

HOW THINGS CAME TO PASS

"The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft astray."

—John Steinbeck

"You'd trust a nation of shopkeepers to organize an operation of this scale? I wouldn't trust them with a picnic."

—Anonymous infantryman, Fourth Crucis Lancers

The origins of the War of 3039, as the Steiner-Davion invasion of the Draconis Combine has come to be known, lie roughly twenty years earlier with a seemingly innocuous series of events. In 3020, Archon Katrina Steiner issued her now-infamous "Peace Proposal" which, though little more than self-serving politics, led to an ongoing dialogue between the then-Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns. These discussions culminated in 3022 with the signing of a treaty that would shape Inner Sphere politics for decades to come. Ostensibly, the agreement facilitated scientific and military exchanges, but secret clauses called for political and dynastic union between the two states. These provisions were kept under wraps until 3027, when the Draconis Combine attempted to kidnap Melissa Steiner in the famed Silver Eagle incident. In the aftermath of that failed attack, the Archon announced that the young Archon-Designate was to marry Prince Hanse Davion the following summer, with their children to inherit power over both states.

A series of military exercises—Operations GALAHAD and THOR—involving LCAF and AFFS troops had been ongoing since 3026, and it was widely expected that eventually the two militaries would be unleashed on their common enemy, the Draconis Combine. However, as each year passed without any attacks, complacency settled over the rivals of this fledgling alliance. The leaders of the remaining Successor States assumed they would see no major action during the summer of 3028, the highlight of which was to be Hanse and Melissa's wedding. How wrong they were.

As his wedding present to his new bride, Hanse Davion gave her the Capellan Confederation, marking his "gift" by launching the massed AFFS at the Liao state (Operation RAT). Meanwhile, the LCAF, still in its advanced positions after Operation THOR, invaded the Draconis Combine (Operation GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG) to draw DCMS forces away from the Federated Suns while their allies dealt with the Confederation. Subsequently known as the Fourth Succession War, this conflict cost the Capellan Confederation almost half its worlds, while the Combine lost more than fifty to the Lyran Commonwealth. Souring the situation for the alliance, though far less so than might have been the case had Takashi Kurita not been obsessed with crushing the mercenary unit Wolf's Dragoons, was the loss of fifteen Davion worlds to the Combine as DCMS forces exploited the Federated Suns' weaknesses.

That the alliance did not focus its efforts on the Draconis Combine initially confounded many observers, but after the war it became clear that Operation RAT, the Davion assault on the Capellan Confederation, was partly in response to various gambits attempted by the Capellan Chancellor earlier in the decade. That the allied Lyran and FedSuns forces would eventually turn their attentions to the Combine was never in doubt. If nothing else, Hanse Davion would want to recover worlds lost to the DCMS, though first the Suns military would need to catch its breath after years of effort and the realm would need time to digest the worlds it had absorbed from the Draconis Combine, Capellan Confederation and Free Worlds League, as well as the "independent" worlds of the Tikonov Free Republic that had recently seceded from the Confederation. Because this process would take several years, no one expected a resumption of war until 3033 or 3034.

As usual in the Inner Sphere, however, political reality would interfere with the best-laid plans of Hanse the Fox, and the new Federated Commonwealth's rivals and enemies would not stand idly by.

THE RISE OF TEDDY K

Targeted by Lyran forces in the Fourth Succession War, Theodore Kurita—heir to the Combine throne—evaded capture and led the DCMS to its few victories on the Steiner front, most notably defeating the invasion of Vega. Recognizing that seizing the initiative was critical to victory, Theodore led a counter-invasion of the Commonwealth that could have severely damaged the Lyran war machine had not LIC agents identified his Operation CONTAGION and launched spoiling attacks, including the sabotage of the Combine fleet over Dromini VI. These counter-assaults cost the lives of hundreds of Lyran warriors, including the Archon's cousin, Frederick Steiner, but stalled Kurita's operations and prompted him to withdraw.

Despite facing considerable political opposition from the DCMS hierarchy, Theodore's success in the war prompted his father to name him *Gunji-no-Kanrei*, Deputy for Military Affairs. This new post—a de facto supreme warlord for the Combine reporting to the Coordinator—would oversee the rebuilding and updating of the Combine military. Theodore planned to use the Genyosha and Ryuken regiments as the model for his revised military, focusing on a more broad-based and flexible armed forces than the DCMS had previously favored. Coordinator

UNITY AND DISUNITY

April 12, 3030 saw the birth of Melissa Steiner-Davion and Hanse Davion's first child, appropriately named Victor. This youth—the first of five children—would one day rule the unified Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns, the so-called Federated Commonwealth. The years after the Fourth Succession War saw considerable political and economic integration between the two realms, but at the time of the War of 3039 there were still two distinct militaries, each with its own command and support structures. Not until the 3040s would the militaries come together as the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth (AFFC), and full political union would not occur until Melissa Steiner-Davion's assassination in 3055—a unity that ironically would last a mere two years before internal politics tore the realm apart and set it on the road to civil war.

