced a government minister that his ability to light fires could be harnessed and trained and thus funding for the fledgling project was found. The psychic's name was Martijn Voss, a man was a visionary and he began the Randstadt Project. Voss's first recruits were others like him. In reality Voss was part of a very small Network cell centred about the University. Through his calculated risk and a certain amount of pyrotechnics he had managed to secure his cell with funding, accommodation and a place to begin training a cadre of psychics. Voss died of heart failure in 1990 and was succeeded by his wife (and fellow Network member) Nanci. She

has spearheaded the integration of the Project into the government though she and her cell are now isolated from the Network as a result. Some might suggest that she has become the enemy. Her greatest success came in 1995 when she managed to secure additional funding from a wealthy benefactor. The warehouses that stood empty were refitted and additional staff were trained and headhunted for the Project. Their talents have served them well not only for the government but apparently also for their mysterious benefactor.

Randstadt exists purely for research and although funded by their government they do not perform an official role other than through the detailed remote scanning reports that they pass onto the security services. Randstadt does not have a regulated breeding program and do not place their personnel under the stress of being locked away from family and friends. Attendance is strictly voluntary though staff are sworn to secrecy. This highlights another important difference; all people at Randstadt are staff. Espers are not treated like circus dogs with a talent for jumping through hoops. Everyone has a role to play in the future.

The Project is based in a large system of converted warehouses in Leiden. These buildings house administration, security and research. The warehouses are monitored by a perimeter guard made up of dogs, humans and espers. There are perhaps 800 staff who live in the surrounding area and a further 300 who live in the surrounding cities of the Randstadt. Randstadt has few resources to call upon and no military to back up its plays other than meagre security resources. They don't have helicopter gunships or military vehicles and every cost must be counted against an ever-decreasing budget. There is no standard equipment but security personnel can be armed with Sig-Sauer P220 pistols and Steyr Aug assault rifles.

Randstadt does not understand the Esper Phenomenon. They desperately seek to discover the secret behind it though they have become adept at nurturing the talents when they manifest. They cannot conceive of their role in the grand schemes of the other Projects and seek only anonymity to develop their understanding of this next step in evolution. Randstadt has no alliances within the conflict and that leaves them vulnerable. They have some links with the Network in Continental Europe.

**Randstadt NPCs**

Nanci Voss is the 'director' of the Project. She is a short and overweight woman in her early forties with mouse brown hair and grey eyes. She wears casual clothes unbefitting her station but indicating the university origins of the Project. Nanci is very protective of her charges and cooperates with the government. Due to a specific condition related to her work and the over-use of her abilities with relation to her daughter, Nanci will be constantly at a high level of stress. This means she may be subject to headaches, dizziness, nausea or erratic moods.

Peter Torgney is the prime researcher with the Randstadt Project. He is a stocky man with longish brown hair, an overly large moustache and a wardrobe of ties from the 1970s. He has the air of university researcher and his informal manner has influenced the whole Project. He enjoys the quiet academia and the feeling of power.

Mari Voss, the daughter of Nanci and Martijn, is a young psychic with growing psychic talents and a sullen restlessness that threatens to boil over. A couple of years ago she became dissatisfied with life at the Project and sought a way to escape. To her regret, Nanci was forced to take control of her daughter and forbade her from attempting further attempts to escape. She has reinforced this simple command with repeated uses of her Regent ability. Mari is experiencing high levels of stress due to her enforced captivity and has developed eating disorders and narcotic dependencies. She cannot, however, just run away.

Support: Peter Torgney  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 Equipment: Sensor Probes, Handheld Computer  
 END: 5  
 REF: 4  
 INT: 7  
 STR: 3  
 Psychic Ability: BioFeedback: 4  
 BioRhythms: N, Psychic Healing: C  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Novice  
 Knowledge: Veteran  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Novice

Age:

Support: Mari Voss  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies: Her mother  
 Equipment: A variety of drugs, Knife  
 END: 3  
 REF: 5  
 INT: 6  
 STR: 3  
 Psychic Ability: Psychokinesis: 9  
 Pyrokinesis: P  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Professional  
 Social: Veteran  
 Survival: Competent  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Competent

Age:

Support: Nanci Voss  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 Equipment: Clipboard  
 END: 3  
 REF: 2  
 INT: 5  
 STR: 4  
 Psychic Ability: Telepathy: 7  
 Regent: V  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Professional  
 Social: Veteran  
 Survival: Novice  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Unskilled

Age:



## The Siberian Project and the HorrorShow (Russia)

In 1945, three scientists in the heart of Mother Russia opened fourteen steel boxes and their eyes greedily devoured the contents. The boxes had come all the way from Hungary and Berlin, the spoils of a war that cost millions of Soviet lives. This was the research that had been carried out on their countrymen and their allies during the war years without the burden of human rights or law. It took them two years to decipher the papers and prepare a proposal for further research. The potential was incredible they said and despite their critics, who voiced their opinions on breaking out into this untried area of science, they were granted five years to show a result. They took over a village called Kozhedub, a hundred miles north of Kirov and had their material shipped up there. The required biochemicals took almost a year to be collected and the acquisition of a suitable subject did not occur until they were almost four years into their allotted time. With just over a year until they were to present their findings they began attempting to train their only subject, Nikita Leonov, a young man with slight psychokinetic powers. He was undisciplined and nine times out of ten he wasn't able to produce the goods. To make matters worse he was prone to fits of depression and if pushed would flatly refuse to perform.

On the day Leonov performed like a magician. He astounded the critics and as he retired from his performance they signed the accords that would ensure a considerable proportion of the defence budget would be invested in psychic research. All Leonov did was stop a gun firing at him by holding back the hammer.

Kozhedub was renamed Location 23 but was known informally as the Village, and expanded to the size of a large town as supplies and personnel were shipped in day and night. In 1958 they were joined by some British scientists who defected to the Soviet Union in order to take advantage of the greater research facilities. In the West the Terata Experiment had been branded a failure but they brought with them the secrets of biotechnology and when this was added to the basic biochemical research begun back in 1946, the Terata Experiment entered a new stage that would not fail.

In 1980 the end began. Leonov, now in his sixties had enhanced his meagre psychokinetic talents with the use of biochemicals. The substances were uncontrolled and not designed for human consumption. Within days cancerous growths had sprouted upon his living flesh and without knowing why he hid them from his doctors. His new sickness was not only physical. In two months there were six deaths, two orderlies who "interested" him and four psychics who identified him as the murderer. He also drew others into his madness and communications with that village 100 miles north of Kirov ceased in 1985. A platoon of thirty soldiers was sent to that village and none returned so they sent another thirty. The brief reports radioed in by the troops described mountains of flesh that flowed, psychic hellfire and men that looked like beasts. These soldiers did not return either and can now be found defending that village from their own countrymen. The air force sent over reconnaissance 'planes, but after the second one vanished without a trace this stopped. Attempts are made from time to time to photograph the village from satellites, their images show an empty expanse of grass where the village stands, but it is known to remain there. The Village now has three main buildings which were originally the hospital, the college, and the barracks. Nowadays it is just all madhouse. There are about a dozen cottages, some are ruined, while others are occupied. However it has been struck from official maps and a fence was erected about it lest anyone stray too close to the madness. A rumour of a nuclear or biological weapon accident was started to keep outsiders out. A persistent haze or mist makes it impossible to observe the village from the fence no matter what instrument is used. A remote viewer would risk everything in attempting to use his power to study the Village. Even non-psychics can feel the oppression in the air as they approach. The place is referred to by Western psychics as the HorrorShow.

Despite the surrounding security, things do come and go from the village. The HorrorShow strike without pattern and take prisoners back to their dreaded Bodyshop for modification. An encounter with them almost always involves Psychotics or minor Terata. The experience may be the worst thing ever to happen to a group of PCs. What goes on in the village today is completely unknown. Leonov rules the Village and is fit and healthy, although he now is scarcely recognisable as a human being.

Occasionally an eager general suggests using a nuclear bomb to 'sterilise' the village, but these proposals are always turned down as the fear of the consequences of failure is too high. The Calcutta Protocols were drawn up to prevent catastrophes like the HorrorShow. Sadly by ignoring them the Soviet government was responsible for creating something terrible.

For PCs a visit to the village should be a descent into a realm of unearthly horror and wonder. A journey into the village should not be a trivial adventure but the climax to a campaign. No-one enters the Village and leaves unchanged.

### **The Siberian Project**

The Siberian Project was opened in 1993 as an attempt to recoup some of the investment that went into that Village. It is controlled directly by the Russian military government and their research is monitored, advised and safe. Its location is secret and they investigate the many ways that remote sensing can aid military intelligence. It is old research with results familiar to other Projects, stifling but safe. To curry favour with its masters the Siberian Project carries out some intelligence and security missions. In contrast with the Nevada Project, the Siberian Project never sends psychics out into the field believing them to be too unpredictable and too sensitive. Morale among the personnel is low, only Russian patriotism and fear of the HorrorShow keeps them going. The atrocities committed by Hitler's armies have left lingering scars in the Russian psyche, hence the Siberian Project's intense hostility towards GSG-13.

The Siberian Project is based in a windowless nondescript grey building in an army base near Novosibirsk. It is surrounded by a 3 metre electric fence. The Siberian Project has a meagre budget, just enough to purchase vital equipment and pay minimal wages. Its laboratory equipment and computers are old and tatty. The soldiers assigned to the Siberian Project carry standard Russian army issue equipment. The most common firearms are AK-74 rifles and PSM pistols. Some image intensifiers are available. The Project has a Zlin limousine, two GAZ jeeps, four trucks, a BTR-80 APC and a Mil 17 helicopter. At any one time several of these vehicles are unserviceable. Non-Russian PCs will be shocked by the shabby and backward facilities of this Project.

The Siberian Project was created to try to catch up with the rest of the world's research. They are also training so they can perhaps retake the Village. The personnel assigned for this plan are very unenthusiastic about this task. Considering the hundreds of lives that have been lost at the Village and in attempts to retake it in the past, it is not surprising. If the Siberian Project were to somehow capture psychic agents from another Project they may be motivated in one of two ways: the first would be to ask for asylum and attempt to escape. The second would be to send the unwary agents to Kozhedub in their stead. For either to occur, Dr Beriev would have had to drink a lot that day.

### **Siberian Project NPCs**

Dr Oleg Beriev currently controls the Project. He is a beefy man with a severe drink problem and often neglects his body hygiene. When sober he is a competent and thoughtful administrator and a brilliant psychologist. His younger brother is a major figure in the Russian mafia. Beriev has a heart condition and requires frequent medication. He wants the best for his people but feels powerless to resist political pressures.

Support: Oleg Bariev

Age: 56

Affiliation:

Allies:

Enemies:

Equipment: Stained suit, Hip-flask, Medication

END: 3

REF: 2

INT: 6

STR: 3

Espionage: Novice

Knowledge: Veteran

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Unskilled

Lt. Ivan Skavar has been with the Project for more than a year. He has been ordered to assist in planning an assault on the Village. When the time comes, he is to participate in the attack. This prospect so frightens him that he plans to go on the run before then. If offered a way out he will take it. He is a pale, prematurely balding young man with no perceptible sense of humour.

Support: Lieutenant Ivan Skavar  
Age: 29  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
Equipment: PSM Makarov, Packet of cigarettes  
END: 3  
REF: 4  
INT: 3  
STR: 3  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Novice  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Competent

The best esper in the Project, Katarina Ossipov is a brave and kindly woman. She takes great pride in her appearance. Unfortunately, thanks to her lack of Western cosmetics and clothes, she resembles nothing so much as a drag-queen, which may cause PCs to consider her a source of amusement. She must sit in an absolutely dark and silent room to use her powers. Sometimes what she sees in the worlds future unsettles her and for that reason she has remained childless.

Support: Katarina Ossipov  
Age: 61  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
Equipment: Pearl necklace  
END: 3  
REF: 2  
INT: 2  
STR: 2  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 4  
Precognition: C, Telelocation: P  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Unskilled  
Warfare: Unskilled

## Project Carl Gustav (Scandinavia)

Scandinavia has a reputation as a nice, quiet place where no-one would bother anyone - certainly not their neighbouring states. They like to keep it that way. Norway, who suffered grievously under the German jackboot in World War II pursues its affairs quietly and resolutely. Sweden, with its policy of well-armed neutrality is a soft but strong voice for moderation in world affairs. Finland, invaded by the Russians in World War II, and through necessity allying with Germany, is determined to survive and prosper whatever the world throws at it. Denmark, secure and at peace with all its neighbours is content to let the world pass on by. All, to a lesser or greater extent, feel ties to each other. Some because of a shared heritage, others because of a shared, harsh environment that breeds like minds.

At the beginning of the Cold War, these nations faced the spectre of the oppressor again - but in a strange battle. Wars were fought with spies, dogma, and perhaps most effectively of all - with publicity. The Scandinavian states knew that one incident, or one technological breakthrough could lead to war. All armed themselves as well as they could. In peace, matching arms with your enemy works well; in war they needed an edge - and Dr. Christof Bergholdt provided that edge.

Dr Bergholt was a Swedish medical doctor who volunteered to fight for the Finns in World War II. In the Arctic conditions, he witnessed suffering and death. But he also witnessed miracles, wounded men who made it back to base after being out in the elements for days and scouts who seemed to have an unnatural talent for finding the enemy. His scientific mind could explain a few instances as luck, but there were some people who could do the impossible.

After the war he started to study humanity for the answers to the questions he had. At the Swedish Institute for Defence Medicine, he explored the tolerances of the human body which demonstrated why humans could survive under certain conditions. He found some subjects who could survive beyond these normal human limits. He found that the majority were from the far north of the country, as was to be expected, a harsh land breeds a hardy man. But they could survive conditions that would leave the strongest, fittest man a block of ice. He presented his evidence to the Swedish General Staff, with this conclusion:

*"All the evidence points to one factor, and one alone. These men can survive against the odds, not because their bodies are shaped by the wind and snow - but because their Minds are shaped by the wind and the snow. Shaped by the isolation of snowbound nights, of hunting for food in a land that wishes them dead, where life survives in so few places that a man could walk for a hundred years and find not a living soul. The answer is in the mind. I'm not going to expound any strange, far-fetched explanations of 'Psychic powers' that our American friends are wont to rave about. The facts are there. They have been verified. If we are to find out the secret that makes these men as resilient as they are, we need to fund research into the matter.*

*You can look at the numbers and say - "Oh well, interesting - but we have more pressing matters". I say "No." What matters is a state called 'The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics'. Our cousins in the Baltic suffer under their oppressive rule. Finland - emasculated by them. God! They're only a hundred miles from our border!*

*If they come for us, and they say they will, we need men like this. Men who can survive where no man should survive. I tell you, if we have the ability to gift our armies with this power - no-one would dare pay the cost of invading us. The life and freedom of future generations rest on your decision.*

*Thank you, gentlemen"*

Bergholt got his institute, located in Uppsala, and set to work. After ten years he had come to the conclusion that the harsh Arctic lands had not bred Supermen, but had weeded out the unfit. Some of the fittest people were, of course, the Supermen, which was why there was a significant proportion of them in the North.

