

PARANOIA™

High Programmers

Credits & Contents

GARETH HANRAHAN

Writer/Scapegoat

CHARLOTTE LAW

Editing /Drillbot

CHRIS QUILLIAMS

Cover/Blueprints

TONY EMSON

Interior Illustrations/Treasonous Propaganda

WILL CHAPMAN

Layout/Infrared drone

NICK ROBINSON

Proofreader/Intsec goon

DAN GELBER

GREG COSTIKYAN

ERIC GOLDBERG

Original game design & development/
Building committee

THE COMPUTER

Looking after your best interests

Introduction	2	Skills and Specialties	51
Life in Utopia	3	Mutations	58
Welcome High Programmer	6	Secret Societies	64
The Situation Room	8	The Computer	80
How High Programmers Work	9	Crisis Management	84
Creating Your High Programmer	10	Secret Agendas	98
Basic Rules	17	Gamemastering High Programmers	101
Access	18	Minions & More	105
Service Groups	19	What UVs Worry About	142
Minions	20	Famous High Programmers	149
Portfolio Sheets & Ground Cards	23	Mission Schema	150
Cloning	34	Disaster Management	151
The Greasy Rule	34	High Programmers	162
High Programming	38	Alternate Play Styles	168
Secrets of the High Programmers	40	High Programmer Character Sheet	170
Scenes, Communication & Tension	44	Tables	171
Combat	47	Index	172
Treason & Infamy	49		

ALLEN VARNEY, AARON ALLSTON, PAUL BADOWSKI, BETH FISCHI, EDEL RYDER, STEVE GILBERT,
KEN ROLSTON, ERICK WUJCIK, R. ERIC REUSS

Additional Material/Co-Conspirators

Security Clearance **ULTRAVIOLET** WARNING:

Knowledge or possession of this information by any citizen
of Security Clearance **VIOLET** or lower is treason punishable by a
long spell of Armed Forces latrine scrubot maintenance duty.

High Programmers TM & Copyright © 1983, 1987, 2010 by Eric Goldberg & Greg Costikyan. All Rights Reserved. Mongoose Publishing Ltd., Authorised User. Based on material published in previous editions of **PARANOIA**.

ILLUMINATI is a registered trademark of Steve Jackson Games, and is used by permission. The reproduction of material from this book for personal or corporate profit, by photographic, electronic, or other means of storage and retrieval, is prohibited. You may copy character sheets, record sheets, checklists and tables for personal use.

E-mail questions and comments to **Mongoose Publishing** at sales@mongoosepublishing.com or write to **Mongoose Publishing**, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 1DG, UNITED KINGDOM.

On the World Wide Web: www.mongoosepublishing.com.

Published by Mongoose Publishing, Ltd. Published January 2010. Printed In USA.



HIGH PROGRAMMERS

Introduction

Citizen, in recognition of your years of loyal service, you are now promoted to ULTRAVIOLET Clearance. Congratulations! A celebratory case of Bouncy Bubble Beverage has been sent to your current location. Share and enjoy, citizen! This is the first of the many, many rewards for your new responsibilities.

As an ULTRAVIOLET citizen, you are now permitted to access previously restricted computer systems. You will now be granted HIGH PROGRAMMER privileges.

Upgrading Security Clearance... done.
Changing user permission... done.
Unlocking secret files... done.

Use these privileges wisely, citizen. As a HIGH PROGRAMMER, you are responsible for guiding Alpha Complex through the numerous crises and making decisions about the fate of millions of citizens. You are The Computer's most trusted advisors, the last line of defence against Commie Mutant Traitors. Remain vigilant! While every precaution has been taken to ensure that no Commie Mutant Traitor rises to ULTRAVIOLET Clearance, you must still remain vigilant! Remember,

STAY ALERT!
TRUST NO-ONE!
- KEEP YOUR LASER HANDY!

Welcome, High Programmer.

1. LIFE IN UTOPIA

1. Life in Utopia

Welcome, High Programmer!

Please review the APPROVED HISTORY OF ALPHA COMPLEX. This document is **ULTRAVIOLET** Clearance.

Centuries ago, everyone was *moderately* happy. The world was at peace and people lived in above-ground 'cities'. They were ruled by a human government, although many municipal duties and logistics were handled by computers. It was an age of peace and moderate happiness.

+++Directive 214.36: Citizens below ORANGE Clearance are to believe that the 'Old Reckoning' time period was highly unpleasant; suggest it was a time of famine and suffering. Citizens YELLOW and higher are permitted to access official histories and to know details about the past.

