

SPACELANES

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERSTELLAR TRADE

FROM TRADING TRIBBLES TO OUTWITTING ORIONS

Enter the world of high finance and low dealing in the *STAR TREK* universe, and enjoy the freewheeling life of the independent trader.

This supplement to FASA's *STAR TREK: The Role Playing Game* enables players to buy private ships, obtain cargoes, and turn profits no man has turned before. In addition, players and gamemasters will learn the ins and outs of the Federation economy—from pricing goods to trading on the UFP stock exchange, and more.

The players' book, a copy of the 23rd century trade magazine *Spacelanes*, gives an inside look at the ways and means of merchant life.

The gamemaster's book provides details on generating trader characters, and all the necessary information for running trader adventures.

Start plying the space lanes today.

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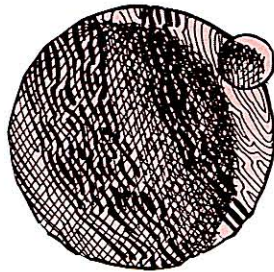
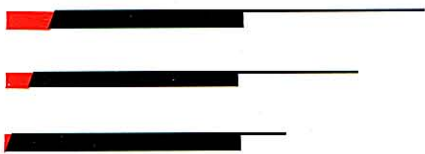
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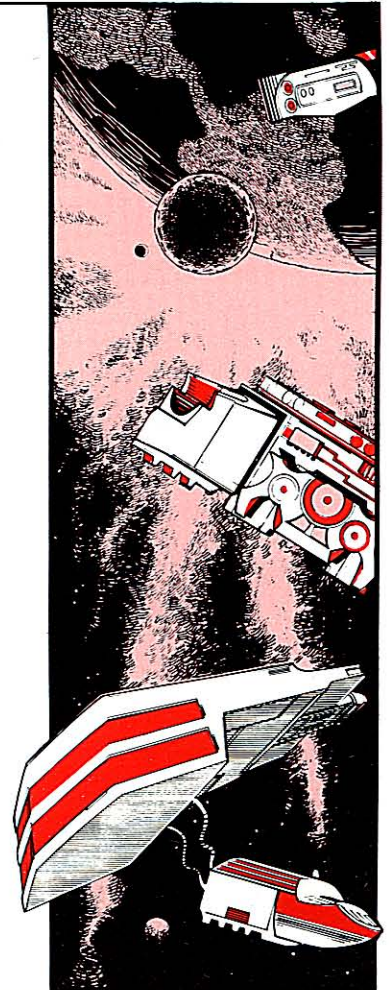
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CONDOMAXIMUMS
LIVING SPACES
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FOR
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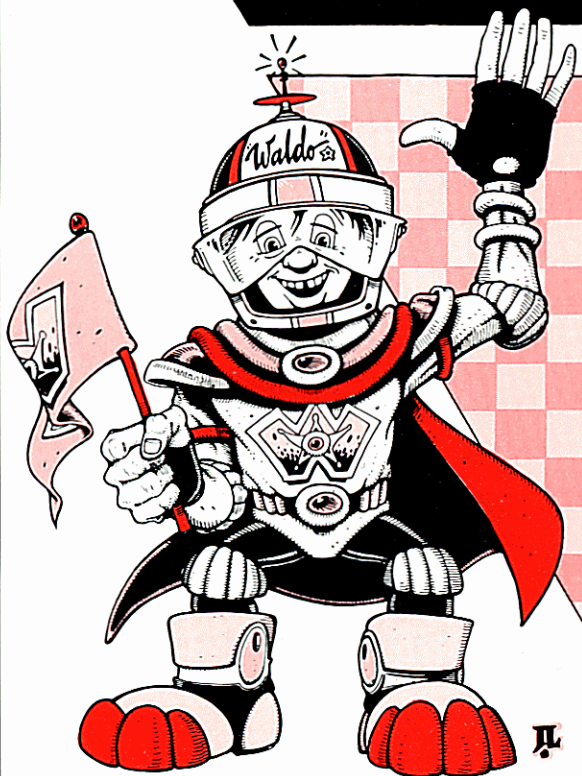
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WRIGLEY'S

PLEASURE

P L A N E T



**THRILLS'
SPILLS' &
CHILLS'**

EDITORIAL

THE MERCHANT IN SPACE

Diplomats, in speeches full of high-sounding words, describe the Federation's mission to bring peace and freedom to the galaxy. These aims are noble and just, worthy of emulation. The words used to describe them, appealing as they do to the emotions and to idealism, are attractive. The galaxy flocks to the Diplomatic Corps and to Star Fleet.

It is disturbing, however, that many of those who mouth the high-sounding words decry the profit motive in almost the same breath. It is considered fashionable to call traders "opportunists", "exploiters", and "profiteers".

Those who raise voices in scorn against traders know nothing of the realities behind the ideals of the Federation.

Trade is the means by which peace and freedom have spread and been maintained galaxy-wide. Trade is what brings together a thousand planets with a hundred races into a strong and benevolent government that allows all their individuality. Trade assists the developing cultures, and gives them influence and power to follow their own destinies. Trade reinforces the ideals of the UFP with actions.

Against the stiff and cynical voices, we traders stand proud. We *are* opportunists, in that we recognize, create, and share opportunity. We *are* exploiters, in that we find and dig out the best each world has to offer and share it with the galaxy's peoples. We *are* profiteers, in that we create profits for ourselves and for the thousand worlds we serve.

We are the lifeline of the Federation, in war and in peace. We are the couriers, the pioneers, the suppliers of needs. We are the merchants, and we wear the name "trader" proudly.

Join us.



TRADER CAPTAINS AND MERCHANT PRINCES

Writing And Design
John Theisen

First Edition Writing And Design
Fantasimulations Associates
Guy W. McLimore, Jr.
Greg K. Poehlein
David F. Tepool

Editorial Staff
Editor-In-Chief
L. Ross Babcock III
Senior Editor
Donna Ippolito
Editor
Todd Huettel

Production Staff
Illustration
Dana Knutson
Todd F. Marsh
Jeff Laubenstein
Mitch O'Connell
Ad Design
Jeff Laubenstein
Todd F. Marsh
Typesetting And Layout
Tara Gallagher

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IN THIS ISSUE

Greenhorns, welcome!

This issue is dedicated to those who are just now becoming traders, or who are considering the life of seeking gold in the stars. To such "Greenhorns", we give warm greetings! There will be much between these covers for you.

Since the earliest days of Terra's North American voyagers, there has always been a rite of passage through which the novice trader had to navigate. It is our hope that the material we present here will help with the navigating.

Do not take offense at the name Greenhorn. It has a venerable history, harking back to the frontier days of Terra. It is a term of affection, bringing to every seasoned trader captain and merchant prince a rush of memories, fond and not-so-fond. We all were Greenhorns once, and if the truth be known, many of us would prefer to be so again!

Your spirit and enthusiasm revitalize our profession. You are the fresh blood we need to keep from stagnating. With the energy you supply, we continue to grow.

In this issue are articles from many different sources, all of which bear directly on the merchant in space. Bernard Reynolds, Chairman of the UFP/Independent Traders' Association, once again supplied us with a glossary of terms useful for the novice. We recommend that you read it first. His staff also has provided a timeline giving the high (and low) points in the history of interstellar trade. To this, the editorial staff here has added sidebars on the colorful individuals who helped create that history.

Master Trader Kevin Devlin gives invaluable information on *Becoming A Merchant Spaceman*. His article is a shameless attempt at recruiting. Does a pretty good job, too!

The two feature articles deal with the two main lifestyles of the deep-space trader. In *The Corporate Merchant*, we explore the various paths a trader can follow as an employee of a trading company or shipping line. In a companion article, *The Independent Merchant*, we deal with the tough, intensely personal business of becoming the owner of your own merchant vessel and of operating it at a profit (sometimes immense profit!).

Captain Anson Robertson returns with *Making The Freeloader Run*, another chapter in the adventures of young Jaan Holona, Citizen of the Triangle. Well-known from the pages of *Youth Life*, published by the Stellar Scouts of the UFP, Captain Robertson's long-running series frequently features independent traders in a true-to-life fictional style. This piece deals with the trade run from Wall to Freeloader, as Jaan makes his first interstellar voyage aboard a small freighter.

The Law And The Profits returns with yet another episode in our own popular series of debates between legal-eagle Leonard Lawrence Llewellyn, retired Senior Counsel to the UFP/ITA, and the outspoken Captain Rita Martinez, well-known author of *The Martinez Method: A Practical Guide To Triangle Trade*. "Law" Llewellyn, as usual, takes the conservative viewpoint, spelling out clearly what the law does and does not allow. "Rigel Rita", on the other hand, relates experiences from her 22 years as an active trader in the Triangle and the Organian Treaty Zone.

In a two-article mini-series dealing with the black market, "Roger Blacke" presents us with *Shadow Alley*, an excerpt from his best-seller *Confessions Of A Star Pirate*. The other side of the cell door is amply represented by the Federation Office of Justice. Jessup van der Heern, First Assistant Prosecutor, Borderlands Sector, answers the question *What Is The Black Market?* and provides the FOJ guidelines on statutes and penalties for black marketeering.

Finally, investment counselor Roberta S. Kaminsky guest-authors on investments in *Making Your First Million*.

Again, Greenhorns, welcome! See you in the spacelanes!



A Capsule History Of Interstellar Trade

By Paul Jesse and the UFP/ITA Staff

The history of interstellar trade is about as old as interstellar travel itself.

There is an apocryphal story, often repeated by non-Human traders, about a junior contact officer aboard the first Terra-to-Alpha Centauri expedition who wore a rather flashy but inexpensive electronic timepiece. When contact was established between the Terran expedition and representatives of the Alpha Centauri government, a young Centauran science adviser (some versions of the story attribute the action to the youthful Zephram Cochrane) admired the chronometer.

Neither the Terran nor the Centauran spoke the other's language, but it was clear to the junior officer that the timepiece was of some interest. He thought to make some diplomatic points (and perhaps catch the notice of his superiors) by making a present of the device to the Centauran. He removed the device from his wrist and placed it in the hand of the surprised Centauran, unaware that this particular move was—in the Centauran culture of the day—a way to dicker about the price of an item.

When a customer implied that a stated price was too high, a Centauran merchant would place the item in the hand of the customer, or move the item closer, saying in effect "You have not looked closely enough". Though the Centauran had made no overtures about buying the device, he did not want to insult an interstellar visitor, and so he handed the Terran officer a Centauran creditcube. The advisor had just been paid that morning, and the crystal creditcube represented more than half the science advisor's weekly salary. The Terran did not recognize the yellow-green crystal cube as money, but thought he was being given a gift in return, smiled, and kept it. Thus, the story goes, the first transaction between Terrans and representatives of an interstellar culture ended with the Terran having all the money and the other having a useless trinket.