INSIDER INFORMATION

The coincidence that ComStar should seek an alliance with the Combine just when Theodore most needed its support—and that Theodore managed to predict Primus Waterley's needs and demands—has led many observers to suggest that either the ISF or the O5P had placed an agent deep inside ComStar. Indeed, Theodore's ability to defuse ComStar's anger after the creation of the Free Rasalhague Republic—the Combine retained a number of worlds that subsequently formed the Alshain Military District in contravention of the pact with ComStar—suggests a level of insight that could only have come from within the Order. The Combine has never acknowledged such an agent, though House Kurita's actions in the aftermath of the Clan Invasion—most notably in stalling Waterley's Operation SCORPION—lend credence to such a suggestion. The identity of the operative, assuming one existed, has never been made clear.

Some suspect then-Precentor Martial Anastasius Focht of being Theodore's agent, and it is true that the two commanders have shown a degree of comradeship that suggests a relationship spanning decades. However, as ComStar did not have a military force in 3030 when the initial contacts began, this proposal is unlikely. Even less likely is that Waterley herself—or her successor as Precentor Dieron, and eventually as Primus, Sharilar Mori—was secretly an ISF operative. No evidence exists for such speculation, save that both Waterley and Mori were born in the Combine, and those who support such ideas also tend to believe that Aleksandr Kerensky was in league with Stefan Amaris in attempting to seize control of the Terran Hegemony. More believable and likely is that some member of a precentor's staff—most likely on Luthien or Dieron, though possibly on Terra—was suborned by one of the Combine intelligence agencies. The truth will likely never be known.

up. The Skye secessionists had lost a figurehead when Duke Aldo Lestrade died during the Fourth Succession War, but former Archon Alessandro Steiner—deposed some years earlier by Katrina Steiner—prompted his protégé Duke Ryan Steiner to assume the leadership of the separatist movement. Within weeks of Rasalhague's birth as a nation, pro-independence demonstrations occurred throughout Skye. Commonwealth garrison troops, many of whom were of FedSuns origin, overreacted to the demonstrations. Their harsh crackdown played into Duke Ryan's hands, allowing him to bolster his own position at the expense of Hanse Davion and Katrina Steiner. The need to maintain order at home (and to redeploy troops to calm the rising tensions) also significantly delayed Hanse Davion's plans to attack the Draconis Combine. The extra few years bought by this insurrection likely made the difference between defeat and victory for the DCMS when Hanse Davion finally launched his long-expected Combine invasion. Despite the loss of its Rasalhague worlds and the casualties of the Ronin War, Theodore Kurita believed that price a fair one to preserve his nation.

Takashi had little intention of granting the new *Gunji-no-Kanrei* any real powers, however, and ordered Theodore's "pet units" dispersed throughout the Combine military. This action had a result opposite to what the Coordinator intended—instead of spiking the *Kanrei's* plans, it spread the new units' flexible ideology throughout the Combine.

The Fourth Succession War effectively shattered the Concord of Kapteyn that had bound the Combine in a shaky alliance with the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation against Houses Steiner and Davion. Janos Marik, Captain-General of the Free Worlds League, was distracted by internal disputes and Capellan Chancellor Maximillian Liao was spiraling down into madness after his realm's near-dismemberment by the AFFS. Theodore knew his nation could not stand alone and set about finding new allies inside and outside the Combine. The first approach came from a thoroughly unexpected quarter.

Even before the Fourth Succession War formally ended, the new Primus of ComStar—former Precentor Dieron Myndo Waterley—made overtures to Theodore. She offered to provide the struggling DCMS with advanced Mechs and equipment, ostensibly as part of a garrison force deployed at Combine HPG stations. The price of such support was perhaps more than Theodore was prepared to pay—independence for the Rasalhague Military District.

INDEPENDENCE FEVER

Theodore was unprepared to take unilateral action on the Rasalhague issue, but when Haakon Magnusson declared himself Prince of the Free Rasalhague Republic on 13 March 3034, the *Kanrei* signed off on the agreement that not only created a buffer state between the Combine and the Commonwealth, but also forced the Steiners to give up many of the worlds they had seized in the Fourth Succession War. The extent of Rasalhague's political claims—granted by the Tharkad government as well as the Combine—would cause considerable friction between the Duke of Tamar and the Archon. Unfortunately, it also caused friction within the Combine's political and military hierarchy. Theodore had hoped that creating a buffer state—a deal sweetened by the equipment from ComStar—would be worth the internal troubles sparked by that action. The former Rasalhague Military District worlds retained by the Combine would form a new military district, Alshain, which would also incorporate ten worlds from the Buckminster Prefecture.