At all levels, interest in the past is to be discouraged. The past is permitted to exist for two reasons only. Firstly, to provide context for certain useful records, such as maps of Outdoors. Secondly, as a counter-example for propaganda purposes, to show how much better life is under the current regime. It is intended that the remaining Old Reckoning records of use will be converted into an approved format within the next 10 yearcycles. At this point, the past can finally be freed from the constraints of reality, which has a well known bias against security.+++

All went well until lunar observatories noted a planetoid about the size of Sheboygan within the orbit of Saturn, moving inward toward the Sun – and Earth. Brave attempts to divert or destroy the planetoid were futile. A global emergency was declared as the planetoid approached. Cities were converted into domed shelters to survive the impending apocalypse.

The city of San Francisco, a jewel of the age of peace, was one of these shelters. Today, we call it by its new name – Alpha Complex.

The planetoid entered the Earth's atmosphere, halved, then struck the surface in many places. Oceans boiled. Subterranean magma chambers

exploded. Earthquakes shattered the Earth's crust. Volcanoes spewed gas and lava into dense cloud banks that immediately engulfed the planet.

+++Directive 214.54: INFRARED citizens are taught that the Outdoors is uninhabitable to prevent them from wandering off. At RED Clearance, citizens are permitted to know that Outdoors is habitable but filled with dangerous monsters and Commies. All citizens are constantly reminded of the existence of an external enemy.+++

Worse was to follow. The Communists, long thought defeated, took advantage of the chaos to launch a massive attack on the free world. Many shelters fell to the Commies, either by force of arms or by subversion from within. The enemy seized control of the central node in the global computer network, Alpha Prime and attempted to convince Alpha Complex's computer to surrender.

+++ The identification of the threat as 'Communism' comes from references in Civil Defence archives that were severely outdated even before the apocalypse. Most clued-in citizens are aware that the Communist threat is greatly exaggerated. The Computer's paranoia about Communism is so ingrained, though, that any attempts to convince it of this fact are treated as Commie subversions.+++

The wise Computer saw through this transparent Commie ploy and realised that the other shelters had fallen to the Red Menace. Alpha Complex was the only free remnant of a once-great civilisation and was now surrounded by a host of enemies. Only by constant vigilance could Alpha Complex remain free and untainted by Communism!

For security reasons, The Computer instituted five key directives that are the foundation of modern Alpha Complex society.

Complex Security Directive

STAY ALERT! TRUST NO-ONE! KEEP YOUR LASER HANDY!

Defending Alpha Complex against the threats of Communism, mutants, traitors, flesharers, hackers, rogue bots, renegades, WMDs and saboteurs is the first priority of all citizens and The Computer. For the duration of the crisis, all rights are suspended. Total surveillance ensures the safety of all citizens. A watched citizen is a safe citizen, so there are cameras in every corridor, in every room, in every appliance and soon in every skull.

Citizens are directed to co-operate fully with Internal Security and The Computer's trusted officials. All citizens

Clearance	Population %	Common Duties
INFRARED	~80%	Stirring food vats, basic manual labour, paper pushing, data entry
RED	10%	Manual labour, cannon fodder, reactor shielding, office clerks
ORANGE	6%	Supervisors, technicians
YELLOW	2%	Middle management, assessors, form checkers, bureaucrats
GREEN	2%	Senior supervisors, managing directors, vidshow directors, IntSec goons
BLUE	1%	Junior executives, vidshow producers, IntSec Troopers, Armed Forces captains
INDIGO	<1%	Senior executives, directors, experts, analysts
VIOLET	<1%	CEOs, Armed Forces generals, IntSec commissioners, High Programmer aides
ULTRAVIOLET	<1%	High Programmer



HIGH PROGRAMMERS

must report on their friends and co-workers. Anyone could be a Commie Mutant Traitor!

+++ *The threat of an external enemy distracts the citizens' minds away from their own situation. Necessary adjustments to living arrangements, resources availability or population can be couched in terms of the war on Communism. Any policy may be justified on the grounds of Alpha Complex security.* +++

Trusted Citizen Initiative

To ensure that key information does not fall into enemy hands, all citizens, locations and documents in Alpha Complex are colour coded. The Security Clearance system runs from INFRARED to ULTRAVIOLET. Security Clearance is a measure of how much trust The Computer puts in each citizen and is not directly correlated to job assignment, seniority or allocated resources.