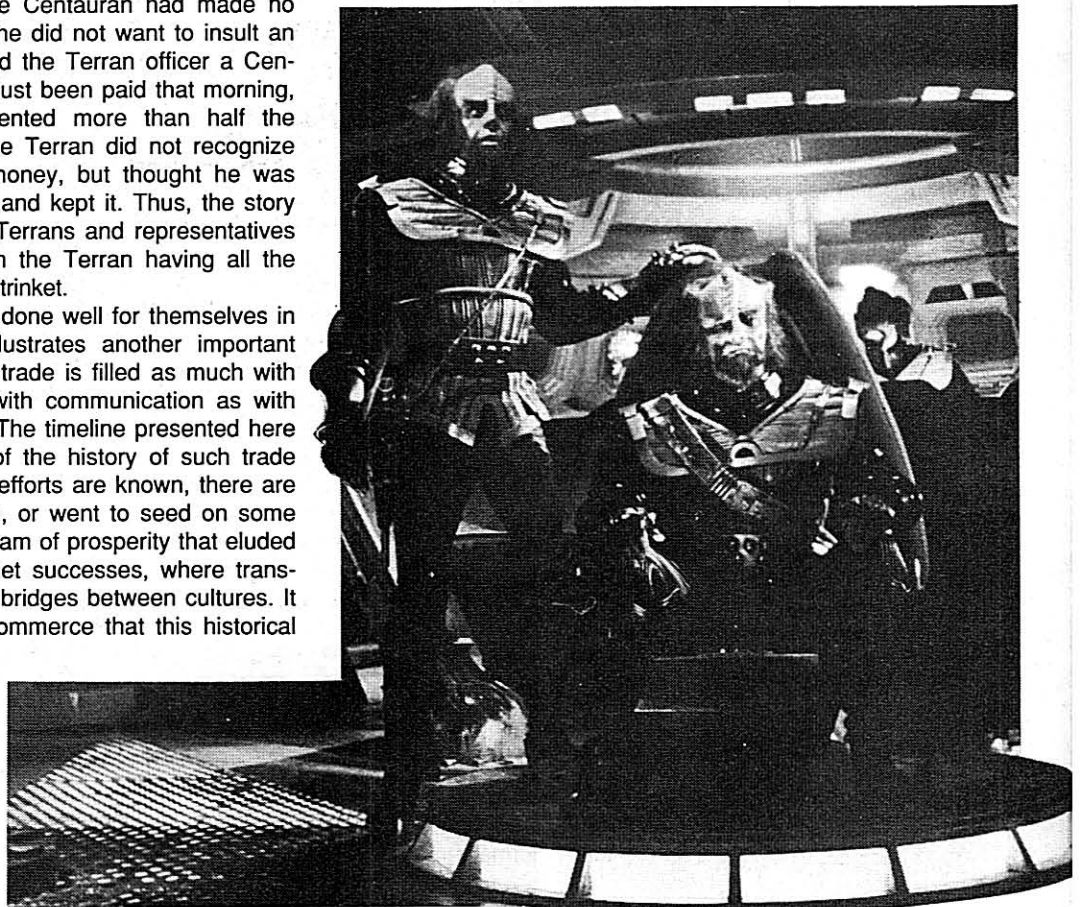
Though Terrans certainly have done well for themselves in interstellar trade, the story also illustrates another important point: that the history of interstellar trade is filled as much with misunderstandings and difficulties with communication as with rich successes and great triumphs. The timeline presented here gives just a taste of the richness of the history of such trade endeavors. For every trader whose efforts are known, there are thousands who died alone in space, or went to seed on some backwater world, searching for a dream of prosperity that eluded them. There are also the many quiet successes, where transactions between individuals created bridges between cultures. It is to these unheralded heroes of commerce that this historical work is indebted.

Stardate 0/7104.09

The Triverture Trade Pact is signed by representatives of Terra, Alpha Centauri, and Vulcan. Until this time, every trade transaction among the three worlds required lengthy negotiation on every point. The Triverture Pact arranged for private interests on each world to cooperate in providing venture capital and guidance for independent and corporate trade efforts that would be chartered jointly by the three governments. The Triverture Pact made interstellar commerce practical and attractive, and the dawn of modern interstellar trade is marked by this date.

Stardate 0/7202

The Orion colonial governments make first contact with the Klingon Empire. Cleverly, they conceal the real value of their location in space and their mineral wealth, avoiding Klingon domination by convincing the Empire that they have more to offer as independent allies. A figurehead Klingon governor is assigned to the Orion Colonies after a minor show of force, but he never actually attempts to exercise control, and his position is mostly that of a trade liaison. The average Orion is totally unaware that the colonies are 'officially' a Klingon protectorate. They do recognize a rich new market when they see one and so start trading with the Klingons, with the controlling trade families always watchful to assure that the Empire does not become too interested in Rigel's wealth.



A look at traders past:

SEHEK'S FOLLY

In the early days of warp drive, during the period of galactic expansion prior to the founding of the Federation, a scout ship of the Triventure Pact assigned to explore a new star system made First Contact with the Tellarite culture—and landed before an inquiry board that insisted on holding the vessel responsible for "excessive" amounts of radiation created by its warp drives. Suspecting that the Tellarite government was merely attempting to obtain concessions that would gain them the secret of warp drive, the scout ship's captain at first denied all charges.

Science Officer aboard the vessel was Sehek, a member of one of Vulcan's first families of trade. Perhaps shrewd bargaining is encoded genetically, or perhaps Sehek absorbed trading through his pores, while under the influence of his father Silak, who guided the family trade business unerringly. Faced with all the components of a trade dicker, Sehek demanded to see proof that Tellarite science was any more capable of screening radiation than the scout ship was.

Proof was forthcoming, data that explained the work of Tellarite scientists in building shielding for fusion reactors. This data was convincing enough that the scout ship captain, pressured by Sehek, agreed to the huge fines levied by the Tellarites. When word of this agreement reached his superiors, Sehek was reviled widely for his "folly".

Later, capitalizing on one of the shrewdest trades from the early days of interstellar merchant operations, Sehek took the proof given him and showed how the shielding techniques could be applied to warp drives to make interstellar ships more efficient. The income from marketing these systems paid for the Tellarite fines many times over, and assured Sehek's honored place in trading history.



Stardate 0/7308

First contact with Tellar is made by a Triventure-sponsored scout vessel manned by Vulcans. In the tradition of true Tellarite hospitality, fines are levied on the incoming ship for unlawful levels of radiation and emissions from its engines and power generation systems. Science Officer Sehek argues before a hastily-convened Tellarite inquiry board that their vessel cannot be held responsible for regulations that impose impossible restrictions that cannot be met by known technology, but his arguments are refuted by Tellarite scientists. Though Tellar has not perfected the warp drive itself, their widespread use of fusion technology has led to the development of advanced shielding techniques previously unknown to the science of any of the Triventure cultures. Sehek insists that proof of the

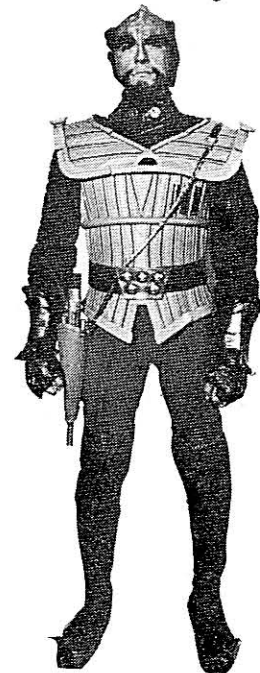
existence and nature of such technology be provided before he will concede defeat. Though the other officers of the vessel advise against it, Sehek convinces his captain to sign an agreement to pay huge fines to the Tellar government, which will be collected from Triventure interests in the form of trade goods. Sehek's "folly" proves to be a shrewd plan in the long run, as the scientific data he insisted on as proof in the inquest grants Triventure interests a major technological boost that allows bigger and better drive and power systems to be constructed for manned ships. Tellar is eventually granted equal trade status with the Triventure signatories, despite the fact that the Tellar government never quite agrees to formally join the Trade Pact.

Stardate 0/7604

In the face of tension between the three primary Triventure cultures and the newly-encountered Andorian Empire, a restrictive trade act is introduced that would prohibit trade with Andorian interests, or even with independent worlds and cultures that trade with Andorians. Feeling that such restrictions would be a major step backwards in attempts to bring the Andorian government to the negotiating table, a number of Vulcan trade families oppose the act. Speaking for these families, the great Vulcan negotiator T'pava declares it a "measure born of fear, unworthy of seekers of peace". Her oratory sways the Council, and the measure is defeated, though Tellarite trade associations do restrict trade with Andor. As a result, trade concessions are a major factor in bringing about the First Alpha Centauri Conference, at which the Andorians agree to join the Triventure effort, which becomes known as the Quadrilateral Trade Pact.

Stardate 0/7610

The Klingon figurehead governor is withdrawn from the Orion worlds, beginning a period of benign neglect by the Klingons, largely because war has heated up between the Romulans and Klingons along their common border, and the Empire has no time for an area it perceives as only marginally useful. Trading vessels from the Klingon Empire become rare in Orion space, with most trade of war materials conducted using Orion vessels. Allegedly, this is done to free Klingon vessels for war efforts, but the policy is actually suggested by the Orions to rid their space of the Klingon presence so that they may build up their own military more effectively without tipping off the Empire to their actual strength.



Stardate 0/7907

A small Orion frontier scout encounters a lone Tellarite trader, Gargash Dlumppheg, whose dilapidated ship had wandered far off course, where he would surely have died if he had not been found. The details of this meeting are unknown, though Dlumppheg's memoirs hint that it started in a somewhat less-than-friendly manner. Even so, the Tellarite trader was taken to the Rigel system, and came away after five months with an exclusive

trade agreement between his tiny shipping outfit (now minus even *one* ship of its own) and the entire Orion colonial government. Heavily in debt to the Orion consortium that supplied him with a ship for his return to Tellarite space, he is able to turn his agreement into a personal fortune by selling franchises for Orion trade to the biggest corporations on Tellar, Andor, Vulcan, Terra, and the Centauran worlds.

A look at traders past:

A FOOL AND HIS MONEY

In a stroke of bad luck that fully described his early career, Gargash Dlumppheg was sent hurtling into uncharted space when the navigation system on his one-Tellarite ship failed. His tale would have ended there had he not been discovered by a passing Orion scout vessel. This was the first meeting between Orions of the Rigel system and the Quadrilateral trading powers.

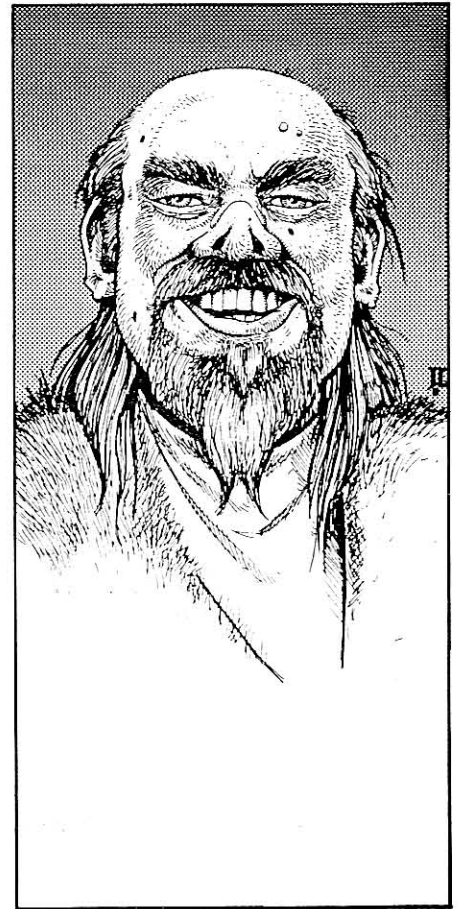
Through sheer stubbornness (he refused to identify himself to the alien Orion vessel that found him), Dlumppheg began his journey to Rigel as a prisoner. Five months later, that same stubbornness (and some well-chosen half-truths) had convinced the Orion government that Dlumppheg was the best chance they had to exploit the new Quadrilateral Trade Pact as a customer for Orion goods and services. Already the center of a growing trade empire, the trade families of Rigel coveted more territory and believed Dlumppheg could supply it.

The Tellarite trader, who was possessed of a completely undistinguished trading record before his chance meeting, returned to Tellar with an exclusive agreement for trade with the entire Orion government. He soon parlayed this astonishing document into billions of credits, selling exclusive franchises to both Tellarite and Quadrilateral trade companies. His story remains as one of the classic rags-to-riches tales in all of galactic trading history.

Unfortunately for both the franchisees and Dlumppheg, the Tellarite was not as clever as he had believed. Orion law differed sharply from the Tellarite and Quadrilateral trade agreements he had been used to, and the agreements he thought to be exclusive were binding only on governmental buying and selling, and did not apply to the big Orion trade families that actually moved most of the cargo in and out of the Rigel system.

The large companies that bought franchises were able to obtain only small, almost worthless shipping contracts, while ambitious independents made deal after deal with the Orion family corporations. Dlumppheg was sued by the franchisees, but both Tellarite and Quadrilateral Pact courts found him innocent of actionable wrongdoing. In the words of a Vulcan justice of the Quadrilateral High Court, "One cannot imprison someone for being a fool and for being believed by other fools."

Unable to continue in business because of public mistrust, Dlumppheg purchased his own colony world, to which he retired with his fortune. There he lived to a ripe old age, parted from his wealth only by death. Dlumppheg's 14 sons and 11 daughters fought over the wealth left them, most of which was eaten up by legal fees.



Stardate 0/8202

Franchisees of the Dlumppheg agreements discover they have miscalculated badly. The Terran trade vessel *Marco Polo* returns from Rigel laden with cargo and important news. The exclusive ties between Dlumppheg and the Orion colonial government do not apply to the much richer trading market available by dealing direct with the trading families of Orion. The *Marco Polo*, with no Dlumppheg franchise, has returned with a hold full of fine Rigelian wine.

The bureaucratic snarl involved in dealing with the largely ceremonial Orion colonial offices is quickly bypassed by small independent traders, particularly from Vulcan and Terran colonial interests. While the big companies fumble and delay, many fortunes are made in practically unrestricted trade with the Orion families. This period of prosperity forever assures a future for independent small trading operations in interstellar commerce.