The conflict that followed became known as the Ronin War when a number of DCMS units sought to destroy the nascent FRR. Led by Marcus Kurita, Theodore's cousin, these renegades assaulted the new nation but were opposed by the DCMS, mercenaries and forces loyal to Free Rasalhague. The fighting further weakened the DCMS and cost it considerably in men and materiel, but also gave the *Kanrei* an opportunity to purge the military of disloyal elements and those resistant to change. Furthermore, the assassination of Marcus Kurita—ostensibly by the Lyrans, but widely believed to be the work of the ISF—removed a political rival of the ruling branch of the Kurita family.

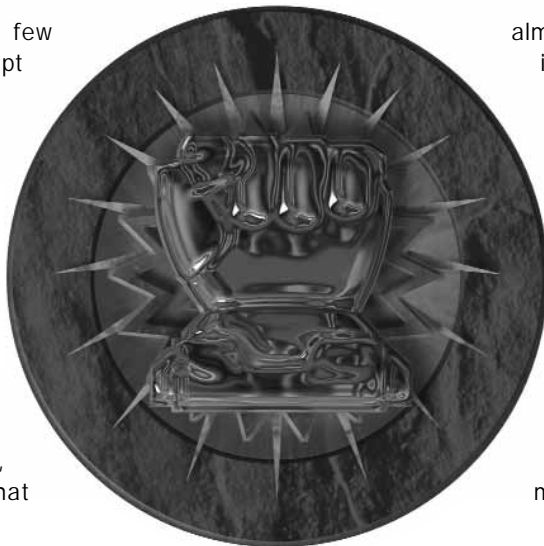
The creation of the FRR also heightened tensions in the Lyran Commonwealth, an effect seemingly planned by Theodore and ComStar. In addition to the province of Tamar's disaffection with the Tharkad government, the loss of Lyran worlds to the new republic exacerbated the longstanding desire for independence in the province of Skye—an industrial stronghold, and not a region the Lyran nation would willingly give

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As the 3030s marched on, few doubted that renewed war would erupt between the FedSuns-Lyrans alliance and the Draconis Combine. The anticipated assault was a military imperative for the alliance and another step toward dominating the Inner Sphere. Political pressure also played a role, with Duke Aaron Sandoval of the FedSuns' Draconis March constantly calling on Prince Hanse to deal with House Davion's ancestral enemy. Duke Sandoval opposed the alliance with the Lyrans, and Hanse Davion believed that renewed war with the Combine might persuade the duke to throw his weight behind the Prince's other plans.

Hampering those plans, however, was the Prince's ongoing conflict with ComStar. Though the powerful communications agency had facilitated the FedCom Alliance, they had little desire to see one nation dominate the Inner Sphere, and for much of the Fourth Succession War had placed the Federated Suns under communications interdict. Officially, ComStar took this action in reprisal for attacks on the Sarna HPG (also used to justify ComStar's militarization in the 3030s), but a postwar investigation by the FedSuns intelligence agency, the MIIO, exonerated the AFFS of any wrongdoing and suggested that some other party (most likely ComStar itself) had staged the Sarna incident to rationalize the interdict. An attack on the New Avalon Institute of Science by the Liao Death Commandos as the war drew to a close likewise raised suspicions among the Davion intelligence community. That same unit had targeted the valuable JumpShip facilities on the planet Kathil



almost simultaneously, and the physics of interstellar transport made it impossible for a unit to be in two places at once.

The paucity of evidence proving that the NAIS attack was truly the work of the Death Commandos suggested that the unit targeting the NAIS was most likely a doppelganger formation made to look like the elite Liao troops, but in reality sponsored by another power. Few groups had the knowledge and resources to carry out such a deception, but one stood out in Prince Hanse's mind. Had ComStar attempted to destroy the Helm memory core, recently acquired by the NAIS facility, or had they learned of the secret communications research underway there? Whatever the cause, relations between the alliance member-states and ComStar cooled markedly after the war, in particular following Myndo Waterley's ascension as Primus. Soon afterward, the MIIO and the LIC found themselves embroiled in a shadow conflict with ROM, ComStar's intelligence service, that cost thousands of lives and hampered the alliance's intelligence gathering capabilities. The damage done there would prove a major disadvantage in 3039.

Even before the formation of the FRR and the Ronin War, Theodore Kurita had sought to broaden the DCMS' resources and had made an alliance with the yakuza gangs that dominated the Combine's criminal underworld. The purges of the DCMS leadership in the wake of the Ronin War removed the major opponents of allowing such undesirables to serve in the military, and Theodore used the yakuza to create a series of new irregular units that bolstered the Dragon's strength. Formed in utmost secrecy, these so-called Ghost Regiments provided the Combine with a concealed reserve which, though it did not overtly deter Davion aggression, ultimately gave the *Kanrei* a means of taking the war back to the enemy. Theodore also

encouraged commanders to promote soldiers on the grounds of ability and potential, rather than by gender or social standing. Consequently, the number of women holding prominent posts in the DCMS rose substantially, though the installation of a female warlord would not occur until after the Clan Invasion.