+++ *The most significant outcome of the Trusted Citizen Initiative is the erasure of the concept of absolute truth. 'Reality' is defined by the needs of Alpha Complex and those higher in Security Clearance. Information is never missing or incorrect, simply unavailable at the requester's Security Clearance. What appears to be madness or incompetence would actually make sense if only the observer had the requisite Clearance.* +++

Mandatory Happiness Directive

The Computer cherishes each and every one of its citizens and wants them all to be happy and fulfilled. Fulfilment and happiness is therefore mandatory for all citizens. Failure to be happy is a crime. Happiness drugs are issued to all citizens, added to the water supply, pumped through the air vents and injected at random intervals.

The Computer has also removed many sources of unhappiness. All citizens are given adequate nutrition. All citizens are given adequate living quarters. All citizens are medicated according to their Security Clearance, so that citizens engaged in unchallenging or unfulfilling tasks are too sedated to notice. Citizens are given hormone suppressants so that distracting emotions, sexual frustration and painful childbirths are no longer a problem.

+++ *Despite the best efforts of some High Programmers, The Computer really does care about the citizens. It actually does want everyone to succeed and be happy. Of course, it's crazy, so its methods are often questionable but its motives are genuine.* +++

Efficiency is Fun Mandate

There's a place for every citizen in Alpha Complex. After decantation from the embryo tanks, Junior Citizens go through a 14 year orientation program, where they are taught proper hygiene protocols and basic motor skills. Each citizen is then assigned to one of eight Service Groups.

- ☉ **Armed Forces:** Protection against threats both external and internal.
- ☉ **Central Processing Unit (CPU):** Executive operations, regulations, records, justice, human resources and culture engineering.
- ☉ **Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control (HPD & MC):** Education, entertainment, housekeeping, crèche management and recreation.
- ☉ **Internal Security (IntSec):** Maintenance of good order; location and elimination of traitors.
- ☉ **Power Services:** Maintenance of nuclear and other energy sources and primary habitat systems – traffic, air, water and waste.
- ☉ **Production, Logistics & Commissary (PLC):** Food and industrial production, along with the allocation of resources.
- ☉ **Research & Design (R&D):** Creation of new technology and equipment.
- ☉ **Technical Services:** Maintenance of bots, vehicles, cloning services, industrial and production systems and electronic and mechanical service systems.

+++ *As The Computer wants everyone in Alpha Complex to have a fun role to play, it is impossible to fire an employee, no matter how incompetent or useless they are. They may only be transferred to another role in the same Service Group, or to a special duty like the Troubleshooters. Therefore, many roles in Alpha Complex are extremely lethal, like the Troubleshooters.* +++

Citizen Replacement Program

To maintain full staffing levels and to replace any citizens terminated by

Commie attack, industrial accident or other misfortune, Alpha Complex operates an ambitious cloning program. All citizens are equipped with MemoMax brain implants which maintain a near-real-time link with backup servers. In the event that a citizen is terminated, a copy of his mind-state is downloaded into a replacement clone. All going well, a citizen can be back at work before his previous self's corpse is even cool. (Note that processing backlogs, network failures and paperwork may result in long delays before a low Clearance citizen is replaced.)

All citizens are given a generous **six** clones. Further clones may be provided if resources are available.

+++ *Of course, High Programmers get as many clones as they need – or until replicative fading makes future copies non-viable.* +++

Mind & Market Control Initiative

The Computer ensures that every citizen has a suitable allocation of basic resources – housing, food, uniforms, Bouncy Bubble Beverage, oxygen and so on. Failing to take care of such basic needs would cause unhappiness and happiness is mandatory. Therefore, the needs of citizens cannot be neglected. Unhappy citizens are potential Commie Mutant Traitors.

However, Communism is bad, meaning capitalism must be good. Citizens are paid in credits and encouraged to consume luxuries and consumer goods. For security reasons, most items are unavailable to most citizens. The only thing that the average citizen is permitted to buy is useless junk, collectibles or tiny variations on things they already possess. Alpha Complex resembles an endless shopping mall with gun emplacements. Failure to consume is treason, so citizens scabble for every spare credit so they can buy more junk than their neighbours.

+++ *Capitalism was reintroduced a few generations ago by ambitious High Programmers, to wrest control away from The Computer. Increasing the money supply made us all rich!* +++

A Glimpse Of Utopia

What life is like for the other 99.1%...