Dlumppheg is sued unsuccessfully over 750 times in Andorian, Centauran and Terran courts, largely because there are no legal reciprocation agreements among the various cultures. General mistrust of Dlumppheg forces the closing of his non-Tellarite operations, but he retires with a huge fortune to his estate on his very own Tellarite colony world.



A look at traders past:

GENTLEMAN J'MM

After a distinguished military career with the Andorian Imperial Navy, Captain J'mm T'las became an interstellar trader, who carried over his precise military manner into his trade operations.

Heading up a well-organized group of independent interstellar traders, T'las was instrumental in the formation of the UFP. As a member of the Andorian delegation to the lengthy debates surrounding the formation, he helped hammer out the laws governing interstellar trade, ensuring that they would not crush independent trade.

The group of traders he led formally organized as the United Federation of Planets Independent Traders Association (UFP/ITA), with T'las as its first President and later Chairman of the Board of Directors. His long and distinguished career saw the fledgling organization through the chaotic first years of the Federation.

Among his many accomplishments was the negotiation of the Andorian Transport Strike of Stardate 0/9101. He spearheaded the establishment on Andor of the first UFP/ITA Merchant Academy (Stardate 1/1907.15), which was later renamed the T'las Memorial Academy for Interstellar Merchants.

Stardate 0/8706.06

The Articles Of Federation are signed, linking Terra, Andor, Alpha Centauri, Vulcan, and Tellar in military, social, and economic fellowship. It is economics, some say, that swung the tide of opinion in favor of the Federation concept, as the Articles and early Federation rulings based on them provide for a common legal system and a way to regulate interstellar trade. Independent interests, well-funded and led by Andorian trader J'mm T'las, manage to prevent a stifling Federation bureaucracy from crushing small independent traders, but the free-wheeling traffic in everything and anything money will buy is soon over. This cooperative effort among independents leads, however, to the formation of the United Federation of Planets Independent Traders Association (UFP/ITA), with T'las as its first president. Orions keep their colonies out of the Federation, avoiding restrictive entanglements for the time being. They also maintain the secret of the existence of the Klingon Empire. The Klingons are just one of many cultures with whom the Orions, and so they go unnoticed by the newborn Federation.



Stardate 0/9211

The Federation cargo vessel *Atlas* is destroyed by Romulan forces in the first known contact between these two cultures. A marker-recorder buoy is released by the vessel's captain before the ship is disabled entirely and taken in tow. Though the buoy is found months later, the *Atlas* is never heard from again.



Stardate 1/0101.01

The loss of three Star Fleet heavy cruisers in the same area as the *Atlas* incident, and eyewitness accounts by the crew of a surviving destroyer attached to the same fleet reveal the presence of the Romulan Empire. The subsequent series of border incidents lead to war, and also distract Federation attention from exploring the area beyond the Orion colonial holdings, which would have revealed the presence of the Klingon Empire.

Stardate 1/0610.14

The UFP formally declares war on the Romulan Star Empire. The Orions surprise the UFP by declaring full neutrality and by not allowing Orion shipping to participate in war trade, nor Orion bases to be used as way stations for war supply. This move hampers war supply efforts, and many UFP companies that continue to trade with Orion interests are branded by the public as traitorous and are forced out of business. Independents pick up the slack, supplying the war effort. As the Romulans do not recognize the status of non-combatants, no cargo vessel in the area is safe, including those converted to the so-called mercy vessels run by many patriotic independent traders carrying non-combat aid to colonies isolated by the fighting.

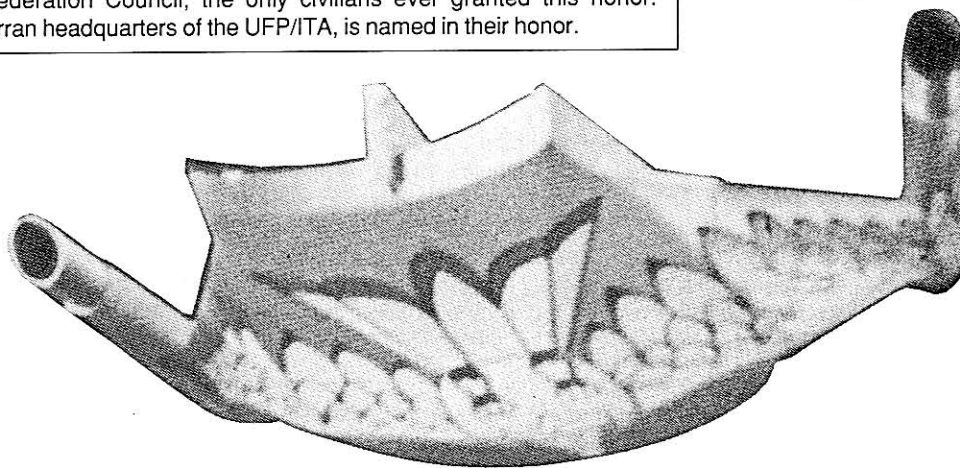
A look at traders past:

BRAVEST AND BEST

In the early days of the Romulan/UFP War, a number of outlying colony worlds were cut off from the UFP by the fighting. To bring vital supplies to these colonies, a large number of independent merchants acted as "mercy vessels" transporting relief shipments. Such ships always broadcast the recognition signal of a non-combatant vessel, completely unaware that the Romulan Star Empire, because of characteristics in their racial make-up, did not recognize the existence of non-combatants.

On Stardate 1/0703.21, a convoy of mercy vessels was ambushed by a Romulan warship. Offers of surrender were ignored, and the Romulan ship mercilessly destroyed six unarmed merchant vessels. Captain Rachel Cohen and her copilot/husband Isadore "played dead" in their two-person merchant freighter the *Free Spirit*, drawing the Romulan close. They then deliberately overloaded their engines and exploded their vessel, crippling the Romulan ship and allowing 23 other UFP merchant craft to survive.

The Cohens were posthumously awarded the Federation Medal of Valor by a special act of the Federation Council, the only civilians ever granted this honor. Cohen Center, the Terran headquarters of the UFP/ITA, is named in their honor.



Stardate 1/0703.21

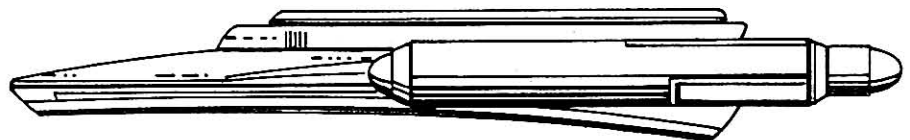
An unarmed and unescorted mercy vessel convoy returning from a supply mission to an isolated world is attacked by a Romulan war vessel. Offers of surrender are ignored and six small merchantmen are destroyed. Captain Rachel Cohen of the two-person independent merchant *Free Spirit* plays dead to draw the warship close, then overloads her engines and explodes her vessel, crippling the Romulan ship. The other 23 surviving merchant ships escape, though the crippled Romulan also self-destructs. Cohen and her copilot/husband Isadore are posthumously awarded the Federation Medal Of Valor, the only civilians ever to be accorded the honor. The incident sparks new war fervor at home, and independent merchants gain new status in the eyes of the UFP and the public. Permission is given for independent merchants to be armed in all areas bordering the war zone. (Cohen Center, the Terran headquarters of the UFP/ITA, is named for Rachel and Isadore Cohen.)

Stardate 1/0909

The end of the Romulan/UFP War comes as a result of the efforts of Federation Senior Councilman Abraham Dannon. The peace offer is made and the treaty negotiated by subspace radio, and no members of the two warring cultures meet face-to-face. The UFP/ITA narrowly votes to grant its support to the peace move, though a strong faction, sparked mostly by the Cohen incident, wishes to prosecute the war to a more definite conclusion. The UFP/ITA is split, with many financially-powerful independents who had profited from the transport and sale of war materials breaking away to form the Association of Star Merchants (ASM).

Stardate 1/0910

The end of the Romulan War brings the Orion colonies to the realization that the UFP and the Klingon Empire must eventually encounter one another. Though the Klingon military is occupied with raids against the weakened Romulan border, Orions fear that the Klingons will return their attention to Rigel and her interstellar holdings. Realizing that any contact between the UFP and the Klingon Empire must inevitably lead to armed conflict, the Orions hastily negotiate several non-aggression and trade treaties with the UFP, but do not join the Federation.

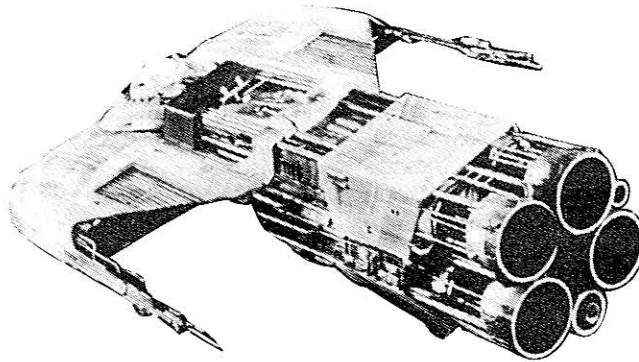


Stardate 1/0912.03

Mantiev, a harsh but promising planet discovered during deep scouting efforts connected with the Romulan War, is settled by Federation political dissidents. Nearby star systems, which will form the Mantiev Colonial Association, are colonized within a year by similar groups. The war has revealed several useful worlds in the area, which becomes known as the Triangle, but their distance from the center of the UFP, and their uncomfortable proximity to Romulan space, makes them unattractive to most. It is years before additional serious colonies are established there.

Stardate 1/1303.21

The early efforts of the Association of Star Merchants in persecuting Councilman Dannon for his role in the peace treaty with the Romulans have an unfortunate and ironic consequence. A former ASM official who lost much of his family in the war assassinates Dannon. This breaks the back of trader support for the Association of Star Merchants, and the ASM collapses within three months.



Stardate 1/1818

Most Orion trade families close their operations with the UFP in the face of a return of Klingon trade to the Rigel colonies. Through masterful timing of ship arrivals, the Orions keep the Klingons and UFP unaware of each other's presence for many years, despite UFP displeasure at the closing of many Orion ports.

Stardate 1/2412

Faced with threats of the revoking of UFP non-aggression agreements because of Orion port closure to even emergency traffic, the ports are reopened to UFP shipping on a limited basis. Further treaties with the UFP are signed, providing the Orion worlds with a promise of protection from outside aggression, while only prohibiting the Orions from directly attacking the UFP. This opens the door for the Orions to trade with both sides in the eventual conflict between the Klingon Empire and the UFP.

Stardate 1/3308

Independent traders from the UFP first encounter Klingon traders on an Orion colony planet. They are aware that they have made contact with a previously unknown species, but the Klingons keep them unaware of the true importance of the incident, while pumping them for information about the UFP. The merchant captain E. A. Jacoby is an experienced trader with a small vessel. Having encountered a number of new races (all customers of the Orions) in past visits to Orion ports, he simply passes along the customary UFP contact material. Though he claims to have filed the proper reports on his encounter to the UFP Contacts Bureau, those records are never found.

A look at traders past: FIRST CONTACT?

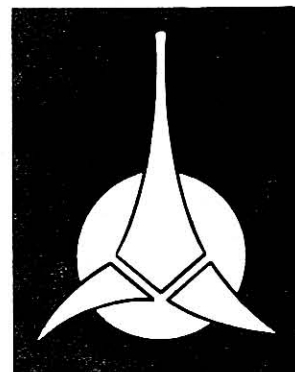
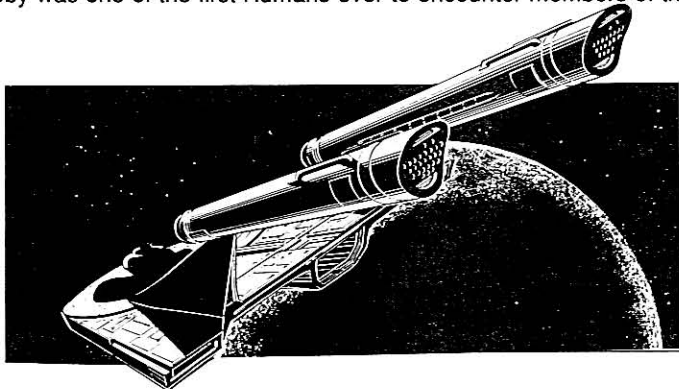
Terran merchant captain E.A. Jacoby is remembered (perhaps unfairly) for an act he may *or may not* have failed to perform. Around Stardate 1/3308, crewmembers from Jacoby's *Cool Breeze*, planetside on a minor Orion colony world, engaged in a street brawl with members of a somewhat Human-like race that had never before been encountered.