“ I WILL FIGHT NO MORE FOREVER ”

15 March 3039 is perhaps the most significant date in the recent history of the Federated Commonwealth. It saw the birth of Yvonne Steiner-Davion, fifth and final child of Melissa Steiner and Hanse Davion, who would one day serve as regent of the Federated Suns. More significantly, it saw the abdication of Katrina Steiner in favor of her daughter. This act reflected Melissa’s increased political stature in the Lyran Commonwealth and also the balance of power in the FedCom alliance.

Officially, Katrina chose the date of her abdication to coincide with the birth of her latest grandchild and to give the Archon some time to spend with her daughter and grandchildren. The illness that would claim her life in 3040 may have prompted Katrina’s decision, but more cynical commentators cite the event’s proximity to the onset of the War of 3039. At the signing of the peace treaty that ended the Fourth Succession War, Katrina had made it clear that she was tired of warfare, quoting Joseph Nez Perce’s famous statement of a thousand years earlier. For her to oversee renewed war would have made Katrina a hypocrite, and some have suggested that her resignation in March—just as LCAF and AFFS units were moving to their jump-off points and some were already en route to their Combine targets—was a deliberate effort to sidestep such accusations. That Katrina Steiner has remained one of the most beloved archons, exceeded in popularity only by her daughter, is testament to her political acumen in handing over leadership on the eve of invasion.

Even before Archon Melissa left the world of Liao with her new daughter, she had confirmed the orders given to the LCAF high command and committed the Commonwealth to war with the Combine. The die was cast and the troops moving, and neither the new Archon nor her husband had reason to suspect the result would be any less decisive than the conflict launched eleven years earlier on their wedding day. However, the FedSuns-Lyran alliance no longer had the advantage of surprise or a monopoly on determination. This new round of conflict was long expected, and the enemy had had a decade to prepare his defenses.

THE WAR OF 3039

“Euphoria after victory is dangerous. But what’s even worse is arrogance. You stop thinking and learning.”

—Uri Gil, Israeli fighter pilot, Six-Day War

“The Dracs rolled over in Götterdämmerung. We’ll give them a good kicking this time too.”

—Hauptmann-General Kathleen Heany

The War of 3039 was intended as the knockout blow that would ensure Steiner-Davion hegemony over the Inner Sphere, leaving the twin capitals of Tharkad and New Avalon as undisputed masters of human-occupied space. With the Capellan Confederation already shattered, this assault—ten years in the planning—would remove the one remaining obstacle to the alliance’s dominance, leaving them free to deal with the remaining major power, the fractious Free Worlds League, at their convenience.