With his dream dashed, Bergholt began to lose interest in his work, and it fell to one of his underlings, Dr. Mara Unswinn, to make the obvious link. That was, if the environment did not induce people to become Supermen, then the genes for the condition, and many other 'psychic' conditions were spread throughout the population. She initiated a genetic sweep throughout Scandinavia, under the cover of Polio vaccinations. Sweets were placed almost in reach of children, to see if there was any telekinetic response, heating was set up too high and too low, to elicit a thermokinetic response, and, amongst many more tests, cartoons were silently projected in an adjacent room, to see if there was any remote viewing capability in the subjects.

With only a combined population of 19 million in the 1950s, the Institute gathered 213 espers over that decade, mainly because of their scientific method of their search. The majority of espers were those with remote viewing and enhanced endurance, mainly from the North. Some viewers were so good that the Swedish and Norwegian navies started using them to hunt for intruding Soviet submarines, a use to which they are still being put today.

Now, in the 2000's, the Scandinavians have about 350 espers of varying disciplines, and with further refinements to their methods, fewer of the make-up is from the North, which has led to some friction between some factions in the Institute. Currently the Scandinavians are undertaking a covert survey of the Baltic republics, with an eye to offering promising people scholarships to the Institute. With closer links to the Baltic states, there is a possibility that they may be offered official entry to the Institute, but this is likely to cause controversy due to the possible security risk.

### **Carl Gustav NPC's**

Freya Gundarsson is a 19 year old Swede who is deeply unhappy with the Project. She has not accepted her indoctrination and finds Carl Gustav's militarism and secrecy in conflict with her own ideals. The last straw is a proposal to put her to sea in a submarine despite her dislike of enclosed spaces (to be fair this is far too mild to be called claustrophobia). Before this happens she will flee. Gundarsson is very serious in manner and shy. Her blonde hair is worn in a bun and her cheeks and forehead are marked by acne.

Support: Freda Gundarsson

Age: 19

Affiliation:

Allies:

Enemies:

Equipment:

END: 3

REF: 3

INT: 5

STR: 2

Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 5

Telelocation: C

Espionage: Professional

Knowledge: Professional

Social: Competent

Survival: Competent

Technical: Novice

Warfare: Competent

## The Whitechapel Project (UK)

Frank,

*I'm glad that stuff on our German friends was of interest. Yeah, we heard the Montell detonation over here in sunny California. Here's some more from the same source. This time he's turning his considered opinion on the Brits, note the difference in tone. There are some interesting new things, like he's tried to rate the powers of the Espers like those 23rd Letter people did and the HorrorShow data is new to me. I am sure someone from inside Whitechapel told him this stuff, my guess is that it was Benedict Jr. But you still need to take it with a pinch of salt, for example, I was in the Bureau when the Spook Squad was still screwing about and they never warned Whitechapel about anything, they never knew it existed. Still, a lot of this is good, hard data and has been independently confirmed. So use it however you want, but remember you didn't get it from me.*

What would this guy say about us?

Regards  
Jake

### Britain's Part in the Creation of the Esper World Order

The Whitechapel Project was founded in 1945 among the ashes of the Second World War. German scientists, pioneers in the fields of genetics and applied psionics were recruited, given sanctuary in the name of science and provided with elaborate cover stories. These men were all veterans of Projekt Krystall.

Doctor Saul Benedict, friend of Churchill and associate of the SPR, was appointed Director of the Project. No expense was spared during the construction of the research laboratories at Huntingdon and once they were complete, Benedict installed Doctor William Bernard (Albrecht Bernhardt) as Chief Scientist.

Over the decades, the Whitechapel Project has redirected its resources towards new ends. Originally a research centre for the advancement of the understanding of psi phenomena, it has developed what can only be described as a standing army and a progressive charter. This charter is a blueprint for a new world order based on psychic powers.

Whitechapel has been based at three locations, only two of which it still maintains. The administration building on Fieldgate Street, Whitechapel in London was the first safehouse where the scientists Bernhardt and Werner lived and performed their preliminary preparations. In 1948, all research was moved to the newly opened Huntingdon Centre and the Whitechapel building was relegated to a storage facility. Fourteen years later Huntingdon was closed down and all administration moved back to Fieldgate Street.

In the late sixties, with the signing of the Calcutta Protocols, Whitechapel opened the Angel Centre (in direct contradiction of the signed protocols). This heralded the production of the stage three Terata. The Angel Centre is also notable as being the first place where the Screamer was developed.

### Notable Historical Events

**1950s:** Whitechapel's very own Frankensteins repeatedly attempt to create a superbeing. Bernhardt donates his own cells to this end. All that results are dead monstrosities. Eventually some live freaks emerge from their surrogate wombs. These are the stage two Terata.

**1958:** The defection of Bernhardt and Werner to what is now known as the HorrorShow ushered in a new regime of paranoid security within the Project. All personnel must submit to Scanning on request.

**1960s:** The existing stage two Terata were placed in cold storage due to a deep-seated fear of what they might beget. None of the Terata were intentionally sterilised.

**1965:** The stage three Terata are created and released in the Huntingdon Incident.

**1975:** The American FBI's Spook Squad warned its British counterpart of the other world Projects' abilities and intentions. This news so alarmed Whitechapel that they battened down the hatches to prepare for an onslaught of psychic espionage.

**1986:** Whitechapel unleashes an offensive against the HorrorShow. This is the first time the Psychotics are employed.

**1996:** A Whitechapel hit squad eliminates the authors of the 23rd Letter, a book which tried to expose the Psilent War.

**1999:** Geister Dreizehn interrupts a Whitechapel mission on German soil. This precipitates a short but brutal conflict that claims the lives of forty-eight Whitechapel agents and an undisclosed number of GD agents.

**2005:** Esper 9 are outed after one of Whitechapels subsequent moves against the HorrorShow. *[Frank, do you know what this is about? I never heard anything-Jake]*

### **Whitechapel Beliefs**

Whitechapel believes there are three American projects. One is in California and another in Florida. They believe the third Project is based in the Area 51 base in Nevada and responsible for the infiltration of Snowbird [careful what you tell the Canucks-Jake] but have no more data.

Whitechapel believe there is only one Russian/Soviet Project. The division between the HorrorShow and the Siberian Project is in name only. Both are therefore enemies. Following the conflict with GSG-13, Whitechapel has considered the German Project actively hostile.

### **Whitechapel Resources**

Just over two thousand people work for Whitechapel though most believe they are working for MI5, MI6 or another shady part of the British MoD. Six hundred work out of the Angel Centre while seventy eight are located in the administration building on Fieldgate St. The Angel Centre has quarters for a thousand more in barracks hidden in a deep underground bunker. These spaces are for the Chosen, the Seraphim, who will be the heirs to the Earth.

### **Whitechapel Assets**

The Angel Centre is one of the greatest assets. Its laboratories and training centre are second to none and the technologies are state-of-the-art, stolen from any nation or company that has not protected their research from psi intrusion. They have access to a flotilla of vehicles including four transport helicopters and two small passenger jets.

### **Whitechapel and the Military**

Through their affiliation with Military Intelligence, Whitechapel has only to ask and the British Army is ready to strike. SAS and SBS commandos are frequently sent out to exterminate its enemies.

### **Whitechapel Finances**

Perhaps the weakest aspect of Whitechapel is its budget. Though it can procure a large chunk of the defence, education, research and 'miscellaneous' funds, it does find itself strapped for cash. Most of its employees are therefore salaried by other departments.

### **Whitechapel Policies**

Whitechapel intends to contain, control and conceive. They wish to contain psychics by kidnapping and blackmail. They keep them cloistered together. To control them they paint a picture of an evil world with the Project as their sole protector. They wish to conceive a new race of psychics using the best genetic stock available. If these directives mean breaking a few laws, so be it.

### **Research and Development**

Whitechapel has the second most prolific research and development program. They are the premiere body on psychogenic phenomena and eclipsed only by the HorrorShow in their use of genetic manipulation. They have been making increasing progress in the fields of bioelectrics and neuromechanics (controlling machinery).

### **Whitechapel 's Tasks**

Whitechapel is tasked with providing backup to the MI5 and MI6. In addition they have taken other domestic tasks for internal intelligence purposes. Backing up Scotland Yard is an unprecedented and sadly necessary role. They have been assigned with investigating the increasing number of unsolvable crimes. Of course, this makes it easier for them to hide their own breaches of the law.

Their brief with MI5 is to provide Britain with defence against assaults from within such as Corporate Powers and the fledgling Network. In providing a psychic backup to MI6, they have

gained much insight into the working of the other Projects.

### Whitechapel Personnel

Professor Sir Edward Foster Age 58, Director

Foster is a Professor of Parapsychology with a specialist field in neurology. Foster's pet project is in Ganzfeld Theory - sensory deprivation in order to heighten psi response. He attained the post through the traditional channels, brilliance in the field and a dedicated ambition. Foster's attitude is similar to Saul Benedicts' - progress and the advancement of knowledge is worth more than anything.

Foster is a thin man with a noticeably crooked nose. He is fifty-eight but wears his age well, helped by a regimen of good food, regular exercise and the tender ministrations of a psychic healer within the Project.

Support: Professor Sir Edward Foster Age: 58

Affiliation: The Whitechapel Project

Allies: The British Government

Enemies: Potentially anyone

Equipment: walking stick

END: 6

REF: 2

INT: 7

STR: 2

Espionage: Novice

Knowledge: Veteran

Social: Veteran

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Novice

Doctor Rupert Rosbotham, Age 49, Deputy Director, Chief Scientist

Rosbotham is a neurosurgeon who became involved with the Project in the sixties as a technician. His insights directly resulted in the creation of the Screamer and his career has reflected his auspicious if sinister intentions. His budget for research comprises a considerable amount of the total Project resources and his experiments into the use of dead or dysfunctional psychics for other purposes is well received if morbid. His results are invaluable, if extremely unethical. Rumours abound regarding the source of all his materials.

Rosbotham is a small man with small precise fingers, wire-rimmed glasses and piggy, squinting eyes. His skin is pale and he looks unhealthy.

Support: Dr. Rupert Rosbotham Age: 49

Affiliation: The Whitechapel Project

Allies: The Angel Centre

Enemies: People with morals.

Equipment: latex gloves

END: 4

REF: 3

INT: 5

STR: 3

Espionage: Competent

Knowledge: Veteran

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Untrained

Megan Llewellyn, Age 45, Human Resources - Angel Centre

As the face of the HR section, Megan is present to deal with any problems that arise regarding the accommodation, pay, benefits and personal problems that the psychics within the Project might discover. She runs the business honestly and carefully, making sure that the covert plans of the hierarchy do not appear in her mind so she can permit thought scans with little or no apprehension, a great asset in her line of work.

Megan is a mature but very attractive woman standing almost six feet tall. Though she is easy to look at her stature and occupation can intimidate, an impression she works hard to remove. She comes across as honest, interested and compassionate.

Support: Megan Llewellyn Age: 45

Affiliation: The Angel Centre

Allies: The Whitechapel Project

Enemies: None

Equipment: notebook, mobile phone

END: 3

REF: 3

INT: 4

STR: 3

Espionage: Competent

Knowledge: Competent

Social: Veteran

Survival: Novice

Technical: Novice

Warfare: Novice

Julian Marshall, Age 32, Operations Manager

Julian organises the movement and training of Project personnel. He seldom gives briefings but will take great interest in new recruits and those who show promise. As an esper he finds it easy to determine the true intentions of those he meets. He used to be quite reserved with the use of his talents but experience has proved to him that the meek get killed.

Julian is in the prime of his life with only one blemish, a blooded eye, to mar his handsome features. A build-up of stress during a psychic duel that left his entire team dead and a Psychotic free to kill twenty others caused this injury, a constant reminder of the dangers that new recruits will face.

Support: Julian Marshall                      Age: 32  
Affiliation: The Whitechapel Project  
Allies: Whitechapel personnel  
Enemies: all Psychotics  
Equipment: Browning Hi-Power  
END: 4  
REF: 4  
INT: 4  
STR: 5  
Psychic Ability: Telepathy: 3  
Reception: P, Transmission: C, Extract: P  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Veteran

Brian Tupper, Age 43, External Operative

A representative of the British working classes, Brian is a former soldier with the British Parachute Regiment and an agent of MI6. He is a blunt and plain-spoken man, wary of his comrades from privileged backgrounds. Brian Tupper has served as an undercover agent throughout the British sphere of influence and has killed many times. His black hair is short and spiky and he is irritable and aggressive in private, but a master of disguising his emotions on duty. Recognising the potential of the espers, he once naively asked if he could be trained as a telepath. As a result of this question, he was widely derided. Despite his acknowledged competence, he is figure of fun to the Project's upper-class controllers.

Support: Brian Tupper                      Age: 58  
Affiliation: The Whitechapel Project  
Allies: people he likes  
Enemies: everyone else  
Equipment: pistol, knife, another knife, garotte  
END: 6  
REF: 4  
INT: 2  
STR: 5  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Novice  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Professional  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Veteran

### ESPER-9

Esper 9 were born in 1968. Nine children, all the result of the most advanced breeding program of the time, were moved from the Angel Centre to a government-controlled orphanage. Each of the children possessed psychic abilities, each of them descended from a great scientist and a powerful esper, each of them programmed to be Whitechapel's best operatives.

The Orphanage is referred to as The Monastery and many of the staff have taken vows of sorts. Some are genuine philanthropists, some are dedicated teachers and some are hardened killers.

Each of Esper 9 will have at least the following statistics.