Such encounters were not unusual, as the Orion trade sphere extended into areas not yet explored by the UFP. Furthermore, the Orions had been less than anxious to invite competition from the Federation.

Jacoby's logbook shows a short entry on the incident, but few particulars. During a later investigation, Jacoby claimed to have followed required Federation procedure and filed a First Contact report with the UFP Contacts Bureau. No trace of that report can be found in the files of the Bureau, however, nor does Jacoby's logbook from that time mention any such report.

For this minor oversight (which Jacoby always claimed was not his fault), the trader received the blame for the UFP's ignorance for the next 17 years of the existence of a dangerous foe just beyond the fringes of Federation-explored space. Families of the victims of atrocities at the hands of this new race later hounded Jacoby until he died, a broken man, 35 years later.

Whether or not Jacoby actually filed that report or withheld it for reasons of his own is unknown to this day. What is certain from his record log, however, is that E.A. Jacoby was one of the first Humans ever to encounter members of the Klingon race.



Stardate 1/4000

The first major wave of settlements is established in the Triangle.

Stardate 1/4116

Starting circa this date, a number of large Orion trade families attempt to spread their influence beyond the boundaries of their closely held colony worlds through the opening of tradeworlds. These planets are developed specifically to be trade centers and scrupulously avoid affiliation with the UFP or other governments that might restrict their activities. Tradeworlds have virtually no regulations or tariffs to control trade, making them attractive ports-of-call for the small independent merchant vessel wishing to avoid such extra costs or to traffic in contraband. The first experiments are a huge success, with the Orion traders more than recouping their development costs by leasing commercial space near the new port facilities, and by setting up elaborate trade brokerage houses that buy and sell small cargoes from everywhere—often making enormous profits in the process. Despite the high prices for leases, the tradeworlds prosper because of the lack of restrictions.

Stardate 1/5103.27

Freelooter, first and most notorious Orion freeport in the Triangle, is officially opened with the dedication of its spaceport facility. This date marks the beginning of large-scale trade operations in the region, which is soon to become the hottest and most open trade area in the known galaxy.

Stardate 1/5101.18

Independent trader *Millie Sue* exchanges fire with an unknown scout vessel. Though the trader damaged and chased away the attacking ship, the *Millie Sue* was left without the capability for faster-than-light travel in the exchange. Two Star Fleet warships respond to the ship's distress call and rescue all hands. A small destroyer-class ship of unknown origin is also noted on sensors by the two Star Fleet vessels, but it fails to answer hailing messages and flees when they attempt to move closer. The ship, traveling outside UFP jurisdiction, is not pursued, but the encounter leads the UFP to press Orion sources for information on this new space-traveling race. Years later, review of the computer records indicates an 87 percent probability that both

unknown ships were vessels of the Klingon Empire.

Though any number of independent traders have encountered Klingons in Orion ports, the UFP has never taken official notice of this new culture, whereas Klingon military observers have been gathering data for years about the UFP and Star Fleet. Many ship disappearances attributed to Orion pirates prove later to have been caused by Klingon warships capturing UFP starships and crews for interrogation and study. To some, the incident involving the *Millie Sue* marks the date of First Contact.

Stardate 1/5105.02

The *USS Sentry* encounters and confronts Klingon cruiser *Devisor* near Gamma Demetrius. A brief exchange of fire marks the first official contact between the UFP and the Klingon Empire.

Stardate 1/5309.02

Baker's World is founded by UFP settlers in The Triangle. Baker's World will eventually become an important independent trade port, and the seat of the largest independent government in that area: The Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds (aka "Baker's Dozen").



Stardate 1/6003.04

The *USS Flying Fortress*, a prototype slow transport, is hijacked in space by a Klingon war vessel. A Federation anti-piracy force intercepts the hijacked vessel as it is being towed away, and forces the Klingons to release their tractor beam and flee. The badly-damaged *USS Flying Fortress* is recovered.

Stardate 1/6110.21

Star Fleet works with the UFP/ITA to disguise a number of warships as merchant vessels, and the ploy draws out the Klingon Empire for another attack. The *USS Phantom* is fired upon without warning by two Klingon warships while proceeding in Orion space disguised as a large merchant vessel. The *Phantom* jettisons its dummy cargo pod and engages the Klingon attackers, destroying one and crippling the life support system of the second. A boarding party from the *Phantom* attempts to rescue survivors and gather information, but the Klingon self-destructs to avoid revealing too much about their nature, killing all

survivors and the rescue party. Without substantive evidence to link the attack to the still mysterious Klingon government, no direct military action can be taken.

Stardate 1/6211.13

In the face of increased evidence of Klingon aggression, the UFP/ITA calls for a complete investigation of the Klingon Empire and their activities. A badly overworked Star Fleet lacks the budget or manpower to do an adequate job. Ship disappearances continue, but there are no more multi-ship confrontations with the Klingons. Many trade operations shut down, threatening to cripple expansion efforts and isolate frontier colonies.

Stardate 1/6312.24

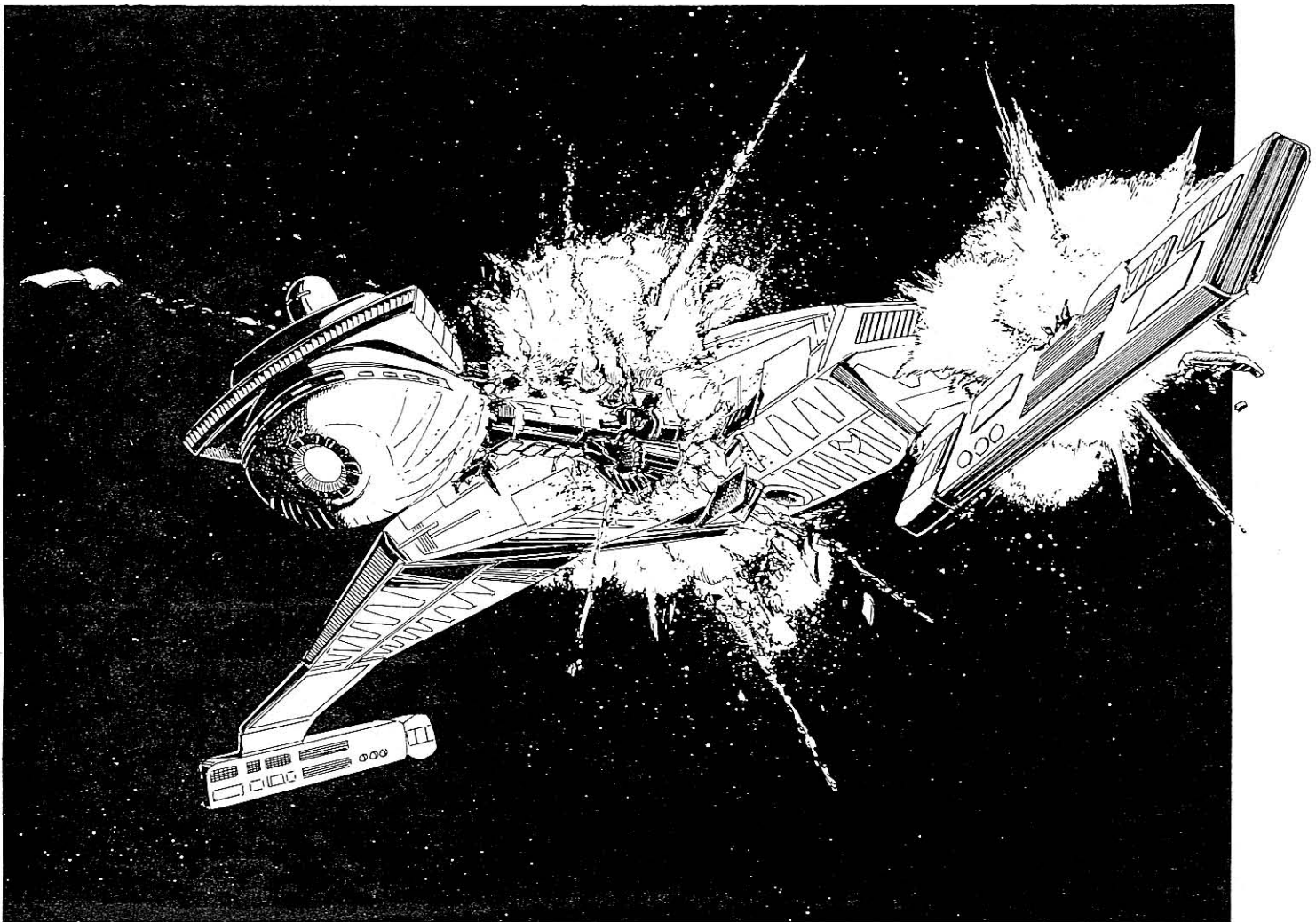
The first Federation Interstellar Trade Operations Act is passed. In an attempt to revitalize interstellar trade along the Klingon frontier, this act offers traders low-interest loans for starship purchases. Despite continued tension between the UFP and the Klingon Empire, the act does its job, and trade operations increase once again.

Stardate 1/82 to 1/87

Trade along the boundary with Klingon space flourishes with little Klingon intervention and few ship disappearances. Intelligence sources later detect massive shipbuilding efforts but no movement of ships toward either the UFP or Romulan borders, indicating the presence of another unknown enemy of the Klingons. The mystery is never solved, but the Klingon armed presence returns in force sometime after Stardate 1/8706. Incidents of ship disappearances remain at a low level nonetheless.

Stardate 1/9212.21

USS Bohr reports observing a three-ship Klingon task force in unclaimed space between the UFP and Klingon spheres of influence. The small task force proves to be a decoy to lure the *Bohr* from its patrol area and allow a 20-ship force to attack the Arcanis research station. The massacre of 112 UFP citizens begins a chain of events that will result in war. Two massive battle fleets are detected over the next two months, but open hostilities do not begin immediately. The UFP begins to organize for conflict.



Stardate 1/9409.29

The Four Years War begins with a Klingon declaration of alliance between themselves and the natives of the Axanar system.

Stardate 1/9410.18

The independent trader *Finagle's Law* becomes the first official merchant casualty of the Four Years War. Caught without escort or armament and using a

Federation-issued civilian recognition beacon, it is nonetheless destroyed by a Klingon destroyer without warning. Though the official Klingon communications claim the ship was detected in the war zone, the ship's wreckage is found far outside this area. Drift projections indicate the *Finagle's Law* had never passed through unclaimed space at all. The incident is well publicized and the enlistment rolls of the UFP armed forces swell as a result. Many independent merchant crews sign up as a group, and remain attached for a time to their own vessels as local support, while Star Fleet attempts to catch up with the sudden demand for more and better war vessels.

Stardate 1/9411.02

In a surprise attack, Klingon warships and ground forces capture the tradeworld Open Door, outside UFP space but owned by UFP-chartered companies. The Klingons declare Open Door as property of the Empire, but the UFP/ITA, representing the coalition of trade companies sponsoring the Open Door tradeworld colony, refuses to recognize any Klingon authority in the Open Door system and calls for Star Fleet intervention.

Stardate 1/9411.30

On his own authority, the commander of Star Base 15 diverts a Star Fleet force enroute to reinforce border positions to deal with the situation on Open Door. Led by the newly-commissioned *USS Defiant* heavy cruiser and the frigate *USS Peking*, the fleet enters the Open Door system and engages Klingon warships, turning away much of the Klingon force after fierce interstellar combat. Federation Marines attached to the Star Fleet force engage Klingon defenders on the surface of a planet for the first time and soon break the back of the defense, liberating the captive population of Open Door.

Stardate 1/9412.18

With the Orion homeworld governments forced to give up trade with the Klingon Empire for the duration of the war, the small, Triangle-based Orion Frontier Merchants Association declares independent status from the main Orion bureaucracy. This association maintains trade links with both sides, despite formal protests by the UFP/ITA.

Stardate 1/9503.21

The Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds in the Triangle is founded with agreements signed on Baker's World. The AOFW soon joins the war on the side of the UFP when a member world is overrun and its population enslaved by the Klingons. This action begins a second front of the Klingon War within the Triangle.