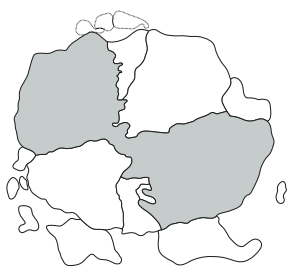
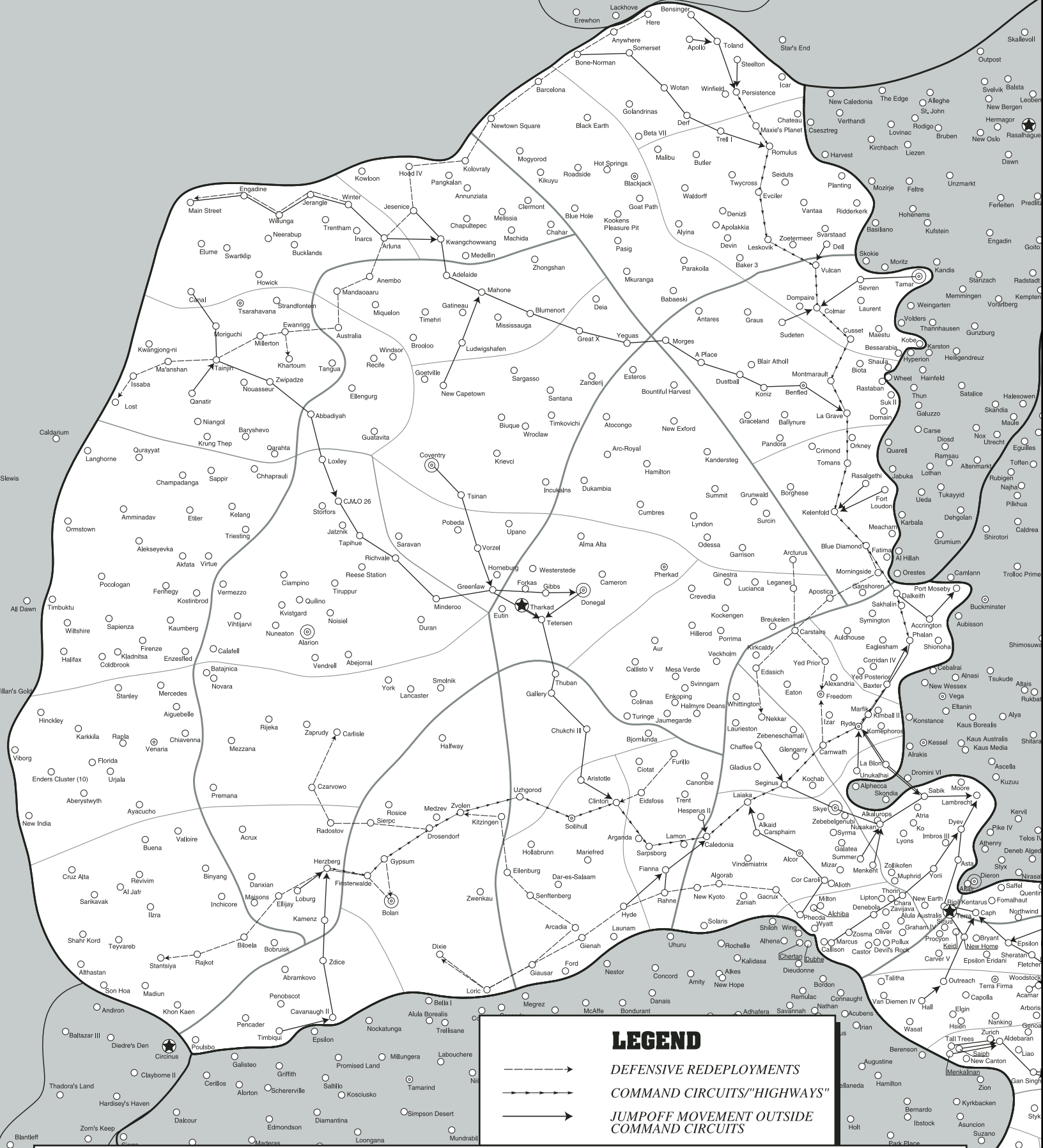
ALLIED PREPARATIONS

Unlike the surprise assault of the Fourth Succession War, there was no concealing the impending, massive Steiner-Davion attack on the Draconis Combine. The enemy knew the assault was coming, and so the allied forces could be a little more overt in their preparations than they had been in the 3028-3030 conflict. Despite the lack of strategic surprise, neither the Prince nor the Archon wished to sacrifice tactical surprise. To that end, both militaries continued their annual exercises, varying the times of their drills and their locations to confuse

PIRATES AND PRINCES

Theodore’s most controversial decision was the appointment of Michi Noketsuna as Warlord of Dieron in the wake of the Ronin War. A former aide to Minobu Tetsuhara, commander of the Ryuken in the conflict against Wolf’s Dragoons that occurred immediately before the Fourth Succession War, Noketsuna had forsaken his DCMS post to pursue a vendetta against rogue Warlord Grieg Samsonov. His campaign to offset the dishonor inflicted by Samsonov on his former master, Minobu Tetsuhara, prompted Noketsuna to adopt the guise of The Bounty Hunter, and in this role his path crossed Theodore’s as the *Kanrei* sought allies to rebuild the DCMS. Despite the objections of Theodore’s advisors, Noketsuna became one of the *Kanrei*’s closest associates, standing shoulder to shoulder with him in his efforts to sway the yakuza to his cause.




Noketsuna’s rival for the Dieron posting was Dexter Kingsley, who served at the time under Warlord Vasily Cherenkoff. Cherenkoff went rogue during the Ronin War and was brought down when Kingsley betrayed him. This action crippled the rebel forces, but Kingsley did it in an effort to advance his own position rather than from loyalty to the *Kanrei*. Theodore had little desire to promote such a self-serving individual to command of a military district and instead chose to install someone he knew had little desire for such power. Noketsuna, he believed, would command because the Combine needed him. The “old pirate” was not a popular choice with career DCMS officers but his combat and command skills, developed in his years with the original Ryuken, were beyond question.