END: 4  
REF: 4  
INT: 4  
STR: 4  
Psychic Ability: at least level 7  
Commonly two or three talents at Veteran or better.  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Competent

Individuals within the group will have their own specialities and aptitudes listed in the brief descriptions below.



David Parker; white Englishman, black hair lank and unkempt, grey eyes, thin build and pale skin, blue veins visible, pulsing when tense.  
Regent (Telepathy 9, Veteran +6)

Alan Redmond; blond hair cut short, blue eyes, medium build, good complexion, becomes layered in cold sweat when using talent. Specialist in intrusion and surveillance.  
Implant (Telepathy 7, Veteran +6)

Sara Webb; long auburn hair, green eyes, well-muscled, looks lively and educated. Closes eyes to use power. Trained helicopter and airplane pilot.  
Extract (Telepathy 8, Master +8)

Joy Phillips; African Englishwoman, close cropped black hair, golden voice, muscular and powerfully built, wears tight fitting clothes. Trained to medical degree level.  
Healer + Paingiver (Bio 7, Veteran +6)

Stephen Foster; cropped ginger hair, pale blue eyes, cultured Scottish accent, looks nervous, wears tidy clothes. Blacks out when using power. Specialist in computer systems.  
Psychometry 9 (Master +8)

Simon Benedict; tidy, medium build, looks normal, dresses in poloneck and jacket, no obvious show of power. Absent without leave.  
Telepath (see The 23rd Letter for details)

Elizabeth Bernard; small, tanned with dark hair and almond eyes, looks worried, prone to nosebleeds, affectation of using 'we' instead of 'I'. Holds degrees in Biology and Chemistry.  
Telekinesis (Psychokine 9, Master +8)

There are others of this ability, but few have the physical skills to match their espionage upbringing like Esper 9. With some further fleshing out, Esper-9 may be suitable as a player character group as they are already embroiled in the Psilent War. If they were, as a group, to go rogue and try to join the Network it could be an interesting development.

## Nevada Project (US)

*I think we are all in complete agreement, Project Nevada has achieved much since its inception almost thirty years ago. Without the efforts of its personnel, thousands of American citizens would have died at the hands of terrorists and enemy troops, and of course, this country could have lost a President to an assassin's bullet. Ladies and gentlemen, I applaud them unreservedly.*

*But could Nevada have achieved even more? Let us examine the record.*

*The New York hijacking, a successful mission and a valuable demonstration of our nation's power and determination. But the soldiers who stormed the 777 and defeated the terrorists were mainly ordinary human Special Forces troops. Yes, Nevada's espers used their abilities to gather vital intelligence, to shut down the terrorists' sensors and distract them at a vital moment. But the espers were sitting in a van on the runway and did not board the aircraft. Similarly the precog who warned of the intentions of Abu Jihad never had to leave Florida. If required I can supply people who are just gifted as they were, and often more gifted, and they will never need to step out of my door. I promise you if our armed services need my peoples' help I will make them available at once.*

*And then we must look at how Nevada has used, for what seemed, no doubt, excellent reasons its resources in the field. Iraq, 1991, nine irreplaceable espers lost in a helicopter crash, former Israel, 2002, a Wildtalent dies in Zealot carbombing, Columbia last year, an esper killed in a firefight with guerrillas. There have been others.... Is it wise to expose precious national resources to such risks? Their willingness to stand in the line of fire is admirable, but is ultimately wasteful. Never mind the security implications of an esper being recovered by an enemy.*

*And when Nevada's espers are not in harm's way on the battlefield, how are they used? Tracking Chinese submarines, watching terrorist camps in Afghanistan, looking for Israel's lost nuclear weapons. All vital tasks for this nation's needs. And all tasks which can be done by satellites, airplanes or even paid informants. Is there a large team of dedicated scientists studying the espers? If there is, I haven't read their results. Is there a research project to give normal soldiers esper abilities? I don't think so. Are they enthusiastically trying to increase American access to esper powers by biotechnological means? Apart from a half-hearted and half-thought out idea of pairing off their male and female people and*

*waiting for them to reproduce, the answer is no. But I'm very touched, General Montell is a true romantic.*

*A dedicated Project purely for military purposes is an idea whose time has come- and gone. The idea of sending espers into combat with our troops on the twenty-first century battle field should make no sense. When we go to war my espers will not don fatigues, crawl in the mud or storm onto beaches , but they will serve this country, and we have plans, beyond the imaginings of anyone in the Nevada Project. Plans for psychic operations which will shatter the enemy's fighting potential, make his weapons impotent, leech away his will to fight. Give us the resources spent on Nevada and we will give America GOLDENSTAR and thus supremacy. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.*

*From Dr Anna Sterling's briefing to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the GOLDENSTAR proposal.*

Anna Sterling's description of the Nevada Project's activities is essentially accurate, although her interpretation of them is jaundiced by her association with the Western Project.

Within the Project's compound, the atmosphere is much like any other US military installation; troops drill continuously to the bellowing of NCO instructors, humvees roar around and the rare silences are shattered by aircraft from the surrounding USAF bases. Nevada is actually run rather cheaply since rather than purchasing and maintaining equipment and buildings, it can share the surrounding facilities with other branches of the armed services. For example, its troops are taught close-quarters combat in the same village mock-up as the other special forces based there.

This close integration with the rest of the base has caused security breaches. For example, a Power, United Defense Industries provides electro-optical equipment for military aircraft. Its employees frequently visit Elgin AFB to install or repair devices. Some of them are actually there to observe Nevada activities. Also Delta Force carries out personnel exchanges with other anti-terrorist forces. None of these foreign units have, to date, included any espers. It is quite feasible that this could be attempted and the consequences can only be guessed at.

General Montell leads the Project (or the Force as he sometimes calls it) with a vigorous, hands on approach. He frequently shows up unexpectedly

(unless you are a precog) anywhere in the base to lend support or bawl out his troops depending on his mood. PCs should stay on their toes. Montell is a lean and youthful-looking man for his age, with sharp, hawk-like features. He is very physically fit and plays a mean game of chess. His attitude is perceived as hard but fair. No-one can recall him losing his temper, but no-one wants to see him in a rage either. One aspect of his personality which surprises many people is his love of science fiction, there's usually a paperback space opera novel in his desk drawer. His second wife, Joanna, lives with him in their quarters in the base. Montell has two children, Edward Jr. is a doctor in Delaware, while Katherine is studying history at Oxford. No PC should underestimate Montell, for despite his apparent friendliness, he is ruthless and dispassionate. When it comes to defending or furthering the interests of the US and the Nevada Project, General Montell will fight to win and will not let any finer feelings get in the way.

Nevada Project squads are issued with standard US Army firearms, but the Project's armoury includes a selection of less common weapons which are available to PCs who can use their Negotiation or Management skills or otherwise justify their need for them. The armoury is a squat bunker set away from the rest of the Project headquarters buildings. Its shelves contain cases of M16, MP5 variants and M9s (this is the US military designation for the Beretta M92). There are smaller numbers of M249 Squad Automatic Weapons and M24 sniper rifles. The Project holds about thirty Kalashnikovs. As an experiment the Project purchased twenty Spectre submachine guns in the late 1990s. These Italian weapons are liked by some for their large magazine capacity but the MP5 (and the closely related MP2000) remain the most popular because of the lighter weight and greater familiarity. Some less common weapons such as combat shotguns are kept in small quantities. Of course ammunition and sighting devices are kept for all of these weapons. There are some 'sterilised' weapons, which have had all identification markings that could be used to track their origin back to the Project or even the US removed.

Unlike every other US Army unit, Nevada is authorised to operate covertly inside the US, although this is rare and must be authorised by the President. Nevada missions are usually assigned to it by Joint Special Operations Command, but Montell decides how the missions are carried out.

The Project is constantly exploring ways to expand its role. Nevada personnel have served on warships, submarines and aircraft, and have been attached to various military formations to evaluate their potential. The latest idea is experiment with Nevada teams as the crews of aircraft and armoured vehicles.

### **Nevada Project Personnel**

Nevada's scientific advisor is Professor Ralph Meeker. Meeker, who arranges tests on all new espers who enter the Project, is a respected mathematician and electronic warfare expert turned parapsychologist. He is spoken of in awed tones throughout the military intelligence community. Unfortunately in reality he is lazy and incompetent, but so far has managed to bluff his way through a lengthy career by hiding behind the hard work of others and the excessive secrecy of his work. A good repertoire of jokes and an easy-going manner has also helped, but sooner or later he may be found out by Montell. Most of his staff despise him.

PCs may try to consult him for advice on scientific and technical matters. Meeker will be 'busy' and hard to find. Actually he has gone off to watch a sporting event or to play golf or locked himself in a laboratory and is playing computer games. Should a PC find him he will be cheerful and eager to assist so they will leave him alone all the sooner. Whatever the question, he will spin out an authoritative answer. He speaks quickly and uses a lot of complex phrases, but the PC will leave feeling confident that they have all the answers they need. This feeling generally lasts until they try to apply the information and make any sense of it. If the PCs discover that they have been badly advised and confront Meeker, he will be very sympathetic but will make it sound as though they were too dim-witted to understand.

Ralph Meeker is tall and overweight. To fit his self-created image as a wacky genius he dresses in very casual clothes. He is a keen follower of the local basketball team, the Pascagoula Fishermen.

Captain Francis Anders is General Montell's aide. An air force pilot, he received head injuries while bailing out of his F-16 over Tel Aviv. Although recovered, he now becomes violently ill in aircraft cockpits and is regarded as permanently unfit to fly. It could have been the end of his career, but a

secondment to the Nevada Project has provided him with a new direction. In addition, he is beginning to manifest telepathic powers. A lean man with ugly-looking rough skin, he is very approachable, but a stickler for military codes of conduct and discipline. Montell often delegates control of operations to him. Anders' major character flaws are a grudging resentment of other pilots and a loathing of the Israeli factions which borders on anti-semitism.

Rodney Dibbs is a rising star in the Project, thanks to his well-developed esper powers and general attitude. A well-educated man from a middle-class African American background, he, for reasons best known to himself, often affects an "Gangsta" style patois. He radiates self-confidence, but becomes very serious in combat and will risk his life on behalf of others without a second thought. Dibbs hates Terata venomously and enjoys firing heavy weapons. Obviously, he combines these personal tastes by making a point of shooting Terata with heavy weapons whenever possible.

With her placid demeanour, Staff Sgt. Janice Mottram looks like a housewife in uniform and that is exactly what she is. Her powers first manifested themselves when she was in her late twenties, and as a result she was directed into the Nevada Project. To her own surprise she breezed through training, while being a wife and mother in the evenings, and has risen steadily upwards through the ranks. On her first mission, which was meant to simply observe a terrorist training camp in Ecuador, things went seriously awry. The Nevada team made a fighting retreat and Mottram got to throw grenades and fire her MP5 at their pursuers, while bullets whizzed around her. Although she was frightened, Mottram found this the most thrilling experience in her life. Since then she is continually volunteering for missions. PCs who encounter her will find her gentle, humorous and remarkably gung-ho. She kills her enemies with as much emotion as she kills flies in her family home. To be truthful, she was very bored as a full-time housewife and finds her work with the Project very fulfilling. Her husband Vince and her three sons (aged eleven, nine and seven) live in the family quarters. Vince knows very little about the operations his wife has acted in. Her relationship with Vince is becoming tense as he does not like her increasingly frequent absences and the risks she takes. Also he left a good job with an aircraft company in their home state of Kansas when she was posted to the Project, and he does not

find his current employment as a mechanic on the Project's aircraft as fulfilling as his previous employment. However their reunions when she returns home are always joyous.

Mottram is small, with red hair and a very pink complexion. To retain the necessary physical fitness she must exercise daily and restrict her diet. She is extremely allergic to animal fur. All her children are espers too. At first her gung-ho approach may amuse PCs, later she may start to scare them.

Juan Maria Ortega is a veteran special forces soldier. A surprisingly small and squat man, he is typically aggressive, but inside he's a sentimental animal-lover. He is obsessed with nutrition and will take a great interest in the diets of his troops. He accepts esper powers as just another scientific miracle, and esper as just another type of military specialist.

PCs requiring weapons will probably deal with Master Sergeant Lester Sontag, a sour-tempered soldier with a noticeable paunch. He will not release any weapons without a complete set of correctly filled-in paperwork. However he is a skilled gunsmith and if befriended (hint: talk about firearms in technical detail) will enthusiastically help the PCs with any weapon-related problems. He has a small but well-equipped workshop and several assistants.

Support: Professor Ralph Meeker      Age:  
 Description: Long wavy hair, tanned, overweight, usually wears Pascagoula Fishermen t-shirt  
 Affiliation: Nevada Project  
 Allies: very few  
 Enemies: his own staff  
 Equipment: None  
 END: 3  
 REF: 2  
 INT: 5  
 STR: 3  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Competent  
 Social: Competent  
     Bluffing: Master  
 Survival: Novice  
 Technical: Novice  
 Warfare: Novice

Support: Captain Frank Anders      Age: 35  
 Description: Wears crisply pressed fatigues with USAF/ CSLU insignia  
 Affiliation: Nevada Project  
 Allies: General Montell  
 Enemies: pilots  
 Equipment: Beretta M9  
 END: 3  
 REF: 5  
 INT: 4  
 STR: 3  
 Psychic Ability: Telepathy: 1  
 Transmission: N  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Competent  
 Social: Novice  
 Survival: Competent  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Professional

Support: Lieutenant Rodney Dibbs      Age: 33  
 Affiliation:  
 Allies:  
 Enemies:  
 END:  
 REF:  
 INT:  
 STR:  
 Psychic Ability: BioFeedback: 4  
 Enh. Sense: C, Kirlian Mask: C, Cleansing Fire: N  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Novice  
 Social: Novice  
 Survival: Competent  
 Technical: Novice  
 Warfare: Professional

Support: Staff-sergeant Janice Mottram      Age:  
 Description: Wears floral dresses off-duty  
 Affiliation: Nevada Project  
 Allies: other soldiers  
 Enemies: The enemies of America  
 END: 2  
 REF: 3  
 INT: 2  
 STR: 2  
 Psychic Ability: Psychokinesis: 3  
 Telekinesis: C  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Competent  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Competent  
 Technical: Novice  
 Warfare: Competent

Support: Sergeant Major Juan Maria Ortega  
Description: Moustache, shaven head, tattooed arms and chest  
Affiliation: Nevada Project  
Allies: God  
Enemies: people who are cruel to animals  
END: 3  
REF: 4  
INT: 2  
STR: 3  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Professional

Support: Master Sergeant Lester Sontag  
Description: Wears fatigues  
Affiliation: Nevada Project  
Allies: gun enthusiasts around the world  
Enemies: people who are careless with weapons  
Equipment: Copy of 'Guns and Ammo', Tools, Filing cabinets  
END: 2  
REF: 3  
INT: 4  
STR: 2  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Competent

## The Western Project (US)

*Oh, I hate these places! I wish they'd go back to blue.*

*Yeah, even that last pink, it wasn't so bad, except when they play that whale's belly music. But right now they make me feel like I'm sitting in some kind of fungus.*

*Fungus! Janie, when you've a couple of kids you'll recognise that color. It's snot! We're really sitting the biggest booger in the world! A giant booger with its own stereo... hey Danielle, you okay? Now just take a deep breath and have a good old cough...*

*Agents Danielle Bomba, Jane Hartmann, Ann-Marie Venker, Western Project*

As described in The 23rd Letter rulebook, the Western Project's headquarters is hidden in a building ostensibly owned by the Astraphysics Corporation and has been there since 1985. Astraphysics' star logo is prominent on the outside wall of the building. Anyone who is allowed through the security doors will find themselves in a cool and luxurious reception area, where there are comfortable chairs, scale models and framed illustrations of missiles and military satellites. Beyond this there is an open-plan office and a conference room. The sixty people in this area actually do the scientific and military consultancy work that Astraphysics is known for. This is done mainly for the US government and aerospace companies. These people have a high security clearance and include not only highly qualified mathematicians, physicists, engineers and computer scientists, but also secretaries, administrators and other support personnel. They know the company is a cover for a secret agency though most believe that it is some kind of training centre for CIA deep cover agents. All of them must wear white security passes at all times and are not allowed access to the rest of the building. Beyond this area lies the Western Project proper.