A look at traders past:

O'DAY'S MIDNIGHT RANGERS

On Stardate 1/9409.02, Klingon warships, acting as allies of the Axanar star group, captured the UFP tradeworld Open Door, beginning the Four Years War between the Klingon/Axanar Alliance and the UFP. Major Jon O'Day, a trade broker, ex-UFP Marine, and leader of the planet's small militia, died in battle in the first wave of the Klingon attack, leaving his motherless 17-year-old daughter hiding in a sub-basement beneath their ruined home near the Open Door starport.

Risking her own life, Diana O'Day rounded up eight local Star Fleet and Marine veterans and their families, concealing them all in the underground hideaway before the Klingon occupation forces were able to round up all ex-servicemen for summary execution as "potential spies for the Federation warmongers". Calling themselves "O'Day's Midnight Rangers" in her honor, the small underground recruited other local loyalists, operated at night, and used a small cache of weapons to harry and demoralize the Klingon occupation force. Their efforts kept the ground forces off-balance and unable to secure a solid foothold on the planet for the 28 days of the occupation.

When Federation Marines arrived to liberate the planet, O'Day's Midnight Rangers staged a daring daylight raid on a Klingon arms depot and destroyed it with stolen explosives. This prevented the use of these heavy armaments against the invading Marines.

For their efforts, Diana O'Day and the members of the underground force she helped organize were the first decorated heroes of the Four Years War, receiving the Marine Iridium Starburst award for gallantry. On her 18th birthday, Diana O'Day joined the Federation Marines. She attended the ceremonies accompanying the signing of the Klingon surrender terms in the uniform of a Marine second lieutenant.



Stardate 1/9504

A convoy of Orion merchant ships carrying dilithium for the UFP war effort are intercepted by a Klingon destroyer task force near Laxala. Refusing to give up his cargo, one Orion captain overloads his drive and explodes, destroying one Klingon destroyer, damaging a second, and ending the attack. The Orion government formally resolves to destroy all dilithium shipments through the use of antimatter devices if any further interference with any dilithium shipment is attempted—by either side. The independent Orion Frontier Merchants Association, supplying dilithium to both the AOFW and the Klingon Empire, joins in this pronouncement. Both sides refrain from further attacks on Orion dilithium convoys.

Stardate 1/9509.07

Faced with a growing number of merchant ship disappearances, Star Fleet Command establishes the Zone of Transport Escort, restricting the movement of private and commercial vessels, requiring naval escort for vessels traveling in the restricted area, and placing armed marines aboard all escorted ships. Small independent merchants immediately protest the order, but large shipping lines mostly remain silent. The UFP/ITA is split, with no formal declaration of support made one way or the other. The regulations remain in effect until after the war. The restricted area includes both Romulan and Klingon borders, but the Triangle is unaffected, thanks to an agreement between the UFP and the AOFW, which is supplied mostly by small independent traders.

Stardate 1/9709.10

The Imperial Klingon States is founded in The Triangle after a failed coup. Declaring itself to be the rightful Klingon government in exile, the IKS becomes a major source of intelligence against the Klingon Empire, mostly through an informal group of AOFW traders who volunteer to gather information during their runs into the IKS. One such agent is Sarah Hastings, a UFP native who distinguishes herself when she overhears the conversation of an IKS spy recently returned from a secret mission within the Empire. Though she is spotted and pursued by the IKS agent, she hides alone in an IKS port city for 18 hours before being able to return to her ship. This information, relayed back through AOFW sources to the UFP, enables Star Fleet to mount an ambush on a major Klingon flotilla sent to intercept UFP arms shipments. Hastings' efforts win her the AOFW Star of Valor and a Star Fleet Civilian Commendation.

A look at traders past:

SHE NEVER MISSED A CREDIT

If there is one universally beloved figure in the history of interstellar trade, it is Captain Sarah Hastings. Hastings was born in the UFP, but her parents emigrated to Baker's World in the AOFW soon after her birth. Her long career as a merchant began when she lied about her age to sign aboard a small freighter as an assistant cook at the age of 15.

By the time of the Four Years War, she had enjoyed a long and successful career, working her way up to ownership of her own small trade vessel. Captain Hastings was among those AOFW traders who volunteered to use their contacts in the renegade Imperial Klingon States to obtain information, and she was awarded the AOFW Star of Valor and a Star Fleet Civilian Commendation for one particularly courageous effort.

After the war, Hastings moved her base of operations to the fringe UFP worlds near The Triangle, helping transport supplies to colonies devastated by the war. Her UFP citizenship was reactivated upon her return, and she became an active and vocal member of the UFP/ITA immediately. She was elected to several local offices in the organization, then became her region's delegate to the UFP/ITA Board of Directors on Stardate 2/9901.01.

One of her major concerns was the Orion slave trade, which she detested as barbaric. Having learned the plight of green slave women when she inspected an Orion freighter as a UFP/ITA volunteer, she never again made port as a trader on an Orion world and loudly denounced the slave trade at every opportunity. As a first-year member of the UFP/ITA Board, she gave an impassioned speech that broke the Board's deadlock over the green slave trade. The UFP/ITA's call for a general boycott of Orion ports by member traders (Stardate 2/0001.11) is largely a result of Hastings' work. This action led eventually to the end of the slave trade outside Orion space.

The controversial Captain Hastings was elected chairperson of the UFP/ITA Board on Stardate 2/0411.21. During her administration, she concentrated on opening up the frontiers to independent trade, vastly expanding the influence of the UFP/ITA in these areas. Her work tragically ended less than two years later when, on her first and only trip to the Rigel system, she contracted Rigellian fever and died at the age of 57.

Captain Sarah Hastings is remembered as an unpretentious, earthy, and wise woman whose many writings and speeches tell the unadorned truth about her chosen profession and the people who choose to follow that path to the stars. Her biography (*She Never Missed a Credit*, referring to the epitaph Hastings requested in her will) was written after her death by noted historian James William Hopper IV, and has never been out of print since its first publication.



Stardate 1/9806

The Four Years War ends. Some financial and trade experts predict a downturn in the interstellar economy as war production and supply is cut off.

Stardate 1/9905

The Zone of Transport Escort is lifted. The opening of new trade areas in The Triangle and in sectors of space conceded by the Klingon Empire at war's end results in a trade boom unequalled in known history. Captain Sarah Hastings moves her base of operations to the UFP, still operating near the Triangle, and becomes active in the UFP/ITA.

Stardate 1/9911

The golden age of Orion control over the tradelanes wanes as the Orion colonies are no longer necessary to maintain the balance of power. Their economic hold on the UFP is reduced by the rise of more UFP-based independent trade operations that deal directly with new frontier areas. The "Green Freedom" movement to force abolition of the enslavement of the green Orion sub-race takes hold in the UFP. After an impassioned speech by newly-elected delegate Sarah Hastings, the UFP/ITA Board of Directors breaks a long deadlock and formally calls for an end to the green slave trade. The Federation Council meets to study the problem, but no solution is found, and Orion economic power is sufficient to again delay a final decision.

Stardate 2/0001.11

The UFP/ITA Board of Directors votes unanimously to impose harsh sanctions against Orion companies, ports, and shipping interests that participate in the green slave trade. UFP/ITA members boycott Orion ports, a controversial move that bankrupts a number of UFP/ITA members dependent on Orion trade. Despite the bankruptcies, the boycott holds firm, proving that the UFP can live without Orion trade.

Stardate 2/0103.13

Captain Christopher Pike of the *USS Enterprise* delivers a report on the Orion slave trade after an investigative mission into Orion space. The public report of the shocking findings outrages many. The Federation Council officially endorses the UFP/ITA boycott of the Orion worlds, in effect telling the Orion government to ban the slave trade or face being totally cut off diplomatically and economically from the UFP.



A look at traders past: MASTER JYM

The legends about Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh are legion, and many must be dismissed as apocryphal or just outright lies. The veteran Tellarite trader almost certainly never won a ship full of green slave women playing poker with an Orion card sharp, only to lose it again to one of those very same women after teaching her the game. Nevertheless, the story or variations on it keeps surfacing year after year. It is barely possible that he did come into possession of a Romulan admiral's insignia, as he talks of the incident in a letter written to Sarah Hastings that remains in her personal papers. Ggavittchh's claim to have removed it, undetected, from the admiral's shoulder while the Tellarite's vessel was being searched for contraband in port must be dismissed as exaggeration, however.

Nonetheless, the colorful trader's accomplishments after succeeding his lifelong friend Sarah Hastings as chairman of the UFP/ITA board are well documented. Ggavittchh was forced to deal with the Gorn/UFP trade rivalries in his second year after taking office, and prevented the minor incidents from erupting into interstellar war. Later, after the signing of the Organian Peace Treaty, the grumpy Tellarite leader worked to assure the UFP's dominance in trade development of the area. His efforts also helped minimize the damage to UFP interests caused by the Great Crash of '09, when scandal rocked Orion mining companies.

Ggavittchh returned to private life as an active trader after five years as Chairman, only to be called back to serve again when the scandal surrounding the murder of reporter Ozcar Kyng brought down Ggavittchh's powerful successor, Boris Falsworth. The dour Tellarite served as Chairman from the time of Falsworth's conviction and disappearance to his death on Stardate 2/2010.06. Known for his traditional Tellarite temper and gruff manner, Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh is nonetheless remembered as a trader who cared greatly for his brother and sister traders of all races, and who devoted much of his life to serving their needs as their representative.

Stardate 2/0105.01

The trade in green slaves is abolished outside the strict confines of the Orion neutrality area, in a compromise move that only partially defuses anti-Orion feelings in the UFP. After this date, no Orion vessel operating outside the Rigel system and her daughter colonies nearby is allowed to carry slaves, and the institution of slavery as applied to the green-skinned Orion sub-race is abolished. Despite this, an underground traffic in green slave women continues, though strongly interdicted in free space by Star Fleet actions. Orions simply stop taking green slave women to non-Orion ports.



Stardate 2/0411.21

Captain Sarah Hastings is narrowly elected chairperson of the UFP/ITA Board of Directors. Still controversial because of her support for the Orion boycott, she soon becomes one of the most well known and admired figures in the history of interstellar trade. Her influence on the history of the UFP/ITA is enormous, as she spearheads the growth of the organization in the frontier areas of the UFP during the boom years.

Stardate 2/0609.17

Sarah Hastings's tenure as Chairperson of the UFP/ITA board ends when she dies suddenly of Rigellian Fever at the age of 57. Vice-Chairperson Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh succeeds her in the post. His first act in office is to sign an order for an apprentice program in frontier areas, opening the way for many youngsters to train for careers as interstellar merchants. This program, which was Sarah Hastings' pet project, is named the Hastings Memorial Program in her honor.



Stardate 2/0801

First conflicts, then lengthy negotiations with the Gorn inhibit free trade in an area previously considered a promising frontier. Rivalry leads to bloodshed between rival UFP and Gorn trade operations negotiating with several unaligned races in the disputed area. Diplomats ease the tensions, but the incidents hamper UFP/Gorn talks.

Stardate 2/0801.24

The Organian Peace Treaty is signed, leading to another trade boom, this time in the Organian Treaty Zone. Since the terms of the treaty call for the awarding of uninhabited worlds to the government that can best develop them, the need for established trade operations to move supplies to new colonies is great. Rivalry between Klingon and UFP traders is keen, with many incidents recorded that always stop just short of armed conflict.

Stardate 2/0902

The planet Coridan is made a UFP protectorate as a result of the Babel Conference on that question. Orion mining interests are implicated in attempts to sabotage the conference, leading to the Great Crash of '09 when three large Orion corporate families are bankrupted after their complicity in pirate actions is revealed. Impact on UFP/ITA interests is greatly reduced by the inspired leadership of Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh. The resulting panic further weakens Orion trade interests and strengthens the UFP's trade influence in the Triangle area and the Organian Treaty Zone.



Stardate 2/0903

Limited trade between the Romulan Star Empire and Klingon Empire begins as a result of non-aggression and technological exchange treaties signed in secret. The existence of these agreements is not known to the UFP or her allies for almost two years.

Stardate 2/1003

Another promising trade area is closed off when the Federation Council decides to respect the Tholian Assembly's demands for closing the borders between their space and the UFP. Only Vulcan interests have much invested in developing trade ties in near-Tholian space, but several Vulcan trade coalitions are badly hurt by this action. Other Vulcan trade companies turn their efforts away from this frontier and back toward The Triangle, investing large amounts there and making competition a bit stiffer for the smaller independent traders of the region.