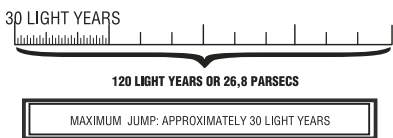
LYRAN COMMONWEALTH JUMPOFF MOVEMENTS

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LEGEND

-  DEFENSIVE REDEPLOYMENTS
-  COMMAND CIRCUITS/"HIGHWAYS"
-  JUMPOFF MOVEMENT OUTSIDE COMMAND CIRCUITS

LEGEND



observers. Operation GALAHAD '32 took place in the Draconis March, while FORGER '33 took place in the Sarna March. FORTITUDE '34 was scheduled to take place in the Isle of Skye, but the political repercussions of the Skye Revolt led to the cancellation of that year's exercises while tempers cooled. The exercises resumed the following year.

One innovation put in place by the allied powers to ease military cooperation was a series of JumpShip command circuits, designed to speed the movement of people and materiel by passing them from vessel to vessel rather than waiting the week or so required for a JumpShip to recharge between 30-light year hops. A semi-permanent command circuit had linked Tharkad and New Avalon since before the Fourth Succession War, and this core route slowly expanded to include side spurs that served regional capitals and key worlds. Ostensibly to speed the political integration of the "liberated" worlds of the Sarna March and to facilitate trade—indeed, for much of their existence the command circuit routes were used to move goods and passengers—this network of JumpShip "highways" allowed the swift redeployment of troops throughout the two realms without needing to militarize large portions of the merchant marine, as had been required during the Fourth Succession War. Not only did this improve the flexibility of the AFFS and the LCAF, but it also kept the economic impact of any future war to a minimum, a lesson Hanse and Melissa had learned the hard way after the Fourth Succession War pushed their respective economies into recession.

The attack on the Draconis Combine was originally scheduled for 3035, giving the FedCom militaries time to rebuild after the Fourth War and to absorb tactical and strategic lessons learned in that intense conflict. However, the Skye Revolt and a succession of political and economic concerns led to the war's postponement several times. The LCAF and AFFS used the delays to further hone their plans, carrying out numerous simulations and exercises to maximize their offensive force and minimize vulnerability to DCMS counter-actions. In particular, they focused on multi-regiment engagements—a signature of the Fourth Succession War—and spent considerable time honing their fighting doctrine. Officers of units scheduled to fight together became familiar with their fellow units' histories, traditions and capabilities via a series of exchange programs. Because many assaults would depend on a mix of LCAF and AFFS forces, this coordination would prove vital.

Another lesson learned from the Fourth War was the establishment of substantial supply caches to allow participating units to drive home their attacks without pausing to resupply. A decade's worth of preparation ensured that vast stockpiles of ammunition and consumables were available at each of the jump-off worlds, and each assault unit would be accompanied by logistics transports that could bring in new Mechs, ammo and personnel, allowing the assault units to remain at peak fighting efficiency. This strategy would be essential in an invasion plan that called for high-tempo operations to keep the DCMS on the defensive rather than staging counter-assaults. A core group of veteran and elite units would spearhead the FedCom assault, constantly driving forward, rather than the typical deployment pattern of two waves of troops leapfrogging each other. This tactic minimized the number of units required for each wave (and maximized the number of worlds the allies could hit), but left the invaders with little depth and minimal reserves. This drawback would return to haunt the FedCom during the war.

In addition to training and planning, the allied powers spent vast sums of money to improve their battlefield technology and maximize their combat edge. New weapons and armor developed by the NAIS using the Helm memory core were employed for the first time in this conflict, considerably extending the range and firepower of the attackers. The allied forces did not suspect Theodore's secret deal with ComStar, which had given the DCMS similar technology not composed of erratic prototypes and experimental configurations. The FedCom also believed it had an advantage in communications, deploying portable "black box" fax machines with each invasion HQ and using these to coordinate actions rather than relying on the questionable services of ComStar. Unfortunately for the allies, the system had fallen into Combine hands during the Fourth Succession War, and so the DCMS could eavesdrop on many "secure" communiqués (for more details on communications, see the *Secret Whispers: Black Box Technology* sidebar on p. 67). The degree to which allied communications were compromised never became clear during the 3039 conflict, though after the war the LIC and MIIO suspected the Combine had access to privileged information and so made radical changes to FedCom encryption. Not until the midst of the Clan Invasion did the full extent to which the black box network had been penetrated become clear, along with ComStar's perfidy.