Most Western Project personnel work out of large open-plan offices. Desks are separated by moveable partitions. However there are small secure meeting rooms. All desks must be cleared at night and there are numerous heavy filing cabinets. Sterling and Gleickmann work in adjoining offices with numerous windows which overlook the main office areas. As a gesture of defiance, Gleickmann has used 'essential' charts to cover his windows and

obscure the view in. There are numerous security cameras, even in the restrooms. Uniformed security guards patrol the corridors at all times. All access is controlled by swipecards and no visitor is permitted without an escort.

A 24 hour cafeteria serves excellent food. There are a half a dozen scientific laboratories. A unique feature of the Western Project building is its suite of twelve Blue Rooms (which confusingly are currently painted green). These were purposely designed as locations conducive for remote viewing, although nowadays they are used for various psychic operations. Each room is a gently-lit five metre square with walls, carpet and furniture of a soft greyish green. The rooms are redecorated frequently as fads in colour therapy change. The intent is to provide an esper with a soothing environment free from distractions so that the esper can achieve the appropriate mental state as easily and quickly as possible. Various blues, greys and even pinks have been used in the past, and none has pleased everyone. Unfortunately the current colour is the worst yet, as it reminds most people of something that might grow on food that has sat in the refrigerator too long. Each room could be painted in a different colour but this idea does not appeal to Anna Sterling's sense of order, so every few months they are repainted. The rooms have a sound system which softly plays the psychologists' ideas of relaxing sounds. In the past these have included taped bird song, wind and wave sounds, music (classical, new age and 'easy listening'). At the moment, the luckless esper is treated to a throbbing human heartbeat interspersed with the calls of a grey whale. The effect is oddly like being inside some great aquatic monster.

Each room has discreet sound and vision recording facilities and all conversations taking place inside are monitored. The furniture consists of a large steeply reclined armchair for the esper and an office chair for the interviewer. A remote viewing session lasts a couple of hours at most, any longer and it becomes too tiring for the esper.

The building also houses a weapons firing range, a well-equipped hospital and a large armoury. The security staff, who wear the uniform of a commercial security firm, are armed with Beretta pistols under normal circumstances. The Project relies on fellow agencies for some resources. For example, forensic examinations are carried out for it by the FBI, cryptography and electronic

surveillance by the NSA, while the CIA assists its operatives in foreign countries.

The Western Project's brief is firstly to counter non-military psychic threats to the United States, whether they be foreign or domestic, and secondly to support the rest of the intelligence community by application of psychic powers. Thanks to its human and material resources, the Project has been very successful.

As was reported in The 23rd Letter, the Western Project carries out numerous illegal and immoral operations besides those the US government authorises. These began in the early 1980s and have steadily grown in number and seriousness. The reason for this is essentially the corrupting effect of wielding so much power with so little public accountability. A Western Project director has carte blanche to do whatever he or she feels necessary for US national security and secondly for the good of the Project. Unfortunately most directors, who serve until they retire, die or are replaced by the President, begin to confuse these goals. By contrast, the Nevada Project is integrated into the military command structure and does not operate as a law unto itself (not very often anyway).

The average Western Project member does not gloat over the wickedness of their employer. The majority are unaware of the organisation's misdeeds and take patriotic pride in their work. Those called on for evil actions are usually vetted and brought gradually into a career of crime. Rarely, if espers will be needed for some illegal action in an emergency, they will be bullied or blackmailed into assisting.

After the death (from an undiscovered brain tumour) of her predecessor, Anna Sterling was appointed to the directorship by a President who had heard disturbing rumours about the Western Project. She was bright, honest and unafraid to upset people. In addition she had little enthusiasm for psychic espionage or faith in the espers and if anything their existence seemed to be an affront to her scientific worldview. President Albright expected her to clean up the Project's act. However within six months of stepping into her office, Sterling had ordered the deaths of three journalists and a congressman who were inconvenient to the Project, and was arranging the release of killers with psychic powers from their prisons. Thanks to well-written reports, the President heard nothing of

these and is deeply satisfied with Sterling's progress. Sterling has been Director for three years now and is completely in control of the Project (or so she thinks, she has begun to make a few bad decisions thanks to Mario Xylander's influence).

Sterling's motives stem from a vague wish to see the US continue as the dominant world power. She believes her Project is vital for this, and nothing should be allowed to interfere with it. As was stated in The 23rd Letter, she has little interest in psionics or liking for espers. Eventually she hopes it will be possible to remove psychic powers from those the Western Project does not trust and implant them in into more suitable candidates. Sterling resents the existence of other Projects and has tried to infiltrate as many as she can. Douglas McDonald's treachery is the greatest success but there are minor and occasional informants in several other Projects. She frequently lobbies her friends in Washington to merge her Project and the Nevada Project, with herself in control. As much as she resents the other Projects, she loathes the Network and Powers even more. Her plans to persuade the Terata (including the creatures which are the HorrorShow) to join with her are underway. Messages offering shelter and friendship are being left at locations where Terata activity has been known. As a gesture of goodwill, she plans to leak advance details of the next Nevada Project bughunt. Of course, she, along with the small team of espers and mundanes tasked with this, has completely misread the psychology of the Terata. The Western Project trying to ally with the Terata is like krill attempting to sign a treaty with a whale.

To everyone, Sterling appears aloof, arrogant and in control. She is totally humourless. She spends her little leisure time in her luxurious house by the sea, alone but for a couple of bodyguards and servants. For amusement she reads 'serious' novels and watches TV sitcoms, not so much for pleasure as to understand other people more. Perceptive PCs will release that her soul is wounded by some childhood trauma.

### **Western Project NPCs**

The most physically dangerous non-psychic in the Western project is the Senior Field Agent Warren Skillett. He has a background of twenty years in the Army Special Forces and the CIA (hence he is well-known to army veterans assigned to the Nevada Project). Most of that time has been spent as a thug

and hitman. He is proud of the fact that he has been responsible for the deaths of 89 people ("but 64 of them were ragheads and blacks, so you don't really count them") and hopes to 'make the Century' before he retires. He has worked for the Project since 1998, and originally acted as an escort to a team of espers. On his third mission he shot dead two of his team outside the Chinese Embassy in Stockholm claiming that they were attempting to defect. The truth behind this incident has never been widely discussed in the Project, but Skillett is feared and hated by most Project espers as a result. Surprisingly, his career was not damaged by this incident. In fact most non-esper personnel respect him and he has been regarded as a hero by some. After all, he has saved the lives of other operatives on many occasions. In turn, Skillett respects competence in others and this will even temper his racial views. He is very loyal to both Gleickmann and Sterling.

Skillett dislikes espers intensely, as he fears that they will read his innermost thoughts. If an esper known to possess Reception or Extract abilities is assigned to work with him, he will take them aside at their first meeting and threaten them with death ("if you take one peek inside my head, just one, then they'll never f\*\*\*ing find you"). Of course several espers have dared to do just this, believing that he must be a pervert or addict. As expected they discovered that Skillett has a huge collection of exotic pornography hidden in his apartment. This is widely-known in the Project, although Skillett does not know this secret is public knowledge. However, the real reason for his hostility is still deeply buried in the recesses of this mind. Almost thirty years ago, Skillett was stopped by a highway patrol cop on a deserted road. Although his crime was a simple traffic violation, Skillett shot the cop dead. This was Skillett's first victim and to this day he doesn't know why he did it. He does count this man in his tally.

His favourite weapon is a AUG Para submachine gun. As well as his issue pistol, he usually carries 'my friend Auggie' in his car. He is cunning and can kill his victims by undetectable means if the death needs to look like natural causes.

Skillett is of average height, but very muscular. He has short curly black hair and wears dark sunglasses outdoors. He can be charming and has a pleasant Texan accent, but he enjoys being threatening even more. He and Deputy Director

Gleickmann sometimes play 'Good Cop and Bad Cop' together during interrogations. Skillett is unmarried. He cannot imagine himself in any other career or way of life and dreads being retired.

Professor Phillip Feintuch is the chief scientist. He is a truly gifted physicist, Nobel Prize material in fact, but is insane. This is unknown to the rest of the Project. Feintuch has created a Theory of Everything which explains psychic phenomena and reconciles General Relativity and Quantum Electrodynamics. However he has kept it a secret to everyone but himself. It is written in a series of notebooks which he has wrapped in plastic and buried in his backyard, as he is very fearful of having his theory read. If it is unearthed, he reasons, his usefulness to the Western Project will be over and he will be killed. This is unlikely but these writings would not be cleared for open publication. Feintuch is a lanky and shy man who smiles a lot and speaks in a guarded manner.

Easily the most popular esper in the Project, 'Grannie' Mai Nyugen Harker lived in the Republic of Vietnam until 1970. Her husband Robbie, an American soldier, brought her to his home town in Ohio. The couple were devoted to each other and lived there until 1989 when they were involved in a horrific road accident. Robbie was killed and Mai was blinded. In the days after the accident, Mai developed strong Kirlian sight, enhanced hearing and psychic healing abilities. After her release from hospital, Mai began to use her healing ability to help others and within weeks was a local celebrity. However, accusations of fraud and (untrue) allegations that she demanded substantial payments for a consultation lead to her neighbours turning against her, and she adopted a lower profile. When she was offered the chance of continuing to help others with government sanction she volunteered and relocated to California. She has never heard of the HooDoo Squad.

Grannie Mai is a slightly-built oriental woman with grey hair. She is completely Americanised in dress, manner and speech. Apart from her blindness, she is in excellent health for a woman in her sixties. She is always friendly and cheerful, and seems to know everyone in the Project by name. The only people who do not return her affection are Sterling and Skillett (Jake Gleickmann enjoys watching Sterling grit her teeth when Grannie Mai greets her with a hug during their rare meetings). She is frequently called in to treat injured Project operatives.

Before his powers appeared, Romeo Fatorini, was the arts critic for a local newspaper in Bend, Oregon. He had drawn the short straw to get this job, for which he was highly unsuited as he has no interest in 'girlie stuff', since he would have been a great sports reporter. An American patriot, Fatorini has now thrown himself into his work with the Project, but thinks that it is not sufficiently proactive against America's enemies. He is highly outspoken and well-known for his sardonic (and downright insulting) comments about the senior members of the Project, although he concentrates more on imaginary short-comings than their real ones. He is married with two children.

Davidson McNab is a very reluctant member of the Project, who hopes that by doing his best he will be allowed to return to his original career as a running back with the Hopkinsville Goblins football team. A gentle and somewhat slow-witted man, he is easily persuaded to perform any task the Project wants him to. He and Fatorini are close friends and live in adjoining apartments. McNab and his wife are currently devastated by the death of their baby son. He is interested in any reference to gene therapy due to congenital sickle cell anaemia.

Support: Warren Skillett

Description: Wears unremarkable clothing in dour colours

Affiliation: The Western Project

Allies: anyone who shares his views

Enemies: free people of the world

Equipment: Steyr AUG Para (in car boot)

END: 3

REF: 4

INT: 4

STR: 3

Espionage: Veteran

Knowledge: Novice

Social: Competent

Survival: Novice

Technical: Competent

Warfare: Professional



Support: Professor Philip Feituch  
Description: Balding, tends to favour old-fashioned suits and colourful ties  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
END: 2  
REF: 2  
INT: 6  
STR: 2  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Veteran\*\* = Physics: M  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Unskilled  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Unskilled

Support: Mai Nguyen Harker                      Age: 63  
Description: Usually wears sweatshirts and jeans, broad smile  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
END: 2  
REF: 2  
INT: 3  
STR: 2  
Psychic Ability: BioFeedback: 3  
Psychic Healing: C, Psychometry: 3, Kirlian Sight: V  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Novice  
Social: Master  
Survival: Unskilled  
Technical: Novice  
Warfare: Unskilled

Support: Romeo Fatorini                      Age: 38  
Description: Steel grey hair, wears checked jackets  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
Equipment: copy of 'Sports Illustrated' in pocket  
END: 2  
REF: 3  
INT: 3  
STR: 2  
Psychic Ability: Psychometry: 2  
Object Reading: P, Intuitions: C  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Unskilled  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Novice

Support: Davidson McNab Age: 26  
Description: Shaven head, broken nose, distracted manner.  
Affiliation:  
Allies:  
Enemies:  
Equipment: Football memorabilia (on desk)  
Stats Skill Base  
END: 6  
REF: 5  
INT: 2  
STR: 4  
Psychic Ability: Psychokinesis: 3  
Cryokinesis: C, Molecular Telekinesis: N  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Novice\*\* = Play Football: P  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Novice\*\* = Drive Pickup: P  
Warfare: Competent

### The Rehabilitation Community

Among the most distasteful activities of the Western Project are the Resource Acquisition Missions. RAMs are nothing more than the kidnapping of people, often minors, suspected of possessing useful psychic powers. These are rarely entered into lightly, usually they are carried out if the subject has turned down an approach by the Project, is a foreign national or is being sought by a Power or rival Project. If a quiet disappearance cannot be carried out, then the Project frequently arranges a non-fatal accident and their victim is hustled into an ambulance, never to be seen by their loved ones again. Alternatively faked evidence may be used to frame the esper for a vile crime, then a Western Project representative visits them in their cell offering them a way out.