Stardate 2/1008

Intelligence gathered by the AOFW in the Triangle and communicated to the UFP indicates the existence of trade and technology exchange between the Romulans and Klingons. Star Fleet's investigation of these reports also indicates the probability that the Romulans have developed a new and more effective cloaking device than was previously known. These activities lead to the intelligence operation eventually known as "the *Enterprise* incident," in which a Star Fleet cruiser penetrates the Neutral Zone, confirming the technological exchange by observation of Klingon-design ships flown by Romulan crews in Romulan space. The expedition brings back a prototype cloaking device as well. Soon after, Romulan and Klingon vessels in the Triangle begin openly using weapons and ship designs gained in the trade exchange.



A look at traders past:

THE TROUBLE WITH TRIBBLES

Cyrano Jones, a long-time trader in the Organian Treaty Zone, is widely heralded for his patents on what has come to be called the *Chameleon* Class freighter, a popular redesigned scout ship used throughout the galaxy by one-man trading operations. The rotund, jovial merchant captain is just as widely cursed for introducing the galaxy's most cuddly (and dangerous) animal into the ecosystem of at least 30 worlds.

Jones' *Chameleon* is an ingenious refit of an outmoded and hence inexpensive scoutship design that added a breakaway cargo pod to the ship's belly. Jones patented the design in his own name (though he had no known formal training in starship design), and sold the patents to a major shipyard that still produces versions of the vessel.

Jones is even more famous for his discovery, on a dangerous planet full of vicious predators, of an engaging little creature he dubbed a "tribble". Always alert for a credit, Jones transported hundreds of these hypnotically purring animals and sold them in various ports as pets over a period of several months. Unfortunately, Jones neglected to inform the new owners that tribbles breed asexually, reproducing at will whenever overfed. Without the many predators of their home planet to keep them in check, tribbles soon overran 17 UFP and independent worlds before Jones was detained at Space Station K-7 by Captain James T. Kirk of Star Fleet.

Seeing Jones as irresponsible but not intending to violate the law, Kirk used his discretionary powers as ranking Star Fleet officer in the area to sentence Jones to clean up the thousands of tribbles he caused to infest Station K-7. Later, a Federation Review Board granted Jones a leave to pursue more efficient methods of tribble disposal. He brought back an animal called "the Glommer", a perfect tribble predator, and was granted a pardon after the animal was studied by UFP bioscience teams and genetic material was obtained from it so that more animals could be cloned. Unfortunately, Jones had obtained the original Glommer from a Klingon science station that needed it to clone more to clean up *their* tribble-infested worlds. Klingons pursued Jones until he was rescued by the *USS Enterprise*. The Glommer was returned, and Jones was taken into custody. Despite his somewhat illegal method of securing the Glommer, Jones was again freed after paying stiff fines.

Genetically altered tribbles that do not reproduce are now grown as clones and are popular as pets on practically every UFP world. Jones plies the spaceways in his one-man ship in the Organian Treaty Zone and the Triangle.

Stardate 2/1111

After five years as Chairman of the UFP/ITA Board of Directors, Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh surprises the galactic trading community by declining a sixth term and returning to active trading. Ggavittchh, gruffly claiming to have been too long away from the thrill of profit, is joined by three members of the board. Ggavittchh is succeeded by Master Trader Boris Falsworth of Terra.

Stardate 2/1504

The holozine *Interstellar Merchant*, published by the UFP/ITA, releases an investigative article by reporter and former trader Ozkar Kyng of Alpha Centauri. The story exposes illegal collusion between regional UFP/ITA officials in the Organian Treaty Zone and Orion trade families.

Price-fixing and profiteering in sales to worlds being developed in this area is alleged, and the story claims the corruption reaches to high levels. Chairman Falsworth of the UFP/ITA board orders Kyng fired. When editor Jackson McLain refuses, he himself is fired and Kyng resigns.

Stardate 2/1505

Kyng takes his story and notes to *Galaxy Week* holozine, and is given the assignment of continuing the investigation. On Stardate 2/1505.23, Kyng is attacked by unknown assailants in Centaurus Port while running down a lead, and is hospitalized in critical condition. He dies three days later. With no public announcement, his former editor Jackson McLain takes over his notes and his assignment.

Stardate 2/1511

After a lengthy investigation, McLain turns up sufficient evidence to link both the price-fixing conspiracy and the murder of Ozkar Kyng to UFP/ITA Chairman of the Board Boris Falsworth. At the instructions of *Galaxy Week's* editors, McLain tells what he knows to Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command officers. Falsworth is arrested in San Francisco, Terra, on Stardate 1511.25, charged with conspiracy to defraud the Federation, and conspiracy to commit murder in pursuit of crimes against the Federation. Both offenses take the case beyond the scope of local law on Terra or Alpha Centauri, with both planetary governments giving permission for Falsworth to be tried in the Federation court system. Seven other members of the Board resign in the greatest scandal ever to strike interstellar trade.

Stardate 2/1512

Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh accepts nomination for the Chairmanship of the UFP/ITA board, and is chosen by an overwhelming margin in a special election. Returning to the ITA's Cohen Center headquarters on Terra, he begins the process of rebuilding governmental and public confidence in the UFP/ITA.

Stardate 2/1609

After numerous delays, Boris Falsworth is tried and convicted on all charges. Falsworth is sentenced to a penal colony, but the small courier ship transporting him never arrives and is believed lost in space. No trace of the ship, its Star Fleet crew, or Falsworth himself is ever found. Jackson McLain returns as editor of *Interstellar Merchant* holozine after winning the Pulitzer Prize on Terra and sharing the Federation-wide Investigative Reporting Award of the UFP Press Council with the late Ozkar Kyng.

Stardate 2/2010.06

UFP/ITA Chairman of the Board Jym Ggavittchh dies in office of natural causes. Per his wishes, his ashes are scattered in orbit about Tellar. The immensely popular Tellarite leader is eulogized by his successor, Master Trader Bernard "Benny" Reynolds, as "a great leader whose gruff and blustering manner could not conceal his concern for his brother and sister traders".

Stardate 2/2111

Bernard Reynolds is confirmed for a second term as Chairman of the Board of the UFP/ITA.

A look at traders past:

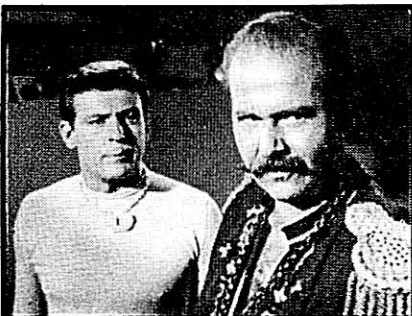
HIS NAME IS MUDD

Harcourt ("Harry") Mudd (alias Leo Walsh, alias Timothy O'Flaherty, etc.) has developed a reputation as the most audacious con-man, swindler, and crooked trader ever to travel the galaxy—a reputation that is not only well-deserved, but in which he takes considerable pride. His exploits are legendary, but, alas, his long-term successes are few. No legitimate trade organization wants to claim him, though he has been a member of nearly all under any number of assumed names.

Mudd's long criminal record mainly records petty cons and larcenies, but a few incidents stand out, even in *his* voluminous file. Mudd has the dubious distinction of being the only known trader ever to have sold the Star Fleet Academy—twice, both times to small, non-Human governments in isolated locations, where his forged Star Fleet credentials looked official enough. He holds the only conviction ever recorded for the actual sale of the semi-mythical "Venus Drug", and he once trafficked in a legitimate "love potion" (neglecting to mention that the state of intense attraction produced by the potion is followed by a much longer period of intense loathing for the same individual).

His most ambitious project almost resulted in the hijacking of the starship *USS Enterprise* by a horde of Humanoid robots Mudd believed he controlled. The robots, from a distant planet Mudd had discovered, were the invention of a long-dead race. They abandoned their supposed "Lord and Master" as "an example of everything a Human being should not become" (an apt description for Mudd), forcing the con artist to side with the *Enterprise* crew in immobilizing the commanding robot with illogic, which paralyzed the entire robot band long enough to be reprogrammed.

This episode ended happily for everyone but Mudd. The robots were reprogrammed to restore the secrets of the lost civilization they had once served, but Harry Mudd was left behind to be tormented by hundreds of duplicates of his shrewish wife Stella. He did escape the planet after a time, and despite three separate convictions that sent him to rehabilitation colonies, he is today free (though wanted on 112 planets) and presumably still happily defrauding the innocent somewhere in this vast galaxy.



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THE UNUSUAL**



**STAR FLEET
MARINES**

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

by Bernard Reynolds

This glossary has been prepared specially for the novice merchant spaceman. It contains references to both common trade terms and everyday terms that traders use in a specialized way. No such glossary could hope to be complete, however, as the language changes with every passing day.

AFFILIATION OF OUTER FREE WORLDS

An independent government in the area of space known as The Triangle, often abbreviated as AOFW. The AOFW is tied to the United Federation of Planets by several trade and mutual protection treaties. At this writing, twelve planets belong to the AOFW, which is also often known as Baker's Dozen, in honor of the founding family of the region.

A-GRAV

Used to describe or denote devices using standard gravity-nullifying technology, including warehouse vehicles and cargo lifters.

AGRICULTURAL WORLD

A world whose economy is substantially based on the growing of agricultural products for export.

ANDORIAN EMPIRE

The governmental unit uniting Andorian colony planets prior to the founding of the United Federation of Planets. The term Empire was perhaps a misnomer, as the colonies participated in a semi-representative form of government. The term, however, was widely used at the time the Andorian government signed the Quadrilateral Trade Pact. The term fell out of use soon after the founding of the UFP.

APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Any one of many programs of on-the-job training for interstellar trade professionals operated by the UFP/ITA and several other agencies outside the UFP. Apprentices normally serve a term of several years, during which they work for small wages and support while receiving basic and advanced training from experienced traders.

BLACK MARKET

The underground trade in illegal items, stolen items, and items on which legal taxes and duties have not been paid.

"BROTHER (or Sister) TRADER"

A common form of address between members of the interstellar trade community, used as a term of respect.

BULK CARGO

Cargo items such as grain, ore, and liquids that are carried in large tanks, bins, or holding areas rather than individual crates. This term is used to distinguish such cargo from miscellaneous small cargo packed in boxes, bins, barrels, and crates.

CARGO CONTAINER (Cargo Pod)

A standardized, pressurized hull used for transport of cargo in space. These are attached to cargo transports to be moved to a destination. (See also TRANSPORT, COMMERCIAL)

CARGOMASTER

The officer aboard a merchant vessel responsible both for cargo handling and cargo purchase/sale. This individual is often responsible for all ship's finances, including crew pay.

CERTIFICATION (Tickets)

The permits or licenses given by the UFP/ITA to operate or command merchant spacecraft. Usually called by the informal name of "Ticket", these are given upon attainment of designated UFP/ITA pay grades. The Merchantman's Ticket allows individuals at Grade 3 to operate as trained merchant spacehands in unsupervised situations. The Master's Ticket allows individuals to operate interstellar vessels as captain.

"CLEAR SKY!"

Spacehand's slang for clear airspace over a departure point. Also, a common spacehand's greeting or wish.

COHEN CENTER

The Terran headquarters complex maintained by the UFP/ITA. It is named after traders Rachel and Isadore Cohen, the only civilians ever awarded the Federation Medal Of Valor.

COLONY WORLD (Daughter Planet)

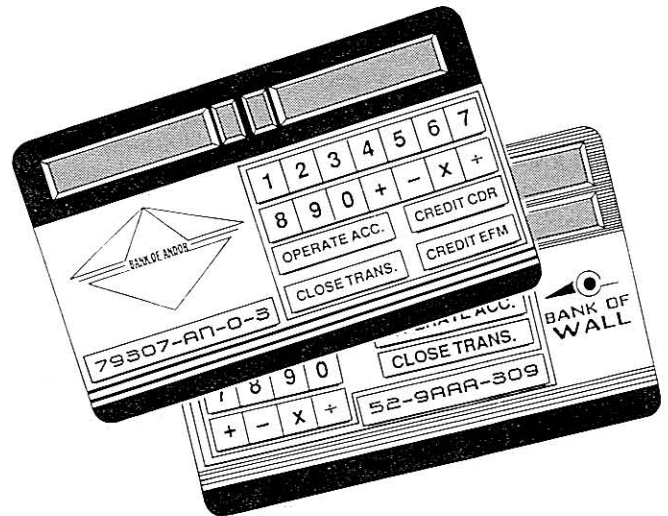
Any planet settled by members of a non-native culture that is run primarily for the benefit of a parent world, or has its government structure controlled by a parent world. Such control is often benevolent, as is the case with a colony too small to be self-sufficient.

COURIER

A small, fast vessel engaged in the quick interstellar delivery of small goods, messages, or individuals.