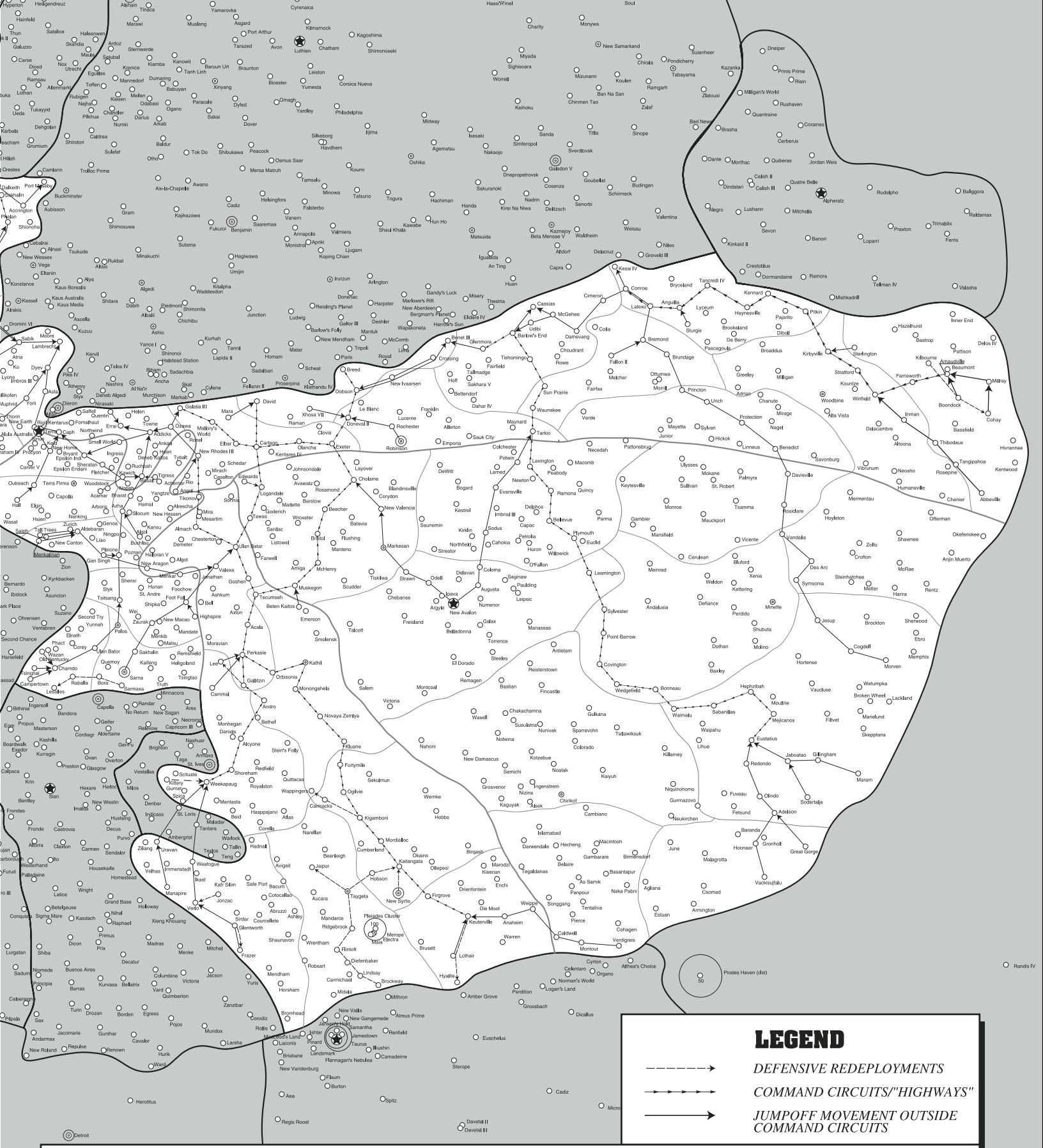
THIEVES AND PATRIOTS

On 2 April 3039, Lieutenant Adrian Robertson left the military command center on Robinson and started the ten-kilometer drive back to his home. En route, he stopped at the KidsWorld department store to pick up a new toy for his six-year-old daughter, locking his briefing papers and personal computer—which contained details of the forthcoming war—in the trunk of his groundcar. He was in the store for six minutes, but by the time he emerged into the late afternoon sunshine, his vehicle and its contents had been stolen.

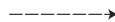


A massive police and MIIO operation followed, based on the possibility that this apparent vehicle theft was an ISF operation. Duke Aaron Sandoval authorized the closure of Robinson's spaceports for almost 24 hours and approved a "technical glitch" in Robinson City's telecommunications grid to limit remote access to the ComStar HPG and contain any leaks. Despite his best efforts, however, news began to circulate in the city, both of the security operation underway and of the loss of valuable military secrets.

Around 3 p.m. on April 3, almost exactly 24 hours after the theft, the Robinson City PD received an anonymous call stating that the groundcar was in a car park in the city center. Agents rushed to the scene, where they found and secured the vehicle. The lock on Robertson's briefcase had been forced but the contents remained intact—the damaged case had been secured with three chains and padlocks. An additional sheet of paper was included, bearing the following statement: "I may be a thief, but I am a patriot too. I return this to you, together with my assurance that I have not copied or passed on the information it contains."

The identity of the man the Robinson press subsequently dubbed the "Patriotic Thief" has never been established.