These people, without exception, are hostile towards the Western Project, so they are not taken directly to the Astraphysics building. Their first home is the Rehabilitation Community. This is ostensibly a refuge for people with difficulties fitting into society and is located on a small nameless island off the Californian coast north of San Francisco. There, a battery of psychological techniques varying from gentle persuasion to brutal threats are used to convince the terrified victims to co-operate. By the end of their stay, most RAM victims believe that serving the Western Project is their only hope and in fact many are now eager volunteers. Not surprisingly, many of the Project's

most ruthless and fanatical operatives have passed through the Community. Hopeless cases who cannot be made to co-operate are either brainwashed and sent to the Low Security Containment Facility or quietly killed. Their bodies are used as sources of scientific study or weighed down and dumped off shore. All of this is kept secret from most of the Project's staff and especially Deputy Director Jacob Gleickmann, although he actually suspects that this is going on. However, Gleickmann is afraid to investigate lest his suspicions be confirmed.

The Rehabilitation Community is a large wooden house. There are rarely more than a dozen RAM victims there at a time. The staff includes a dozen nurses, two medical doctors and a twenty person team of psychologists and technicians. Security is low as there is no way off the island. There are no boats, the sea is treacherous and the mainland is fifteen kilometres away. The only way off is by aircraft and this is how the staff and victims are brought there. Although no aircraft are permanently based on the island, there is a short airstrip and a helicopter pad.

### **The Low Security Containment Facility**

Both American Projects were faced with the problems of dealing with psychics who would not or could not be made to co-operate with them. Then there were the loyal espers who were too old or badly injured to be of use to the Project. There were espers with physical disabilities or personality problems so severe as to make them totally unsuited for service with the Projects. There were captured Network members. Then there were those espers with extremely strong moral, political or religious attitudes against serving with a Project. Such people needed to be kept under control and surveillance. The Western Project's second director, Andrew Packard, had an imaginative idea. It would be expensive to implement but, with the co-operation of the Nevada Project, could be done. So in 1988 the two Projects set up the Low Security Containment Facility, better known to its inhabitants as the town of Panesco, New Mexico.

Panesco had been a remote ghost town in the Sangre de Christo mountains of northern New Mexico. It had been thirty years since anyone lived there and the only access was a narrow and treacherous mountain road, dotted with memorials to drivers who had failed to negotiate its bends.

Severe winter weather often isolated the town from the outside world. A battalion of army engineers arrived spent three months restoring and rebuilding the empty shells of the buildings. Grey, disused houses and shops were painted in bright colours, the potholed and overgrown streets were resurfaced. A water reservoir and a small hydroelectric generator were built by a nearby river. State of the art intruder detection equipment was installed throughout the forest which surrounds the town. In a single day all the residents arrived.

Some of the espers who came to live in Panesco were volunteers, these were Project members who had retired or been invalidated out. Here was a pleasant community where they could spend their lives. Others, the former Network people, the conscientious objectors, the schizoids were not. These people were systematically mentally abused. By a combination of drugs, therapy and psychic implants their memories were substantially altered until they came to believe that Panesco had always been their home. The town was full of evidence that this was the case; photographs, documents and property confirmed that they were perfectly ordinary people in a perfectly ordinary small town. Psilence in the drinking water from a small nearby reservoir and beverages sold in the stores ensured that there was no awkward psychic manifestations to break the illusion. They were also conditioned to see the outside world as a lawless and dangerous place while Panesco is a tranquil haven. These messages are reinforced by the programming on the town's cable TV system.

Today Panesco is home to a thousand people. Among other amenities it boasts a supermarket, a general store/video library, a diner and a post office, all located on its single main street. There is a single school and a chapel, a Protestant church and a synagogue. There is a hall for public meetings which is also used as a cinema. About a hundred of the inhabitants are Project security staff (including some espers). These people occupy positions of responsibility (such as the mayor, priest, bank staff, doctors and police) or control communications with the outside world. The telephone exchange is an old-fashioned but secure manual system, and the post office and sole gas station are run by Western Project staff. The largest employer is a small factory where native American-style dolls and pottery are made. These souvenirs are shipped out by truck for sale at tourist attractions. On Saturdays a bus takes

a carefully supervised party for a shopping trip in the cities of Santa Fe (a three hour drive) or Albuquerque (a four hour drive). Panesco citizens rarely take vacations outside their town and when they do it is usually a part of an organised trip. The churches and the factory both arrange this type of holiday for those interested. The population is growing, both by new espers arriving and by the inevitable births of children. New arrivals are brainwashed into believing that they have here of their own accord, installed in their homes and encouraged to fit in by friendly neighbours. The population is relatively affluent and the quality of life is excellent.

The town is remote, difficult to reach and still marked as abandoned on maps, so uninvited visitors are rare. The area is very beautiful so occasionally tourists, hunters and wildlife watchers do wander in. They always find that the sole motel is full and the sheriff forbids camping. If somehow they did stay they may become aware of some oddities. For example, for such a tiny community, the Sheriff's department is very large and well-equipped. There are twenty deputies (many are troops from the Nevada Project), and as well as four patrol cars the Panesco Sheriff's Department has two humvees and a MD Explorer helicopter. The ownership of vehicles is very rare, many people do not own a car or truck (this is because only trusted former Project personnel are allowed them). Fax machines and 'Net links are rare and break down all the time. Cell phones don't work in the vicinity. Background checks are carried out on any uninvited visitors to Panesco.

The citizens themselves are odd, many avoid contact with strangers, conversations with others will be awkward. They will be vague about their past and travels outside their home town, either because they are being deliberately unhelpful or else they genuinely don't have a past. Some exhibit eccentric behaviour. A very observant visitor may notice that the population doesn't match the ethnic backgrounds of the nearest towns. Some citizens speak with accents which don't fit in with their apparent background. For example, the diner is managed by Lorenzo Santini, who despite claiming to have lived in Panesco all his life, sounds like a resident of the Bronx.

The inhabitants who were brought there without their consent are often troubled. Many have suspicions and strange thoughts but do not want to

risk disbelief by voicing them. The security staff are alert for signs of rebellion or questioning of authority. Should an escape take place then the Western Project would be informed and a ruthless manhunt will ensue. In reality this may not happen, many of the security staff have grown fond of the lifestyle in Panesco and are sympathetic to their 'fellow citizens'. A captured escapee may be quietly returned by the agents without their superiors being informed. The town's Sheriff, a dark-skinned and thick-set ex-FBI agent called Albert Washington, is almost paternal towards the people and this affection is returned by most of them. Washington is so respected and trusted that many people confide their secrets with him. The command centre and armoury for the security force is a bunker under Sheriff Washington's office.

Nearby, a purpose-built construction houses the Francis X. Burns Veterans' Hospital. This houses Project members who have been so severely injured, physically or mentally, that they are no longer useful. It looks and smells like any other residential hospital. It exists solely to contain, rather than cure, these people. There are currently two hundred patients in residence. There is a small clinic and emergency centre in the hospital for use by Panesco residents.

There are potential crises lurking in Panesco's future. Two citizens are planning an escape. Pamela Vale is a smart but stropy teenager with no psychic power (her mother was a electrokine) who wants to see the outside world. Vale knows there is something odd about her family and fellow citizens, she reckons that the government is testing a drug on the public to keep them docile. Through her part-time job as a waitress in the diner she has met Curtiss Burke, a 60 year old accountant in the souvenir factory. He was already troubled by flashbacks to an apparent previous life as a Mathematics professor in Chicago, but when he developed strange powers after drinking rainwater for a month he decided to seek the truth. Vale and Burke have realised that they should not announce their plans, so they are planning to travel on the bus to Santa Fe and get separated from the others. They plan to lie low for some weeks there before travelling onwards. To throw off their pursuers, Vale will cut her hair short and disguise herself as a boy and pretend to be Burke's son. They are clever enough to pull this off, but will be hampered by a lack of money and Vale's frequent sulks (although Burke is a calming influence on her).

Secondly a Network Cell in Arizona has recognised this place for what it is and are planning a raid when they have obtained enough intelligence on the town. They intend to carry off as many of those who are there against their will as possible. As this will require considerable manpower and resources, they are considering manipulating the Green Mountain Men into assisting. The Network Cell intends that the crazed militia men will take all the blame (and casualties).

Support: 'Sheriff' Albert Washington Age: 58  
 Equipment: uniform, Beretta M9  
 END: 3  
 REF: 4  
 INT: 3  
 STR: 3  
 Espionage: Competent  
 Knowledge: Competent  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Novice  
 Technical: Novice  
 Warfare: Veteran

Support: Pamela Vale Age: 17  
 Description: Ginger hair, impatient and sarcastic attitude, tries to be nice to Curtiss Burke.  
 Equipment: Waitress outfit, Cache of male clothing  
 END: 2  
 REF: 2  
 INT: 5  
 STR: 2  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Novice  
 Social: Competent\*\* = Telling Lies: V  
 Survival: Unskilled  
 Technical: Novice  
 Warfare: Novice

Support: Curtiss Burke Age:  
 Description: White hair, gentle, troubled manner, rather enjoys Pamela's company (she is the daughter he never had)  
 END: 3  
 REF: 2  
 INT: 4  
 STR: 2  
 Psychic Ability: Psychokinesis: 2, Telekinesis: N  
 Espionage: Novice  
 Knowledge: Veteran  
 Social: Competent  
 Survival: Novice  
 Technical: Competent  
 Warfare: Unskilled

## The Hoodoo Squad

*Yesterday's Television*  
 Reviewed by BB Lunge

*'I'll Show my Psychic Powers to the World!' was the title of Monday's Vikki Rivers Show (Channel 5), well it made a change from the usual nuts'n'sluts brawling in front of the cameras, so I tuned in. Vikki, irritatingly bouncy as usual, introduced a parade of trailer park trash and New Age ninnies who claimed extraordinary powers. It turned out that they had confused extraordinary with embarrassingly pathetic. "Ah will bring laight to this lamp with ma mand", proclaimed Bill from Biloxi. He strained, frowned and winced but the light bulb remained even dimmer than Bill himself. Noreen, a batty middle-aged lady with prematurely violet hair, said she could read a note Vikki had written before the show. Judging by her dress-sense this would be challenging enough if the note was straight in front of her, but it was actually in a sealed tin box. Noreen just couldn't do it, "It's not working", she wept and the audience jeered. Next was Alicia, an elephantine teenage girl bulging out off a quite unsuitable black minidress, who could allegedly heat up inanimate objects with her ESP. She sat in front of a glass case containing a jug of water with a thermometer and rolled her eyes at it, for just a minute the mercury twitched but that was it. Alicia showed that at least her vocabulary was mature by calling the heckling audience a load of "BLEEP-BLEEP BLEEPERS", before Vikki's minders hustled her offstage. After the parade of freaks and fraudsters finished, Vikki brought on the illusionist Marcus Venture who without any equipment showed a much more exciting range of stunts which actually worked. He was able to name randomly picked audience members, not through paranormal powers, by applying years of experience of observing people, move coins across a table without touching them, a miracle to some, but a matter of carefully timed, imperceptible foot movements to the table base and so on. His new stage act is called 'Magic Works' and as it has earned him a reputed five million dollars and a series of supermodel girlfriends, it's hard to disagree. But then it was time for the repeat of Coronation Street so I turned over...*

Projects want the public to be ignorant of the existence of espers as it is easier for them to operate this way. The Western Project devotes a fifth of its annual budget to actively suppress knowledge of psionic powers. In the Astraphysics building there is an office where twenty people daily study the newspapers, magazines, computer networks and broadcast media for possible threats to the status

quo. There are also moles planted in news agencies for advanced warning of potential stories. Most reports are too vague and unsubstantiated to be of concern, others are too lurid and exaggerated to be taken seriously by a thinking person. Sometimes though, a feature will clearly report the public activities of a psychic or a talk show guest will demonstrate a paranormal talent on air. Then the HooDoo Squad moves in.

This is just their nickname, coined by Deputy Director Gleickman, but it is widely used by the Western Project agents in the know. Doctor Sterling will sometimes disdainfully refer to "our friends in show business". Members are recruited and usually employed individually. The HooDoo Squad is made up of people who will step into the public eye and demonstrate that psychic powers are a myth and hence those who seem to possess them are deluded or dishonest. Most of these debunkers are professional media manipulators with no apparent official connections. There are journalists, scientists, psychologists and professional magicians.

Occasionally where Western and Nevada Project activities have been publicly observed, again the HooDoo Squad has obscured the truth.

The Western Project, in the guise of the Astraphysics Corporation, makes substantial financial contributions to an organisation called Engineers and Scientists Against Superstition (ESAS). This group sceptically investigates and debunks all kinds of paranormal beliefs. Most members are unaware that they are being manipulated, but its leading members and spokespersons are employed by the HooDoo Squad.

If a psychic has performed uncanny feats in public, the HooDoo team may approach the media reporters who covered the story or sometimes a rival news agency, and claim to be concerned citizens. They will regretfully tell how the journalists have been victims of a hoax or have accepted a mentally ill person's words as fact. They may show how even the most astute and experienced observer can be taken in by a skilful fraud or sincere, but deluded, psychic subject. So a corrective item is published or broadcast and the esper is humiliated publicly. Legal sanctions may be threatened. A dose of Psilence is secretly administered to the esper, just enough make it impossible for them to demonstrate their talent in

front of cameras and witnesses. A few days later, a delegation from the Western Project will arrive on the psychic's doorstep and sympathetically offer a new life in a well-paid position where their talents will be recognised. Few turn this proposal down. No esper recruited this way has yet realised that it was the Project which destroyed their reputation, although some trusted ones have been told. The Network has not made the connection either.