CREDIT (Cr)

The standard Federation Credit, the interstellar monetary unit in use in the UFP. Some non-Federation worlds (notably those of the Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds) use the Federation Credit as standard currency for interstellar transactions and most local transactions.



DATANET

Any planetary public computer data network, used for most modern communications and business operations. The term can also refer to any privately-operated part of such a network, such as the UFP/ITA Datanet. Planetary datanets are accessed by any linkable personal computer terminal, and are linked themselves across interstellar space by subspace data carrier channels. The Galactic Datanet refers to the galaxy-wide interchange of datanet information. In reality, the vast distances involved limit useful access to what is available on a single planet, unless one is willing to wait weeks or even months for information retrieval.

FEDERATION TRADE AUTHORITY

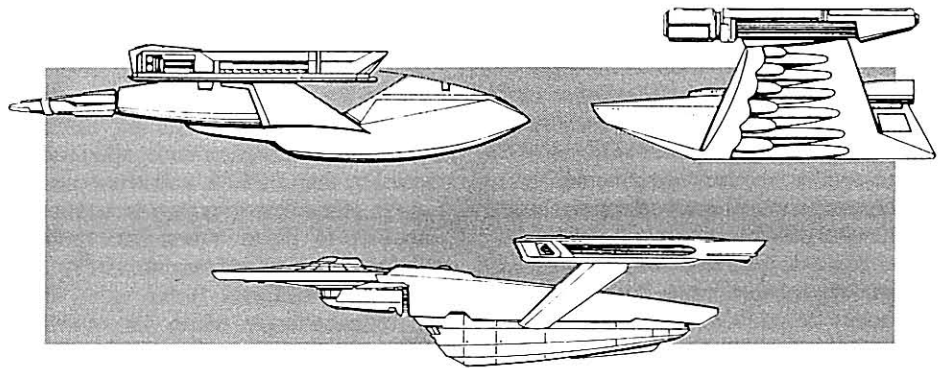
The governmental agency responsible for overseeing interstellar trade efforts in the UFP. Many of the functions of this agency have been delegated by contract to the UFP/ITA, with the Federation Trade Authority acting as governmental overseer of these operations.

FOUR YEARS WAR

The UFP/Klingon Empire war which began Reference Stardate 1/9409.29 and ended with the Treaty of Axanar, Reference Stardate 1/9806.13. It was referred to as "The Klingon War" during the war itself.

FREEPORT

A starport where there are no import duties assessed to encourage interstellar trade. Such ports are often found on tradeworlds established for the purpose of acting as trade centers. Revenue on tradeworlds and in freeports is gathered through the increased value of real estate in such areas and through taxes imposed on the businesses and individuals brought to such a center of trade.



FREIGHTER

A cargo vessel in space that carries its cargo within its own hull, as opposed to detachable cargo pods. (See also TRANSPORT, COMMERCIAL)

"GENTLEBEINGS"

A formal term of address used by spacehands and others who deal often with members of many alien races of various sexes and forms.

GRAVCAR

A private vehicle that rides on an A-grav cushion, and can travel over land or water in nearly any terrain.

"GYPSY" TRADER

An independent trader who keeps to no regular series of runs, but goes wherever cargo can be found.

HOLD ORDERS

Impoundment of a private vessel on which money is owed, ordered at any starport when payments are delinquent. A lending institution will issue hold orders only when it becomes clear that the ship's owners cannot or will not meet their financial obligations.

HOLOZINE

A periodical published in machine-readable form and featuring three-dimensional photographs.

INDEPENDENT MERCHANT OR TRADER

An interstellar trade professional who is not employed by a large corporation, but rather serves aboard a ship (often as part or sole owner) engaged in speculative trade and/or shipping for hire without major corporate sanction. The term has nothing to do with the corporate status of the trader; many independents have incorporated to take advantage of the tax and legal benefits a corporation provides. Rather, the dividing line between corporate merchant and independent merchant is seen as the difference between a ship's reporting to planetside authority or being free to make plans as it goes.

INDUSTRIAL WORLD

A world whose economy is substantially dependent on manufacture of industrial goods for export.

INSYSTEM

Referring to things occurring inside the confines of a planetary system, as opposed to in interstellar space. Insystem maneuvering, for example, is maneuvering a ship within a solar system. The opposite, naturally, is outsystem.

INTERPLANETARY SPACE

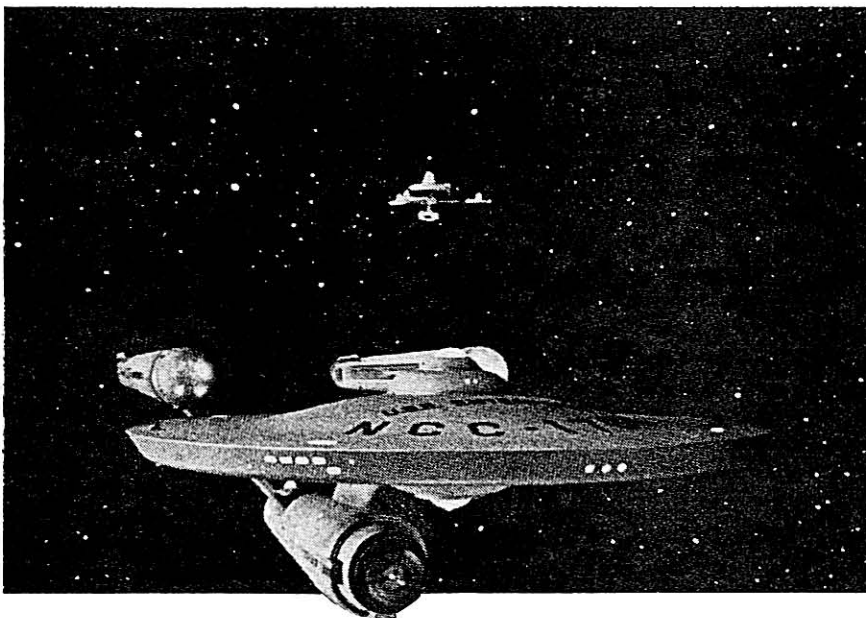
The area of space outside the orbit of any one planet, but still within the gravitational influence of a star (or linked system of stars, such as Alpha, Beta, and Proxima Centauri).

INTERSTELLAR SPACE

Deep space, between star systems.

MASTER MERCHANT SPECIALIST

The official designation for any individual at a UFP/ITA pay grade 8. Such individuals are usually addressed and referred to as Master Trader, and are entitled to put the abbreviation "MMS" after their name when signing official documents, such as a ship's log.



MERCHANT ACADEMY

Any one of many formal training schools for interstellar trade professionals, set up by the UFP/ITA, many planetary governments, and a number of private corporations galaxy-wide. Most offer a full four-year program similar to a college degree program, with an emphasis on professional interstellar trade operations.

MICRO-FUSION

Used to describe or denote devices providing power with compact fusion reactors of standard type. These devices often power vehicles and other major devices or act as portable generators.

ORBITAL CONTROL

The facility responsible for traffic control and coordination of space vessels entering and leaving orbit around a planet, both from the planet's surface and from interstellar or interplanetary space.

PLANETARY TRADE PROFILE (PTP)

An eight-position letter code (nine, counting the Population Rating) that shows the relative value of various import and export categories on a given world. The PTP is assigned and periodically revised by the UFP/ITA, and is used in most areas of the known galaxy in one form or another to guide interstellar traders in planning imports and exports.

"PLANETFALL"

Spacehand's slang for landing or beaming down to a planet. "Hitting dirt" is another common expression.

"PLANETSID" ("Dirtside")

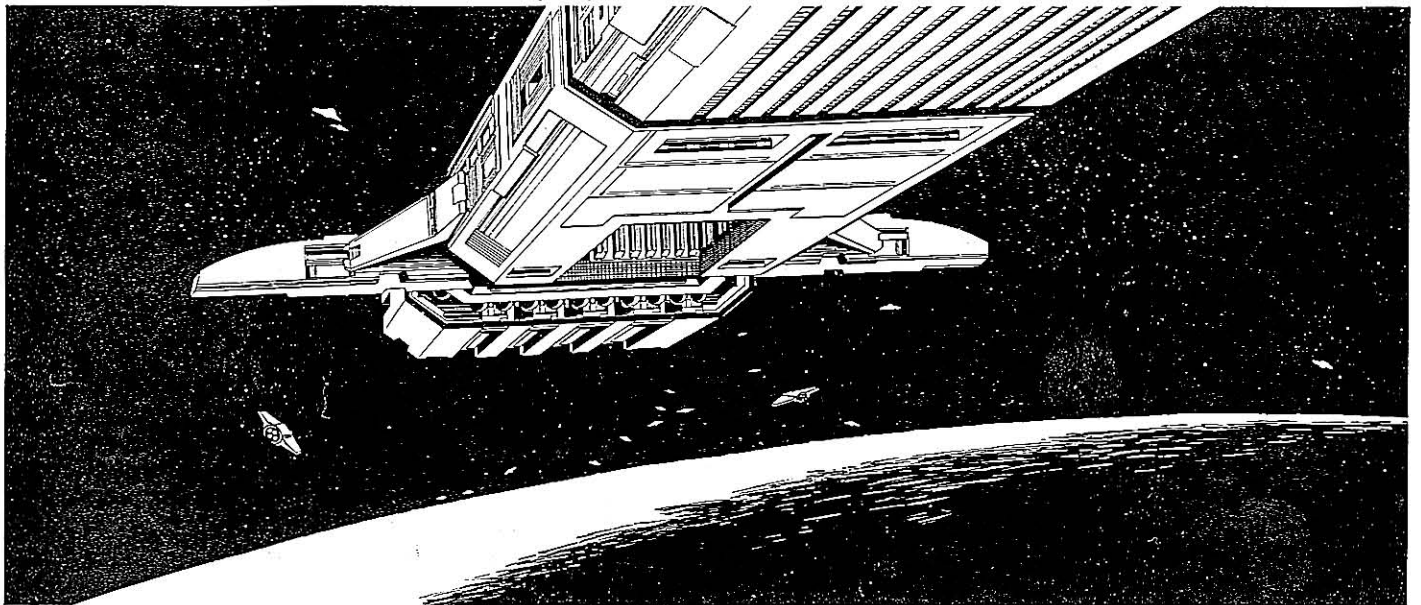
Spacehand's slang for anything pertaining to things on the surface of a planet (for example, "planetside starport" or "planetside corporation"). A slightly more derogatory term is "dirtside".

PORTMASTER

The chief official in charge of the operation of a starport. When both orbital and ground facilities are present, there may be two portmasters, with the ground-based official as the senior portmaster. Subordinates usually control one aspect of the operation, such as Assistant Portmaster for Berthing Operations or Assistant Portmaster for Security Operations.

REGISTRY PAPERS

The documents that establish a commercial vessel's owners, licenses, tax records, outstanding loans, and the home port and government of the owners. All commercial vessels must be registered out of a home port.



"ORBIT JOCKEY"

Spacehand's slang for a pilot who flies only from planet surface to orbit and back, often used in a derogatory manner. The term "system jockey" is similarly used for pilots who never leave planetary space, but this term is less common.

ORION TRADE FAMILIES

The massive family organizations engaged in interstellar trade. These trade families control Orion life far more than the weaker Orion central government.

PAY GRADE

A designation of the UFP/ITA in seven job classifications relating to interstellar merchant operations. There are nine pay grades, numbered zero (0) through eight (8), designating the relative level of expertise held by the individual. Jobs are often advertised as requiring an individual of a certain pay grade, using hiring guidelines set by the UFP/ITA.

PLASTEEL

A widely-used, common form of plastic with the hardness and resistance to damage of strong metal, used for many durable constructions on many worlds. The formula for plasteel is in the public domain, available to any company that wishes to make it, as part of the bequest of its late inventor Janet Chong-Armstrong of Terra.

POPULATION RATING

A single-letter code appended to the Planetary Trade Profile (PTP) of a planet to indicate how planetary population influences the amount of imported goods that planet will consume. This code is used by interstellar traders to aid in planning imports and exports.

ROBOT FREIGHTERS

Cargo vessels that are controlled solely by computers during interstellar travel, with no living beings aboard. Operation of a cargo vessel by computer control within a star system is illegal in most parts of known space. Thus, these ships either have crews brought aboard when they enter a star system, or are met and guided by other manned vessels by remote control.

SCU

See STANDARD CARGO UNIT.