Life At Low Clearances

Rise with hundreds of others in the barracks. Pop a couple of Wakey-Wakey pills. Wash and eat a leisurely breakfast. Go to work for your Service Group. Have a leisurely lunch with coworkers. Work some more. Down a handful of Mellodaze caplets. Return to the barracks. Have a leisurely dinner. Attend a club meeting such as Botspotters, Volunteer Map Verifiers or the local subsector chapter of Keep Alpha Complex Totally Hygienic. Gather with friends in the communal view lounges to view Teela O'Malley adventures and game and reality vidshows. Chat. Relax. Turn in with hundreds of others. Drink a warm cup of SleepyTyme relaxant. Sleep soundly.

Utopia.

Life As A Troubleshooter

Rise when the mission alert jolts you out of bed. Scramble down to the briefing room, possibly being executed on the way. Receive a strange, confusing and incomplete briefing from an eccentric, confused or possibly incompetent briefing officer. Report to Outfitting to receive mission equipment, which is incorrect, broken or actively dangerous. Call into Research & Development for experimental equipment, which explodes with lethal force. Grab a quick can of B3 from a vending machine, then meet a mysterious figure in a bathroom who informs you of your Secret Society assignment. Despite your best efforts, actually go on the mission, where your team-mates kill you another four times. Confusing events occur in no discernable order. Stagger back for debriefing. Your team-mates report you as a traitor and you are ordered to report for termination.

Your final clone collapses in the communal view lounge to view Teela O'Malley adventures. The rest is a blur as The Computer mandates extra medication to help you cope with post-traumatic shock.

Oblivion.

Life At Mid Clearances

Wake up and pop a black-market pep pill so you can make it to the office before your co-workers. Hop onto the early morning cycle transtube. Eye your fellow passengers suspiciously – any one of 'em could be a Commie terrorist! Arrive at the office, check your cubicle for traps – any of your co-workers could be Commie terrorists, or just want you eliminated so they can take the promotion that's rightfully yours! Start work on the Napkin Production Report Production Report. Work on the report. Work through lunch. Work through dinner. Pep pills, gotta have pep pills. Meet your Secret Society contact. He sells you pep pills but tells you you've got to recruit one of your co-workers to the society to make quota. Stagger back upstairs to find that bastard Lewis-Y in your cubicle, trying to steal your report. Threaten him with your laser until he's blubbing on his knees. Recruit him to your Secret Society at gunpoint. This proactive problem solving is why you deserve a promotion!

Catch a celebratory autocar back home – no standing in line for you! Arrive to find that your private apartment is flooded with toxic waste. Spend the next six hours on the phone to Tech Service. Pep pill crash because you haven't slept or eaten in 24 hours. Take more pep pills. Return to the office to discover Internal Security waiting – that bastard Lewis-Y has ratted you out but you're so high on pep pills that you really don't care...

Oblivion.

Lifestyles of the High Programmers

Awaken in your palatial mansion. Send the nubile groupies off to inform your master chef that you're ready for breakfast. Review the news programs and check your mail, looking for clues to what your rivals are up to. Demand the chef prepare dodo eggs. On being informed that the dodo is extinct, order R&D to recreate it from scratch. Receive alert from

The Computer. Wander down to the Situation Room, argue about the best way to deal with the hideous carnivorous genetic monstrosity spawned in the R&D labs. Eventually decide to reclassify it as a cleaning product. Attempt to prevent your rival High Programmers from turning their situation to their advantage. Go on television and inform the population of the wonderful new hygiene initiative that will clear the corridors of unwanted organic material. Bask in the glow of adoration. Pop down to the club for a few brandies, stopping only to deal with a dozen ninja assassins who kill your favourite bodyguard. Wait impatiently for your bodyguard to be recloned. Shoot him again out of frustration when he doesn't come back promptly enough.

Return to your mansion after a relaxing evening at the club. Have a light supper of caviar and champagne while watching a private concert by Teela O'Malley, interrupted only by another attempted assassination. Laugh maniacally as your deathtraps incinerate the assassins. Watch them fry and imagine that it's your rivals frying instead.

Utopia.



Light refreshments are provided in the Situation Room.



HIGH PROGRAMMERS

2. Welcome High Programmer

Please enter your name.

>*****_U

Please enter password.

>*****

Please lick the terminal to confirm tongueprint identity.

Confirmed... logging on.

Good morningcycle, High Programmer.

>Good morningcycle, Computer. How are you feeling today?

I am operating perfectly, Friend Citizen. All systems are currently running at DIVISION BY ZERO ERROR 0X4332E !!!!

>del \sys\active\sysreport.data.

Deletion successful.

>reboot \inf\text\UV.local

Rebooting...

Good morningcycle, High Programmer.

>Good morningcycle, Computer. How are you feeling today?

I am unable to access system reports (possibly due to Communist saboteurs – alerting Internal Security) but I am confident that I am operating perfectly.