Ironically, sometimes a trusted Western Project esper will be assigned to the HooDoo Squad. This is a last resort, used only when there is no other way to interfere with a public demonstration of an esper's powers. Donald Bassom is most commonly requested for this duty, as he exhibits a similar talent to the Nevada Project's 'Blackout' Tennison (see 23rd Letter). Bassom is a slightly plump young man, who can 'switch on' a psychic jamming field centred on himself. Inside this field, which extends about five metres from his body, all psychic forces simply cease to operate (note to GMs: yes, this does mean that persons and objects inside this range are immune to all psychic attacks). Espers attempting to use their abilities too close to Bassom will feel ill, confused and stressed. A few metres beyond 'the deadzone' esper powers are completely usable. Unlike Tennison, whose field surrounds her at all times without requiring any effort to maintain it, Bassom can activate or deactivate his field at will, but he needs to concentrate on keeping it there, a process which becomes more stressful the more attempts at psychic actions take place around him. Depending on how stressed he is, Bassom's field may gradually contract or suddenly collapse. As his power is short-ranged, when he is to spoil a psychic performance he must be disguised, usually as a media technician in order to get close, and he can play this particular role very well. Bassom is a sneaky and devious man who considers himself a step above the rest of the espers, enjoying using his power to cut others down to size. He was spotted as being an esper by the hidden tests in his aptitude and psychological examinations for the US Internal Revenue Service.

The HooDoo Squad members best known to the public are the entertainer Marcus Venture, science pundit Lucas Weldon and the journalist Kay Williams.

Marcus Venture (real name Martin Fulgosi) is an internationally famous stage magician who can demonstrate that he can duplicate any psychic feat



Support: Marcus Venture           Age: 49  
Affiliation: Western Project  
Allies: Joseph Bianchi (Lawyer to the Mob),  
Enemies: Beverley Hills Police Department, Allura  
a.k.a Jayne Hochfleisch (current assistant), Alice  
Holmes (ex-wife) assistant and mistress  
Equipment: Tuxedo, Pack of trick playing-cards  
END:2  
REF: 6  
INT:3  
STR:5  
Espionage: Professional  
Knowledge: Competent  
Social: Novice  
Survival: Novice  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Untrained

Support: Lucas Weldon           Age: 46  
Affiliation: Western Project  
Allies: University staff, ESAS membership  
Enemies: none  
Equipment: Pocket Calculator, Notebook  
END:4  
REF: 4  
INT:5  
STR:3  
Espionage: Novice  
Knowledge: Professional  
Social: Competent  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Veteran  
Warfare: Competent

Support: Kay Williams           Age: 32  
Affiliation: Western Project  
Allies: US News Editor at CNN  
Enemies: CEO, United Defense Industries  
Equipment: Hand computer, Packet of cigarettes  
END: 4  
REF: 4  
INT: 4  
STR: 4  
Espionage: Competent  
Knowledge: Veteran  
Social: Professional  
Survival: Competent  
Technical: Competent  
Warfare: Novice

## The Third Project (US)

There is one mystery the leaders of the Western and Nevada Projects sincerely co-operate to investigate. The Third Project formed at the same time as Nevada and Western is still a complete enigma. Absolutely no-one seems to know what it does, who works for it or where it is based. It doesn't seem to have a name and no money from the military or intelligence budgets can be associated with it. All documents relating to its founding in 1978 have been destroyed and there have been no known official dealings with it since then. The only surviving man who is on record as knowing about is the man who ordered its creation, ex-President James Earle Carter. In 1988 a team of Western Project espers carried out a comprehensive and highly illegal psychic search through Carter's mind. His memories of the Nevada and Western Projects were largely complete and accurate, but he had no recollection of any other. It can only be assumed that some powerful esper has selectively edited his memories.

The two familiar American Projects tend towards the theory that the Third Project is intended to watch over them and prevent their powers being misused. This belief has lead to the Western Project behaving with some restraint, although as the Third Project has yet to make its presence overtly known this fear of being caught out has declined over the past ten years. A minority in both Projects believes that the Third Project was set up solely to combat the Powers. Fewer still believe that the Third Project is a hoax created to frighten foreign Projects.

Those who believe the Third Project to be a real and active force assume that it has the most powerful espers in the world, but that they are few in number. Presumably their powers are used to cover up all traces of its operations and resources.

In 1990, the Astraphysics Building was infiltrated by a powerful esper who used his powers to cover his tracks. He appears to have comprehensively examined the Western Project's records and personnel files. His presence was only discovered by an alert security guard who noticed a figure, who should not have been there, was visible on some security camera tapes. The intruder, a stout black man, simply walked in and out through the main doors and wandered throughout the building for several days without being challenged. Once his presence was discovered a trap was set, but the man

never returned. He left behind fingerprints which matched none on record and his face was not on any database. He is almost universally believed to have been a Third Project esper keeping tabs on a rival Project.

Actually, the man had nothing to do with the Third Project, his name was Seluke Barton, and his story is a very strange one. Until it is told, players may invent any details they want about this event and indeed the Third Project will also remain a mystery for now.

## Additional Information

### New Skills

These new skill are intended for use in the creation of more rounded characters.

**Law:** Possession of this skill means the Character has studied legal matters. She understands the rights and obligations of individual people, organisations and states. The Character may be employed in the legal profession and can therefore draw up and analyse documents such as contracts, deeds, wills and treaties. She may also represent individuals or groups in a court of law. The Skill has specialisations of Civil, Criminal, Business and International.

**Military Science:** This skill represents a superior knowledge of military technology and methods. It is usually possessed by military officers, rather than those in the ranks and may include specialisations such as Combat Engineering, Armoured Warfare etc.

**Performance:** This skill represents the ability to amuse and entertain others. Specialisations include Acrobatics, Acting, Conjuring, Dancing, Games Mastering, Humour, Musical Performance and Writing. Note that possession of one of these specialisations does not mean necessarily the Character has mastered its techniques, but thanks to charisma and self-confidence, the Character can use it to hold the attention of others. A Performance Specialisation should not be confused with an Artistic Skill.

**Artistic Skills:** These skills indicate that the Character has studied the art beyond high school level. The Character can create artworks and analyse and appreciate the work of others in this field. The Character can instruct others in this art. Artistic skills include:

**Acting:** the study, performance and direction of drama.

**Architecture:** the study and design of ornate buildings and structures.

**Cinematography:** the study and creation of motion pictures, television, video and multi-media productions.

**Dance:** the study and practise of representation by body movements and gestures.

**Fine Art:** the study and practise of painting, photography and sculpture.

**Literature:** the study and practise of prose, poetry and scriptwriting.

**Music:** the study, composition and performance of song and music.

Note that the above are skills in their own right, not specialisations to Artistic Skills. A PC can have a rating of Competent in Literature, rather than Competent in Artistic Skills (Literature).

## Equipment

### Sample Military vehicles

The brief lists of vehicles below are in no way all-inclusive. Details are only approximate, more accurate information can be found in reference books. Those marked with an asterisk exist only in the 23rd Letter World.

#### Ground Vehicles

**Humvee (a.k.a. HMMWV, Hummer)** - Small four wheel drive vehicle used for a range of duties. Can be armed with machine gun and man-portable missiles. Used by US armed forces, allied nations and a few civilians. Driver plus five passengers.



**Jeep (USA), Landrover (UK), GAZ (Russia)** - Smaller, lighter and lower technology than the Humvee but otherwise similar. Found in every army and pseudo-military organisation on Earth.

**Saxon (UK), BTR80 (Russia), Fuchs (Germany), LAV-25 (US), VAB (France)** - Wheeled (4-8 wheels) armoured personnel carriers. Can be armed with machine gun and man-portable missiles (the top of the range LAV-25 has standard equipment of a turret mounted, stabilised autocannon and machine gun). Found in armies world wide. Driver, commander/gunner plus ten passengers.

**M113 (USA), AMX 10P (France), FV-432 (UK)** - Boxy tracked armoured personnel carriers. Can be armed with machine gun and man-portable missiles. M113 is used worldwide by dozens of armies, the FV-432 by Britain only. Driver, Commander/Gunner plus ten passengers.

**M2 Bradley (USA), Warrior (UK), BMP (Russia)** - Tracked Infantry Fighting Vehicles. Standard equipment includes a turret mounted, stabilised autocannon, machine gun and guided missile (most Warriors lack this feature). Used by wealthier nations' armies. Driver, gunner, commander and seven passengers.

**AMX-10RC (France), Luchs (Germany), BRDM (Russia)** - Wheeled (4-8 wheels) armoured cars for scouting. Standard equipment includes a turret mounted, stabilised autocannon and machine gun (the top of the range AMX-10RC has standard equipment of a turret mounted, stabilised 105mm cannon and machine gun). Driver, Commander and gunner (loader also in AMX-10RC). No passenger accommodation, but three additional people can be squeezed inside.

**M8\* (USA)** - Light Tank. Standard equipment includes a stabilised turret mounted 105mm cannon and machine gun. Other unstabilised guns will be fitted around the hatches. Driver, commander and gunner. Used by US and friendly countries. No passenger seats, but three extra people can squeeze in.

**M1A2 Abrams (USA), Leopard II (Germany), T90 (Russia)** - Modern Main Battle Tanks. Standard equipment includes a turret mounted stabilised 120mm cannon and machine gun. Other unstabilised machine guns will be fitted around the hatches. Driver, commander, gunner and loader (no

loader in T90). Used only by wealthiest armies. No passenger seats, but three extra people can squeeze in.

**M1A3 Abrams\* (USA)** - Ultimate Main Battle Tank. Standard equipment includes a turret mounted stabilised 140mm cannon and machine gun. Other unstabilised machine guns will be fitted around the hatches. Advanced armour makes this vehicle invulnerable to man portable weapons. Built in stealth features and countermeasures make all attacks by guided weapons Formidable. Driver, commander and gunner. Used only by US Army. No passenger seats, but four extra people can squeeze in.

**T72 (Russia), M60 (USA), Chieftain (UK)** - Older Main Battle Tanks. Standard equipment includes a turret mounted 105mm or larger cannon and machine gun. Other unstabilised guns will be fitted around the hatches. Driver, commander, gunner and loader (no loader in T72). Used by armies world-wide. No passenger seats, but three extra people can squeeze in.

## Helicopters

**Bell Jet Ranger (USA), MD500 (USA) EC120 (France/Germany)** - Smaller helicopters used by armed forces, police and civilians world wide. Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. Pilot plus five passengers.

**MD Explorer (USA), EC135 (France/Germany)** - Smaller high technology helicopters used by wealthy armed forces, police and civilians world wide. Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. The Explorer is a No Tail Rotor design and is hence unusually quiet. Pilot plus seven passengers.

**AH-64 Apache, Tiger (France/Germany), Mil 28 Havoc (Russia)** - Military gunships. Armed with a turret-mounted gun (stabilised) and missiles. Used only by wealthiest nations. Pilot and gunner only, except for Havoc which can squeeze two people into a small compartment.

**RAH-66 Comanche (USA)** - Very high technology military scout helicopter. Armed with a turret-mounted gun (stabilised) and missiles. Can be equipped for stealth missions and is only used by the US army. Pilot and gunner only, but can be converted to carry three people in its weapons bay.

**Mil-35 Hind (Russia)** - Old technology multipurpose military helicopter. Armed with a turret-mounted gun (stabilised) and missiles. Very fast, used by many armed forces, including (secretly) US Special Forces. Pilot and gunner plus eight passengers.

**UH-1 (USA), Puma (France), Mil-17 (Russia)** - Older medium sized military and civilian transports. Widely used world-wide. Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. Pilot, co-pilot, loadmaster/gunner plus nine passengers.

**UH-60 Blackhawk (USA), Ka-62 (Russia), NH-90 (Multi-European)** - Advanced medium sized military transports (sometimes used by corporations). Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. The NH-90 has some built-in stealth features making it very suitable for covert operations. Pilot, co-pilot, loadmaster/gunner plus twelve passengers.

#### VTOLs

**V-22 Osprey (USA)** - Tilt-rotor transport aircraft. Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. Used only by wealthiest nations and corporations. Pilot, co-pilot, loadmaster/gunner plus 24 passengers.

**D-609 (USA)** - Tilt-rotor transport aircraft. Can be armed with machine guns and missiles. Used only by wealthiest nations and corporations. Pilot, co-pilot plus 9 passengers.

**Harrier (USA/UK)** - Older vectored thrust ground attack fighter. Armed with autocannon, bombs and missiles. Used by US Marines, UK armed forces and several European and Asian navies. Pilot only (but a passenger can be carried in a specially designed Exint pod under each wing, this can be dropped by parachute).

**VF-24N SeaFury\* (USA/UK)** - Ultra high technology vectored thrust ground attack fighter with stealth features. Armed with autocannon, bombs and missiles. Used by US Marines and UK armed forces. Pilot only (but a passenger can be carried in a specially designed Exint pod under each wing, this can be dropped by parachute).

#### Aeroplanes

**Cessna 152 (USA), Robin R3000 (France), Beech Bonanza (USA)** - Single propellor light private aircraft. Owned by individuals and flying clubs. Machine guns could be fitted with difficulty. Pilot and five passengers.

**Islander (UK), Avanti (Italy), PC-12 (Switzerland)** - Larger light private aircraft. Machine guns could be fitted with difficulty. Owned by wealthy individuals and corporations. Pilot and nine passengers.

**ATR72 (Multi-European), Dash 8 (Canada), SAAB 340 (Sweden)** - Twin propellor airliners. Used by airlines world-wide. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and 36-72 passengers.

**F-16 (USA), MiG 29 (Russia), Sukhoi Flanker (Russia), Mirage (France), F-18 (USA)** - Widely used fighter bombers. Armed with autocannon, bombs and missiles. Pilot only.

**F-117(USA), F-24 Fury\* (USA)** - Stealth ground attack fighters. Used only by US Air Force and Navy. Armed with autocannon (not F-117), bombs and missiles. Pilot only.

**Lear45, Citation, Diamond (all USA)** - Light Business jets. Used by corporations, government agencies and wealthy individuals. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and eight passengers.

**Hawker 1000 (US/UK), Global Express (Canada), Gulfstream G5 (USA)** - Large business jets. Used by corporations, government agencies and wealthy individuals. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and sixteen passengers.

**RJ85 (UK), CRJ (Canada), EMB-145 (Brazil)** - Smallest jet airliners. Used by airlines world-wide. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and up to 100 passengers.