LEGEND

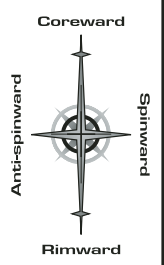
-  DEFENSIVE REDEPLOYMENTS
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FEDERATED SUNS JUMPOFF MOVEMENTS

LEGEND



MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



DCMS PREPARATIONS

Had Hanse Davion immediately turned his forces against the DCMS after the Fourth Succession War, in 3031 or 3032, there is little chance that the DCMS would have prevailed. Though Theodore Kurita had made alliances with ComStar to secure advanced technology in building his new military, the equipment was scarce and trained personnel even scarcer. The constant delays suffered by the LCAF and the AFFS gave Theodore time to recruit personnel and train them, both to handle the new equipment and to accept the new doctrines necessary to resist the invaders.

Theodore and his core supporters could only guess as to the FedCom's intended targets and so had to formulate their strategy around a flexible response to whatever the enemy threw at them. Theodore knew that any attempt to directly oppose the invaders would likely shatter the DCMS—an assumption supported by subsequent wargaming—and so his planning and training centered on delaying actions, which would force the invaders to spend more time and effort attaining their objectives and allow the Combine military to react appropriately. This, Theodore realized, was the only way to direct the DCMS efficiently against the technical and numerical superiority of the AFFS and LCAF.

He also realized that making alliance assaults more costly than expected might be insufficient. To ensure victory, he would have to convince Hanse Davion and his generals that the whole premise of their war was flawed, forcing them to question their information and assumptions about the strength and effective-

ness of the DCMS. The new *Yurei* (Ghost) units created through Theodore's alliance with the yakuza provided one strand of this deception, and the technology garnered from ComStar was another. These alone were not enough, however, and so Theodore designed Operation OROCHI, an audacious gambit upon which the defense of the Combine hinged.

RANK AND FILE

At the outset of the war, the LCAF and AFFS remained distinct military entities, each with their own rank systems, organization and procedures. The alliance had brought the two militaries closer together—they used many common 'Mech and vehicle designs and broadly similar tactics—but ten years of cooperation had not yet integrated their rank systems or command structures. For much of the 3039 conflict, this lack of complete coordination was a minor issue, as many assaults involved either LCAF or AFFS troops but not both. However, where units from both militaries worked together, a degree of command confusion (and in some cases, outright conflict) hampered allied operations.

To better understand the command structures of the three principal militaries involved in the War of 3039, the following table shows the equivalency of ranks between the AFFS, LCAF and DCMS. The table also depicts the ranks of the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth (established in response to the command confusion of the 3039 War) to facilitate comparisons with unit structures during the Clan Invasion and later conflicts.

	Federated Suns	Lyran Commonwealth	Federated Commonwealth	Draconis Combine
ENLISTED RANKS				
E1	Recruit	Recruit	Recruit	<i>Houjuhei</i> (Recruit)
E2	Private	Private	Private	<i>Heishi</i> (Private)
E3	Private, First Class	Private, First Class	—	<i>Gunjin</i> (Lance Corporal)
E4	Corporal	Corporal	Corporal	<i>Go-cho</i> (Corporal)
E5	—	Senior Corporal	—	—
E6	Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	<i>Gunsho</i> (Sergeant)
E7	—	Staff Sergeant	—	<i>Shujin</i> (Master Sergeant)
E8	Sergeant-Major	Sergeant Major	Sergeant Major	<i>Kashira</i> (Talon Sergeant)
E9	—	Staff Sergeant Major	—	<i>Sho-ko</i> (Sergeant Major)
E10	Command Sergeant-Major	Senior Sergeant Major	Command Sgt. Major	—
OFFICERS				
O1	Subaltern	Leutnant	—	—
O2	Leftenant	First Leutnant	Leftenant	<i>Chu-i</i> (Lieutenant)
O3	Captain	Hauptmann	Hauptmann	<i>Tai-i</i> (Captain)
O4	Major	Kommandant	Kommandant	<i>Sho-sa</i> (Major)
O5	—	Hauptmann-Kommandant	—	—
O6	Leftenant Colonel	Leutnant-Colonel	Leftenant Colonel	<i>Chu-sa</i> (Lt. Colonel)
O7	Colonel	Colonel	Leftenant General	<i>Tai-sa</i> (Colonel)
O8	Leftenant General	—	—	—
O9	Major General	Leutnant-General	Hauptmann General	<i>Sho-sho</i> (Brigadier-General)
O10	General	Hauptmann-General	Marshal	—
O11	Marshal	Kommandant-General	—	<i>Tai-sho</i> (General)
O12	Field Marshal	General	Field Marshal	<i>Tai-shu</i> (Warlord)
O13	Marshal of the Armies	General of the Armies	Marshal of the Armies	<i>Gunji-no-Kanrei</i>
O14	First Prince	Archon	Archon-Prince	Coordinator