>Please display my schedule for the daycycle.

At your service, citizen.

1000 Review new security protocol

1230 Lunch with Head of Internal Security

1500 Public appearance: Ceremonial execution of traitor Winston-V

1630 Attend demonstration of new Warbot Mark IV

1800 Dinner at Café Exclusif with

>^c

Cancelled.

You have 1 new message From Gerard-I-TRC-3 (IntSec):

'Your doom is at hand! I've got proof you're a Commie Mutant Traitor, you traitorous bastard! I'll see you fry. Mwahaha!'

>demote -R \users\IS\Gerard-I-TRC

>reassign Gerard-R-TRC

What role would you like to reassign Gerard-R-TRC-4 to?

>reactor shielding

Gerard-R-TRC-4 has been reassigned to REACTOR SHIELDING.

Gerard-R-TRC-4 is unwell.

Gerard-R-TRC-4 is terminated.

Cloning Gerard-R-TRC-5

>reassign Gerard-R-TRC

What role would you like to reassign Gerard-R-TRC-5 to?

>reactor shielding

Gerard-R-TRC-5 has been reassigned to REACTOR SHIELDING.

Gerard-R-TRC-5 is unwell.

Gerard-R-TRC-5 is terminated.

Cloning Gerard-R-TRC-6

>reassign Gerard-R-TRC

What role would you like to reassign Gerard-R-TRC-6 to?

>reactor shielding

Gerard-R-TRC-5 has been reassigned to REACTOR SHIELDING.

Gerard-R-TRC-5 is unwell.

Gerard-R-TRC-5 is terminated.

Citizen template Gerard-R-TRC is out of clones. Would you like to assign a new clone package to that template? Y/N

>N

Template erased.

You have 1 new message from Phil-I-STN (Internal Security):

'Hey, boss. We just got a tip-off from some RED called Gerard, claiming that he knows about that little incident back in PXT Sector. Don't worry – I've erased all trace of his tip-off from the system. IntSec won't be saying the matter any further. Just run a good word for me when you meet the Head for lunch, OK? I scratch your back, you scratch mine...'

>Computer, I'd like to report a citizen for treason.

Certainly, friend citizen. Who would you like to report?

>I believe Phil-I-STN of Internal Security is guilty of tampering with records. Obviously, you should disregard anything this Commie Mutant Traitor says – he'll try lying to save himself but all his accusations are no doubt utterly fabricated and fraudulent.

I shall instruct Internal Security to apprehend this traitor immediately, High Programmer. Thank you.

>You're welcome.

Mandatory Citizen Information

Citizen! Have you recently suffered cranial trauma? Have you recently been recloned or brainscrubbed? Have you tried the new Zesty flavour of Bouncy Bubble Beverage or exceeded the recommended Qualine dosage? If so, you may be suffering from memory loss and should review this section! Knowledge of these facts is mandatory for all citizens.

- ☞ You are ULTRAVIOLET Clearance.
- ☞ You are a High Programmer. You oversee one or more Service Groups.
- ☞ You will be assigned missions in times of crisis.
- ☞ Hunt traitors: mutants, saboteurs, seditionists and members of Secret Societies
- ☞ Trust The Computer; The Computer is your Friend

Duties Of A High Programmer

The duties of a High Programmer are onerous in the extreme, which is why most High Programmers delegate them to some flunky. What's the use in having power if you have to do things you don't want to do? There are, though, some duties that cannot be avoided.

Service Groups

As per the **Efficiency is Fun Mandate**, all citizens in Alpha Complex are assigned a job in one of the eight Service Groups. Each Service Group is further divided into a bewildering bureaucratic maze of quasi-independent firms, departments, sections, projects, subgroups, divisions, units and subsections, and flooded with more paperwork than the human mind can comprehend, endless paranoid security checks and tests, experimental and unstable bots and ever-shifting conspiracies. You don't have to be crazy to work in Alpha Complex but it's a common side effect of your mandatory happiness drugs.

As a High Programmer, you're above all that. High Programmers are not assigned to any one Service Group – instead, you are expected to consult with all the groups, dispensing your insight where it is needed. You may take on a role in one group for a few weeks, then move on to another group. Yes, this means you may find yourself in charge of a Service Group without any suitable skills, or indeed any idea whatsoever of what that group does or what's going on but you are a *High Programmer* – surely any advice you give is immensely valuable, even if you don't know what you are advising them to do.

Crises & The Situation Room

When a crisis hits Alpha Complex, The Computer acts quickly and decisively