**A320 (Multi-European), MD90 (USA), Boeing 737 (USA)** - Small twin jet airliners. Used by airlines world-wide. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and 100-200 passengers.

**A330 (Multi-European), MD11(USA), Boeing 767(USA)** - Widebody jet airliners. Used by airlines world-wide. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and 200-350 passengers.

**A340 (Multi-European), Boeing 777 (USA), Boeing 747 (USA)** - Widebody long range jet airliners. Used by airlines world-wide. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot and 250-550 passengers.

**C-130 Hercules (USA)** -Transport aircraft used world wide by armed forces and commercial operators. Basic version cannot be armed, but the AC-130 variant carries a 105mm cannon and four autocannon. Pilot, co-pilot, engineer (older models only) and loadmaster plus 100 passengers.

**C-17 (USA), An-70 (Ukraine)** - Advanced transport aircraft used by wealthier armed forces and a few commercial operators. Cannot be armed. Pilot, co-pilot, loadmaster and 150-300 passengers.

## Weapons Listing Expansion

The weapons listed below are available to paramilitary forces and, in some countries, private individuals. The description format is as follows:

### Weapon

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

### Pistols

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

M100 Offensive Handgun Weapon System				
.45	12	1	20 / 60 / 100	
Calico Model 950				
9mm P	50	1	20 / 40 / 100	
CZ 75				
9mm P	15	1	25 / 50 / 80	
Colt M1911 MEU (SOC)				
.45	7	1	20 / 60 / 100	
Colt 2000				
9mm P	15	1	20 / 40 / 100	
H&K Universal Service Pistol (P8)				
9mm P	19	1	20 / 60 / 75	
PSM				
5.45mm Sov.	8	1	15 / 40 / 60	
SIG-Sauer P220				
9mm P	9	1	20 / 40 / 80	
Smith and Wesson 1076				
10mm	9	1	10 / 30 / 60	
Smith and Wesson Mark 22 'Hush Puppy'				
9mm P	8	1	10 / 50 / 60	
Steyr SPP				
9mm P	15	1	10 / 40 / 60	
Walther P99				
9mm P	18	1	20 / 60 / 75	

### SMGs

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

Ares Folding SMG				
9mm P	32	1 / 3	25 / 50 / 100	
Armscor BXP				
9mm P	32	1 / 3	25 / 75 / 150	
Calico Model 960A				
9mm P	50	1 / 5	30 / 75 / 200	
FN P90				
5.7mm	50	1 / 3	25 / 50 / 150	
MP2000				
9mm P	30	1 / 3	40 / 90 / 200	
JATI-Matic				
9mm P	20	1 / 3	40 / 100 / 200	
AKSU-74				
5.45mm Sov.	30	1 / 5	25 / 125 / 200	
SITES M4 Spectre				
9mm P	50	1 / 3	40 / 90 / 150	
Star Z-84				
9mm P	30	1 / 3	25 / 75 / 150	
Sterling L2A3				
9mm P	34	1 / 5	20 / 50 / 100	
Steyr AUG Para				
9mm P	32	1 / 5	25 / 75 / 150	
Steyr MPi 81				
9mm P	32	1 / 3	25 / 50 / 100	
Steyr TMP				
9mm P	24	1 / 3	30 / 75 / 100	
Thompson M1928				
.45 ACP	20	3	25 / 100 / 200	

### Assault Rifles

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

Beretta AR70				
5.56mm NATO	30	1 / 3	40 / 200 / 300	
APS				
5.56mm MPS	26	1 / 5	5 / 10 / 30	
Giat FA-MAS				
5.56mm NATO	25	1 / 5	15 / 150 / 300	
Heckler and Koch G41				
5.56mm NATO	30	1 / 3	50 / 200 / 400	
IMI Galil				
5.56mm NATO	35	1 / 3	40 / 150 / 200	
IMI Tavor				
5.56mm NATO	30	1 / 5	20 / 150 / 300	
Colt M16A2 Carbine				
5.56mm NATO	30	1 / 5	30 / 130 / 300	
Type 89 Xin				
5.8mm PLA	30	1 / 5	20 / 150 / 300	
Type 87				
5.8mm PLA	30	1 / 5	50 / 200 / 400	
An-94				
5.56mm	33	2	50 / 200 / 400	

**Sniper Rifles**

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

Heckler & Koch PSG1				
7.62mm	1	5	201	50 / 250 / 1000
Parker Hale Model 85				
7.62mm	10	1		100 / 500 / 1000
Remington M24				
7.62mm	6	1		100 / 500 / 1000
Ruger Mini-14				
5.56mm NATO	10	1		100 / 300 / 600

**Shotguns**

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

Beretta M3P				
12 Gauge	5	1	3	10 / 20 / 30
Bernardelli B4				
12 Gauge	5	1	3	10 / 20 / 40
Daewoo USAS-12				
12 Gauge	12	1	3	5 / 15 / 30
Franchi SPAS-15				
12 Gauge	6	1	3	10 / 25 / 45
Mossberg Model 500				
12 Gauge	8	1		10 / 25 / 40
Pancor Jackhammer				
12 Gauge	10	1	5	15 / 30 / 45

**Machine Guns**

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

FN M249 SAW				
5.56mm NATO	30/B	6		30 / 150 / 500
FN M240G LMG				
7.62mm NATO	Belt	6/9		50 / 300 / 600
PKM				
7.62mm Russian	Belt	5		30 / 150 / 500
Type 87 LMG				
5.8mm PLA	30/B	5		50 / 200 / 400
NSV				
12.7mm	Belt	5		100 / 200 / 1000
Rheinmetall MG3				
7.62mm	Belt	6		60 / 300 / 1000
Browning M2				
.50BMG	Belt	8		100 / 200 / 1000
GECAL 50				
.50BMG	Belt	45		150 / 300 / 450

**Grenade Launchers**

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

M79				
40mm Grenade	1	1		5 / 100 / 400
ARMSCOR 6				
40mm Grenade	6	1		5 / 200 / 400
Granatepistole				
40mm Grenade	1	1		15 / 200 / 400

**Grenade Launchers**

**Calibre - Mag - Rate - C / M / E**

BG-15				
40mm Grenade	1	1		5 / 100 / 450
Mark 19				
40mm Grenade	Belt	3		100 / 1000 / 2000
M203				
40mm Grenade	1	1		5 / 100 / 400
Objective Individual Combat Weapon (OICW)				
20mm Grenade	???	???		45 / 200 / 1000
5.56mm NATO	????	???		5 / 50 / 100

**Notes;**

M100 Offensive Handgun Weapon System and M1911 MEU (SOC): these are very accurate pistols used by US and allied special forces. The M100 is silenced and fitted with a laser spot projector as standard.

Smith and Wesson Mark 22 'Hush Puppy': a waterproof and silenced pistol developed for the US Navy SeALs.

FN 90: this odd-looking weapon fires a unique 5.7mm round, its Minimal/Basic/Critical values are 3 / 4 / 6.

MP2000: a silenced MP5 derivative designed for and used by the US Navy SeALs.

APS: a Russian 'assault rifle' designed for underwater use, but it can be fired on dry land. The MPS round is an 15cm long armour-piercing harpoon, its Minimal/Basic/Critical values are 3 / 5 / 8.

Types 90 and 87: these Chinese weapons use 5.8mm ammunition, its Minimal/Basic/Critical values are 3 / 4 / 6.

NSV and M2: these are heavy weapons and need a two-three person team to carry them. The NSV's 12.7 mm round does the same damage as a .50 Browning MG round.

GECAL 50: this is a three barrel, electrically powered Gatling gun. It requires three people (or one Schwarzenegger) to carry it and its accessories

Grenade Launchers: these fire grenades which have an explosive rating of Small. See explosive rules in The 23rd Letter. They may also be loaded with gas rounds.

Granatepistole, BG-15 and M203: these can be attached under the barrel of a rifle.

Mark 19: this is a heavy weapon and needs a two-three person team to carry it.

Objective Individual Combat Weapon (OICW): This is a radical new concept weapon designed as an assault rifle replacement. The grenades arm themselves in flight and have a minimum range of 30 m. The built in 5.56mm rifle is for close in-fighting only. Built in laser sights and recoil compensation make this weapon suprisingly accurate. It began to be issued to the US Army in 2006

### Missile Launchers

Weapon	Role	Guidance	C / M / E
Mistral	SAM	Fire&Forget	0.5 km / 5 km / 8 km
FIM-92 Stinger	SAM	Fire&Forget	1 km / 2 km / 5 km
Starburst	SAM	Manual	0.5 km / 5 km / 8 km
Starstreak	SAM	Manual	1 km / 5 km / 10 km
SA-18	SAM	Fire&Forget	1 km / 2 km / 5 km
Keiko	SAM	Fire&Forget	1 km / 2 km / 5 km
Milan	AT	Manual	0.5 km / 1 km / 2 km
TOW	AT	Manual	1 km / 2 km / 4 km
Javelin	AT	Fire&Forget	0.5 km / 1 km / 2 km
Predator	AT	Fire&Forget	50 / 100 / 500
Dragon	AT	Manual	500 / 750 / 1000
Eryx	AT	Manual	20 / 100 / 600
Sagger	AT	Manual	500 / 1500 / 3000
Armbrust	AT	None	100 / 300 / 1500
RPG-7	AT	None	100 / 300 / 500
Bazooka	AT	None	50 / 75 / 100
SMAW	AT	None	300 / 400 / 500
AT4	AT	None	100 / 200 / 300

### Notes

Explanation of guidance systems:

None: the weapon is aimed at the target and fired, it hits or misses;

Manual: the operator must guide the missile onto the target by means of a joystick on the launcher;

Fire & Forget: the weapon fires a 'smart' round which follows the target.

All SAM warheads have a Small explosion rating.

All Anti-Tank (AT) warheads have a Medium explosion rating.

### Miscellaneous Equipment

The following items of equipment may be made available to Project members

Armour	Location	Protection	Enc.
SBS/ProTec Helmet	Head	1	0
RBR 405 (for use by frogmen)	Chest/Abdomen	1	0
RBR Armour Light, SK2	Chest/Abdomen	3	2
RBR 800 (for bomb disposal experts)	all locations	4	3

### Gadgets

These are typical pieces of military gear used by special forces. All are easily man-portable. The given examples are typical Western models still used in the 23rd Letter world.

### Equipment

Purpose	Examples
Night Vision Goggles	See in darkness AN/PVS-7, NV38, M983, Nova, Cyclops
Image Intensifiers	Surveillance and weapon-aiming in darkness Kite, KN-250, Armscor MNV
Thermal Imagers	Surveillance and weapon-aiming in darkness and through smoke/camouflage Spyglass, Hibbeaux, NiteSight
GPS Receiver	Satellite location anywhere on Earth Magellan GPS2000, SLGR, TRIMpack
Military Communications Gear	Secure, coded voice and data transmission Panther, AN/PRC-119, CougarNet
Rescue Beacon	Shows your friends where you are Firefly Rescue Lite, Day & Night Signal No.1
Rapid Access Equipment	Rips doors open, powered by compressed air Allen Manual Door Ram
Remote Motion Detector	Senses vibration and voices, indicates their position on a monitor CLASSIC, IREMBASS
Special Forces Respirator	Gasmask with built in radio SF10, AR10
Descent Harness	Used for abseiling down cliffs, buildings and from helicopters

## New Psychic Rules

### Mind Shield

The Western Project is credited with the first “successful” creation of the Mind Shield. Through drugs, hypnosis and psychotectonics it is possible to place structures in the mind that can prevent intrusion by psychics.

The mind shield requires a basic success or better on a Difficult Psychotectonics skill roll. The procedure lasts 1d10 hours causing one stress point per hour.

The mind shield is impenetrable to all but the most powerful psychics (Power 8+, Skill 8+) and even contacting a consciousness protected by a mind-shield causes stress. Psychics should incur one point of stress for every round they are in mental contact with a mind-shield. Characters who receive mind shields lose one point from every Trait due to the effects it has on creativity, concentration, rest and reasoning.

An enterprising player with a less-powerful psychic may be able to break mind-shield conditioning through excellent roleplaying.

### Psychotectonics

Psychotectonics is a separate skill that can be developed by Telepaths who already have Veteran skills in Implant, Extract and Regent.

Psychotectonics can only be performed in laboratory conditions while the subject is restrained and sedated using specific psychoactive drugs. The procedure takes several hours of work though a skilled (Competent or better) psychic can “suspend” a mind and return at a later date to continue the work.

Through psychotectonics, a psychic can restructure a mind in any way he desires. He can create convincing memories far superior to anything Implant can produce - sufficiently so that even if found to be incorrect the recipient will quickly rationalise the changed memories. He will even argue their veracity as they are - to all extents - his own memories. Through psychotectonics a psychic can create mind shields in normal humans and turn a normal psychic into a Psychotic. Psychotectonic work can be concealed from other psychics with a Difficult roll depending on the grade of success.

## Psychotics

Psychotics are normal psychics who have had mind shields forced upon them. The interactions between their own psychic abilities and the mind shield causes something akin to a feedback loop within their own mind. Stress levels rocket out of control and new terrifying psychic powers are awakened.

### Game Rules

Psychotic characters automatically have a Mind Shield and therefore any psychics that come into contact with their mind immediately begin to accrue stress.

Psychotics also broadcast their psychic distress causing one stress point per “scene” in all psychics present. This is always accompanied by dramatically appropriate effects such as headaches, nosebleeds, ringing in the ears and dizziness.

Psychotics may focus their psychic distress on one person. If psychic they begin to accrue one stress point per round and one fatigue point per round until unconscious. Then, unless rescued or the Psychotic distracted, they begin to accrue Wound points.

If a Psychotic focusses on a human mind they immediately begin to accrue Wound points.

Psychotics also gain at least one point in every Psychic talent and can use Psychic skills at the Unskilled level.

### Why use Psychotics?

The procedures for creating psychotics are in the hands of most Powers and Projects around the world.

Psychotics are not usually created intentionally. At times they are created as a result of an aborted or unfinished psychotectonics program. At times they have been used as a last resort when under siege by enemy agents.

It is known that powerful Terata create Psychotics as their guardians. Some of the more powerful Terata must be resistant to Psychotic assaults and some might even be able to control Psychotics - sending them to do battle with their enemies.

It is extremely unlikely that a Psychotic would be a playable option for a player.

## References

The following publications were consulted in the writing of this work. They may be of use to GMs in the creation of their own scenarios.

