

# Society & Culture

The North American Federation can be considered a shadow of what it once was. When the U.S. government declared bankruptcy, society nearly broke down in the interim. Riots and looting were commonplace until the NAF police force, called G-Police, was in place. While the overall quality of life in the NAF improved under the fledgling government, the gap that separated the haves and the have-nots grew.

Through the influx of immigrants during the Balkan Wars, the invasion of the Fourth Reich, and the Malaysian Campaign, large, cultural neighborhoods became more commonplace. Chinatown and Little Italy grew by over 250% in the first few months alone. Unfortunately, many of these cultural neighborhoods were located in slums and red light districts, adding to the impoverished population. With the increased number of "Lowballers" (as they became known), crime increased, both by those struggling to survive and by those willing to prey on the unfortunate souls. The red light districts are packed with low-rent apartment buildings and similar shops, with apartments above, lining every street. The shops all vary, especially between cultural neighborhoods, and as many as half are fronts for the crime syndicates operating throughout the NAF. While some sell exotic incense and candles, one could walk less than ten feet and see a shop selling handcrafted toys.

With this increased crime rate came increased cases of vigilantes and supposed "protectors of the downtrodden." There are many, police and citizen alike, that are uncertain which is worse: the vigilantes or the crime lords.

## Lowballers

The lowballers would appear to have it worse than anyone, but they never let on. Many are upbeat and simply exist in a world where the future is an uncertain one. You might die today in the crossfire of a gang war or you might die a hundred years from now of old age. The lowballers, despite having lost their right to vote, keep an optimistic attitude and enjoy themselves, one day at a time.

## The Upper Class

The upper class has walled itself off from the lowballers and the red light districts in many cities. Following the riots, citizens picked up the pieces. Some managed to raise their station in life, becoming one of the upper class by taking advantage of the situation and the less fortunate, and cannot bear to return to their previously impoverished life. Thus, they protect their riches with deadly force, using their money to purchase elaborate and dangerous security systems. Others, particularly the local politicians, worked with the G-Police to put a wall between the poor wealthy sections of the cities. Now, the rich sections of the cities are palaces and towers of glass and metal, separated from the poorer shantytowns by an easily recognizable border.

## G-Police

The Government Police, or G-Police, is the NAF-backed local police force. Each city funds 80% of the G-Police force, with the remaining 20% of necessary funds provided the federal NAF government. This 20% is generally in the form of police vehicles, especially the MX-9 "Land Shark" APCs (see **Century Station**, p.81) and Havoc gunships (jet-powered, helicopter-like craft with VTOL capabilities and varying armaments). City funds are primarily used to cover salaries, support personnel, and supplies. Total funding for a city the size of New York City is approximately \$30 million annually. Smaller cities (St. Louis, Dallas, and Houston) range from \$12 million to \$20 million in funding for G-Police forces.