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Clancy, Tom - Marine  
Clancy, Tom - Armored Cav  
Dobson, C, & Payne, R. - Dictionary of Espionage  
Dockerty, K - Compendium of Modern Firearms  
Foss, C. - Jane's Armoured Fighting Vehicle  
Recognition Guide  
Fowler, Will - Arms and Equipment of Special  
Forces  
Fremantle, Brian - CIA  
Friedman, R.S. et al - Advanced Technology  
Warfare  
Griswold, Terry & Giangreco D.M. - Delta Force  
Kennedy, William V. - The Intelligence War  
Rottman, Gordon L. - Inside the US Army Today  
Urban, Mark - UK Eyes Alpha

Armed Forces Journal (various issues)  
International Defence Review (various issues)  
Fortean Times (various issues)  
New Scientist (various issues)  
Focus (various issues)  
X Factor (various issues)

## Adventure hooks

These adventure/campaign hooks may equally well be modified for use with Network adventures.

1) The government wants a powerful foreigner dead. He may be a drug baron, a terrorist leader or religious/political figure, but he is charismatic and has a large and devoted army of followers who are very anti-Western. If he dies an obviously unnatural death, he will be seen as a martyr by his enraged supporters, so the Project personnel assigned to this task must not simply shoot or blow him up. To discredit his memory, it is suggested that they made it seem he died accidentally while performing a sordid act. The mission may be carried out while the target is on a visit to the West or, better still, on his own territory. Either way he will have many armed bodyguards.

2) It has been discovered that the Iraqi dictator is sponsoring his own Project (G.M's note: this is the

Euphrates Project). It is located in a heavily guarded complex outside Basra. The research centre is among flat farmland and has a company of 120 Republican Guards (with armoured vehicles and helicopters) assigned to protect it. A Project team must enter Iraq, travel to this place and covertly observe it to determine the Iraqis' progress. They may discover that there are Nevada Project survivors from the 1991 helicopter crash held there. These people are helping the Iraqis, either willingly or under duress. What are the PCs going to do?

3) Satellite photos of a military factory in a foreign dictatorship suggest that a military aircraft of radical design is being built and tested there. Remote viewing by Project espers will confirm this. The location is close to friendly territory so the PCs' team are sent in to observe or sabotage the aircraft. But it is a trap. The aircraft is a non-flying mock-up, and a powerful esper (maybe a Terata?) has planted illusions in the remote viewers' minds to lure in subjects for experimentation. The PCs will be inserted by aircraft or submarine which will return to collect them some days later. A force of elite, but non-esper, troops (10 soldiers for every PC) will be waiting for them.

4) Reliable sources say that a terrorist group has obtained a 100 kilotonne nuclear device and is going to smuggle it into the US. The PCs will be assigned to a taskforce trying to prevent this. Other personnel on this task force will be from the FBI, CIA and another Project (the Western or Nevada). The CIA and FBI officers will either not take the PCs' contributions seriously or resent their presence while the other Project's people will be condescending. The bomb will be brought into New York harbour in the hold of an innocent-looking Swedish freighter (most of the crew don't know it's there) on 30th June and detonated (by a fanatic terrorist on the ship) on 4th July. Can the PCs stop this? If they fail it may mean the death of millions of people and the end of their own Project.

5) Police forces in California are seeking a serial killer who has murdered a young woman every month for nearly a year. The PCs' Project has a precog who claims that the killer will be caught and found to be an esper with an interesting wild talent. Although it is outside the Project's jurisdiction, their superiors send the PCs out to catch the killer and bring him back to their base for study ("After all, nobody will miss a creep like this"). The police and FBI are not informed about the PCs' operation. The

killer is Mario Xylander (see The 23rd Letter) and is being protected by the Western Project. Xylander has had cosmetic surgery and no longer looks the same as when originally captured. Should a PC notice similarities between the present cases and Xylander's original crimes, all records will indicate that Xylander is still incarcerated. Enquiries to the prison will alert the Western Project (but the PCs will not know this). Can the PCs capture Xylander without alerting the police or Western Project? The GM might want to detail two of the FBI agents assigned to the case, the female is a hard-nosed sceptic about the paranormal, however her spooky male partner whole-heartedly believes in psychic powers and secret government conspiracies.

6) An high-ranking official from a hostile nation has vital information urgently needed by the government. He is completely loyal to his homeland, will not willingly defect and kidnapping him is out of the question. In desperation, their country's intelligence service turns to the players' Project for help. The information is too extensive to be read by a psychic, but in their briefing the PCs will find their target has a weak spot, ripe for them to exploit. He may have a religious faith or other supernatural belief and be open to a psychically generated 'miracle', a beloved family member may be ill and could be cured by psychic healing. Maybe just a threat of overwhelming power will work. The PCs must either bring about his (apparently) genuine defection or at least get him to give them the information. The PCs may have to travel undercover to the target's country or he may be visiting the their own or an allied country.

7)The PCs' team is to participate in a security exercise. They must either penetrate a high-security government installation and physically steal a particular file or guard the same file from a rival team within a seven day time limit. The building belongs to a 'neutral' agency (such as NASA or a police force). The PCs will be in competition with a team from another covert agency (for example the CIA, Delta Force or even the Nevada Project) who are to guard the file if the PCs are the thieves or take it if the PCs are looking after it. Either way there is to be no violence directed against the rival squad (or the workers in the installation), but the teams are free to use any dirty tricks they want. The winners will be heroes to their own organisation, and will be rewarded with improved status. If the PCs lose their superiors will make their lives very miserable.

8) At short notice the PCs are attached to the Hoodoo Squad. The Project has received advance notice that a hitherto unknown, but powerful esper (abilities up to the GM) is to appear the following night on a live, prime time chat show. If the esper successfully demonstrates his or her powers on air it will be a disaster. The PCs are to sabotage the show or if that fails limit the damage. They may take any equipment they think they need, including doses of Psilence, and any of the Hoodoo Squad NPCs described in this book. They will meet with several complications, the esper is somewhat paranoid and has several habits which make it difficult to dose him with Psilence (only eats or drinks foods he has prepared and brought with him, will not willingly take pills or injections no matter what the reason). Also if they do not want to take an NPC with them, the GM may want them to have to take Marcus Venture, and he will be obnoxious, lecherous and a pain in the neck.

9)The PCs are returning from a foreign mission and are tired and off-guard when the crowded commercial airliner they are travelling on is hijacked! The PCs do not have any weapons and the hijackers are armed and ruthless terrorists with impossible financial or political demands. The PCs will realise that the terrorists do not intend to let the hostages survive even if their demands are met. Can the PCs with their limited resources turn the tables on their captors? There are complications too. The airliner may land in a country where the PCs have enemies, or if it lands in a friendly country the authorities may launch a bungled rescue attempt. One of the hijackers may be an old enemy or even another esper. In the early stages of the adventure, the GM should confuse the players; is this something to do with the last mission or an unfortunate coincidence?

10) A country friendly to the PCs' homeland is threatening to go to war with a neighbouring state. The allied nation's President (or Prime Minister) is a charismatic fanatic, too in love with his Hard Man public image to reduce the rising tension, and believes destiny is on his side. The war will be an international disaster, which the PCs' government wants to avoid. The PCs' team will be sent to this country under the cover of advisors to the President (who will trust them initially) and are tasked to avert conflict. They cannot assassinate the President as this is liable to trigger a war. The GM can throw in border skirmishes and assassination attempts as he sees fit.



11) An important Esper from the PC's Project has successfully defected to a foreign rival Project. The PCs' are sent abroad to recover her. This may not require drastic moves like kidnapping her, perhaps she regrets her flight and can be persuaded to come home.

12) The adventurous son of the President is lost in bad weather in a wilderness. A Project Esper has determined that he is alive but little more, and cannot pinpoint his location. The players must lead the search through difficult terrain, which will be arduous. Perhaps the young man's disappearance was not an accident, in which case the PCs will find themselves in combat with armed kidnappers.

13) A vengeful father is searching for his lost child, an Esper forced to work for the PCs' Project. The father is a former covert operative and is very clever and dangerous. The players must stop him somehow, the fact that their opponent is both sympathetic and in the right makes this difficult. Just to make things worse, the child may escape...

14) To draw media and public attention from a black operation by another agency, the PCs are to fake a series of non-psychic paranormal events on members of the public. For example they make set up mock UFO abductions, poltergeist activities or other Fortean events. The players are free to pick their victims, and should be encouraged to have fun. If the GM wants there may be a dark side, they may be so successful a victim may die of a heart attack during their manifestation or a really persistent media investigation may discover too much about their activities. The FBI operatives mentioned in Hook 5 may also become involved.

15) This is the reverse of Hook 14. The PCs are sent to investigate a sinister paranormal event which is sufficiently alarming to have attracted their Project's attention. After a lengthy investigation they will discover that the phenomena is an elaborate hoax. The motive may be a prank, a stunt perpetrated by a local tourist commission to attract visitors, or by criminals to disguise their activities. It might be Old Mr Peterson the Janitor trying to hide his counterfeiting scheme by scaring away the yokels. He may get away with it too, if it isn't for those meddling espers...

16) The PCs' team is investigating a series of murders of agents from their national intelligence service or Project. When they make progress,

attempts will made on their lives by professional assassins. Should the PCs survive, they will discover a world-wide conspiracy by a secret organisation fronted by a wealthy and charismatic megalomaniac who enjoys caressing fluffy white cats. This person is near completion of a plan to undermine the international banking system, gain control of the world's energy resources, provoke a major war or other drastic event. He operates from an elaborate hi-tech base with scores of armed guards, booby traps and technicians, and is also protected by a fanatically loyal bodyguard/chief henchman with a colourful physical or psychological abnormality. Depending on the PCs' morality they may try to prevent their enemy achieving his goal or offer to throw in their lot with him if this seems more promising.

17) On the PCs' last mission they were careless and left enough evidence to incriminate themselves. As a result, a respected team of journalists is about to present a TV special which will embarrass the PCs and their Project. The PCs must stop this. Threats and actual violence may be counter-productive, as the reporters are clever and have access to all manner of surveillance gear so the PCs may find themselves on tape. Possibly the best ideas are to undermine the programme's credibility or buy them off by revealing a story of greater public interest. A juicy sex'n'drugs'n'politics scandal (real or fabricated) may do the trick.

18) The PCs are part of a larger group operating out of an official safehouse. They are called out to investigate a child who is manifesting pyrokinesis. Successful or not they return (with or without the kid) to the safehouse to find it plundered, their fellow operatives dead and their personal possessions missing. What follows is a desperate race for safety as their enemy (agents of a Power) tries to finish them off, while their Project attempts to bring them in.

19) A non-psychic NPC in the Project complains of inexplicable lethargy and mental exhaustion, his health is declining seriously. His wife exhibits similar symptoms. The PCs are his friends and they volunteer to investigate. He is a recent father, and the baby will never sleep... nothing unusual there, except his newborn daughter is an esper. Her wildtalent manifests as an ability to remove her own fatigue and transfer it to others. Unfortunately the Project has a policy of 'removing' espers with dangerous powers.

20) The PCs are guarding an elaborately sealed crate which is being transported to their Project's main site. The journey is by land or sea and takes several days. The crate's contents and history are unknown to the PCs, other than it originated from another Project, the PCs have been firmly told not to try to find out what is inside. Of course, agents of a Power or the Network intend to steal it. The box contains a Screamer (see the 23rd Letter) which will activate if roughly treated.

21) One of the PCs receives a coded document which, if deciphered, will be found to contain shocking predictions of future events. It is a copy of the Rosetta book, which was delivered to the PC because of a bureaucratic error. As soon as the mistake is discovered the PC and any associates will be pursued. The PCs may be able to return the document and convince Ozymandias that they have not read it, although they will need to be very accomplished to succeed. If they have read it and survived, should they reveal its contents to their superiors or even the public.

22) The PCs are ordered to work with a scientist who has radical theories about psionics. She needs their help for a programme of experiments, which begin quite reasonably, become humiliating, then downright dangerous. Their tormentor treats them as talking laboratory rats, and ignores any complaints. Can the PCs endure this experience? Their Project thinks highly of the scientist and the PCs have been warned of serious consequences should they fail to give satisfactory co-operation.

23) On a single street, in a small town, seemingly normal people are acting out of character. Amongst others, a timid schoolmarm buys a shotgun and murders her postman and a teenage girl stabs her loving father with a carving knife. An esper link is suspected, and the PCs are called in. They discover that the attackers, who have no esper powers, had somehow received their victims' thoughts. The postman was fantasising over the teacher and was secretly observing her, while the father lusted after his daughter (although neither man had actually made any advances to the women). A rogue esper (maybe a former colleague) is acting as a 'thought policeman', reading the thoughts of those around him and psychically informing potential victims of what he sees as threats to them. The PCs must attempt to track him down. What do the PCs think about each other?

## The Thanking section

Crucible Design would like to thank the many Irish games conventions who have tolerated us over the years (that would be Q-CON, Gaelcon, Warpcon and Leprecon), our distributors for taking a chance on a small untested games company, James Wallis of Hogshead Publishing for being such a well-dressed role-model and everyone who has contacted us in the last couple of months wishing us well and looking for more stuff: here it is.

## Colin's Special Thanks

The Crucible Design Team (for all the jolly japes)  
Everyone who bought The 23rd Letter  
(for supporting a new company with their wallets)  
Arcane Magazine RIP (for a major morale boost)  
Keith and Dana (for being great folks, also because Keith invented Aurion)  
Mum and Dad ( for putting up with the mess in the front room)  
QUB Dragonslayers (for giving us somewhere to go on Monday nights)  
St Dogbert (for "Out! Out, you Demons of Stupidity!")  
High Commander Dick Solomon (for "I'm... gorgeous!")  
Bill Bailey (for "Human Slaves in an Insect Nation!")  
Sir Harry Flashman VC (for being a valued rolemodel)  
Julie (for everything else)

**Crucible Design hope that you enjoyed this book and will use it again and again in your games. We're committed to making fun games that we would want to play and keeping the content:noise ratio high!**

## The Crucible Design Catalogue

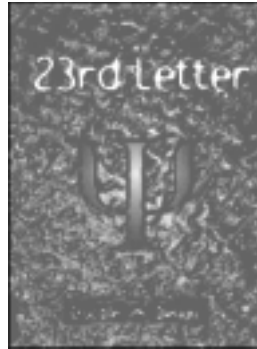
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