"SQUEEZE"

("Grease" or "Gimmies")

Spacehand slang for under-the-table payments made to planetary officials, inspectors, and the like to "grease the wheels" of commerce to avoid costly delays. These are more common in some ports (notably Orion ports and frontier ports) than in others. The difference between squeeze payments, which some traders consider routine, and outright bribes paid to cover up illegal activity should be noted.

STANDARD CARGO UNIT (SCU)

A measure of cargo capacity used frequently in the UFP and by most known starfaring cultures. One SCU is roughly equivalent to 6.75 cubic meters of volume, or a square of deck space 1.5 meters on a side (given the average 3-meter height of starship decks for Humanoids). One SCU will hold about 200 bushels of agricultural products, or 6750 liters of liquid. When figuring the SCU volume required for a cargo, the figure given includes any special support necessary to maintain that cargo. Thus, liquids and other bulk products are more efficient users of SCU space than such things as live animals and breakables in special bulky packaging.

SHIP BROKER

An individual or firm that arranges ship purchases, deals in used starships, and purchases commercial star vessels from the manufacturer on speculation, transporting them to outlying star systems for resale to merchants.

SHIPWRIGHT

An individual builder of spacegoing vessels or a firm engaged in that activity, specializing in star vessel engineering relating to ship construction rather than in ship design. Those recognized (by the strong unions controlling this activity) as being at the top of their profession are called Master Shipwrights.

SHIPYARDS

A facility where star vessels are built. If in orbit, they sometimes are known as staryards; larger shipyards are of this type. If engaged in building military vessels, they sometimes are called Navy Yards. Orbital shipyards often bear the name of the planetside location where the operation is based. Thus, the major Star Fleet shipbuilding facility in orbit around Terra is referred to as the San Francisco Navy Yards.

SPACEHAND

Any person serving aboard a ship in space. This term has replaced the older term "spaceman" as the preferred designation for crewpersons of all sexes and races.

SPACE VEHICLE TAX

A .01 percent tax on the purchase of all commercial interstellar vehicles operated within the UFP.

STAR CHART

A pictorial representation of an area of space, showing star systems, navigation hazards, etc. Star charts are used in navigation and in planning interstellar trade routes.

STAR FLEET MERCHANT MARINE COMMAND

The Star Fleet agency responsible for supply and transport, which also regulates interstellar spacecraft with respect to trade vessels.

STARPORT

The extended planetary facility for the receiving, docking, landing, and offloading of star vessels. Many starports have orbital as well as planetside facilities. Starports range from large areas of cleared ground where atmosphere-capable ships can land to major facilities covering many acres, with associated landing areas, communications and traffic control facilities, cargo loading and warehousing facilities, ship berths, transport control and dispatching centers, and governmental/customs areas. The term is also often extended to the port cities that inevitably grow up around such locations.

TRADE BROKER

An individual or firm that purchases local goods to resell to traders travelling outsystem, and buys import merchandise from traders for local resale.

TRADE PAIR

A regular trade run where cargo purchased at port A is sold at port B and the money reinvested in cargo to carry back to port A. Trade pairs make money for a time, but are easily exhausted and more vulnerable than triangle runs.

TRADEWORLD

A planet whose economy is substantially based on its position as a center for interstellar trade. Many such worlds are established especially for this purpose.

TRAINED MERCHANT SPECIALIST

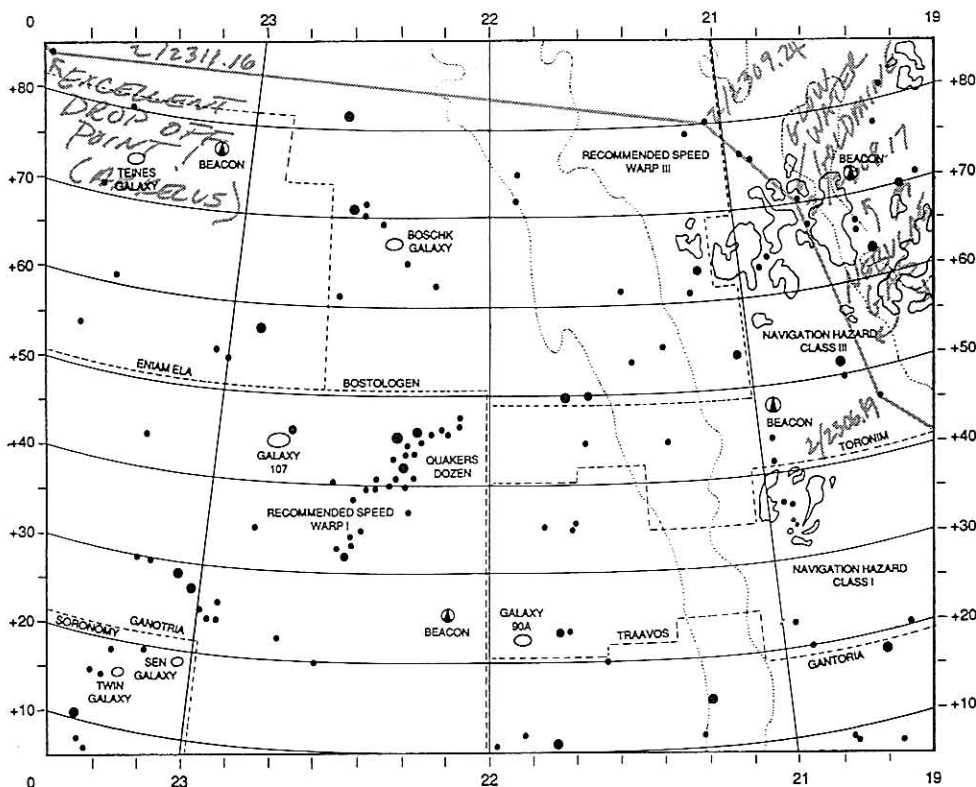
The official designation for any spacehand with a UFP/ITA pay grade of Grade 3 or above. Those attaining this grade are entitled to put the abbreviation "TMS" after their names on official documents such as ship's logs.

TRANSACTION

The small computerized device used to transact cashless exchanges of money by crediting or debiting the user's personal bank card or ID card accounts.

TRANSPORT, COMMERCIAL

A cargo vessel in space that moves cargo in detachable cargo pods or containers, not within its own hull. Such vessels are either "tugs", which pull containers along, or "pushers", which have containers attached to spines, hardpoints, or in front of the moving transport vessel. Sometimes simply written as "transport", when it is clear that the term does not refer to a troop transport. (*Compare FREIGHTER*)



TRANSPORTERS, BULK

Beam transport devices used only for bulk matter such as water, grain, ore, etc. These devices are connected to bulk storage bins or tanks and draw in bulk matter to be broken down and transported by beam. These devices are often used to beam large amounts of cargo to a planet's surface from a bulk cargo transport (and vice versa). They can move a great deal of bulk matter in a short time, but are totally unsuited for transporting living things or even complex non-living items.

TRANSPORTERS, CARGO

Beam transport devices used to move items or groups of items that are too large for standard personnel transporters. The beam platforms of these units use many nested triangular scanning plates instead of one disk-shaped plate, and

coordinate these segments when re-assembling items. This is an extremely tricky process, particularly where living matter is concerned. For this reason, they are not recommended for use in transporting living beings, though they can be so used in an emergency.

TRIANGLE, THE

An area of space that lies between the Klingon Empire, the Romulan Star Empire, and the UFP. A number of independent governments and non-aligned planet systems are located there. The Triangle has a reputation as a rough-and-ready section of space, and is one of the most active interstellar trade areas known. (For more information, see the UFP/ITA publication, *The Triangle*, available from the UFP/ITA datanet or from FASA Corporation, Chicago, IL, Terra.)

TRIANGLE ROUTE

A regular trade run involving three ports of call, which is made by a merchant ship. Goods purchased at port A are sold at port B and the money reinvested in more cargo, which is carried to port C and sold again. Some of these profits are again reinvested to buy more cargo to carry to port A. Triangle routes are good trade runs for fast profits. Trade runs with more stops are possible, but are not as easy to find or as flexible.

TRIVENTURE TRADE PACT

The interstellar trade association founded between the governments of Terra, Alpha Centauri, and Vulcan. This later expanded to include other space-faring cultures, eventually becoming known as the *Quadriateral Trade Pact* when joined by the Andorian Empire. This organization was the precursor to the United Federation of Planets.

UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS INDEPENDENT TRADERS ASSOCIATION (UFP/ITA)

This private and independent trade association is licensed by the Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command and the Federation Trade Authority to perform many contractual functions for these organizations, including regulation of pay grades for merchant spacehands in UFP space, coordination of testing and certification for interstellar merchants, etc. The organization also maintains a large number of training academies and apprentice programs, and offers placement, guidance, and informational services to its millions of members across the Federation and the known galaxy.

"UP SHIP!"

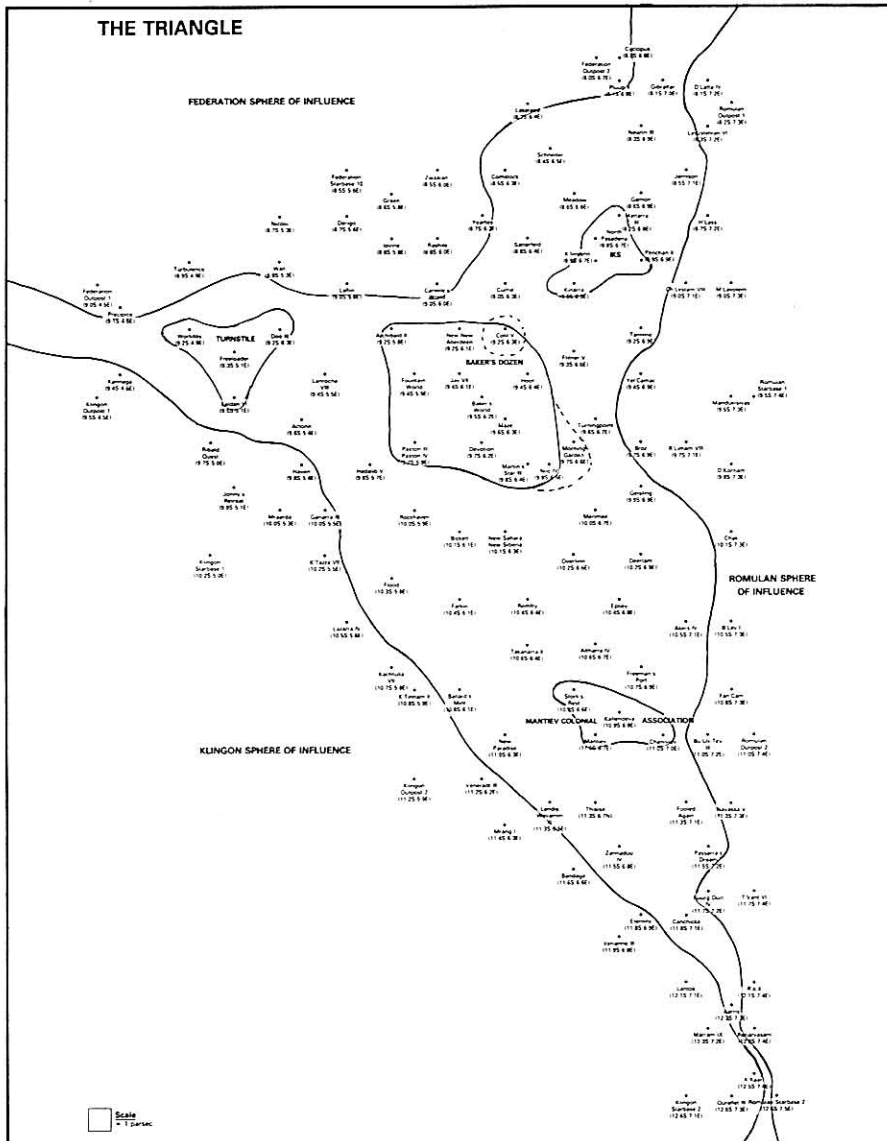
The traditional command for liftoff of a space vessel that takes off from a planet's surface. The term "raise ship" is equally common.

URBANIZED WORLD

A developed world, such as Terra or Tellar, whose population is concentrated in large cities that rely on high technology for their support.

ZONE OF TRANSPORT ESCORT

Established during the Four Years War on Reference Stardate 1/9509.07, this area of Federation space bordering the war zone and the Romulan Neutral Zone was closed to unescorted merchant traffic as a result of heavy merchant craft losses. The Zone was abolished Stardate 1/9905. (See also the Star Fleet publication, *The Four Years War*, available from the Star Fleet datanet or from FASA Corporation, Chicago, IL, Terra.)



A TTENTION!



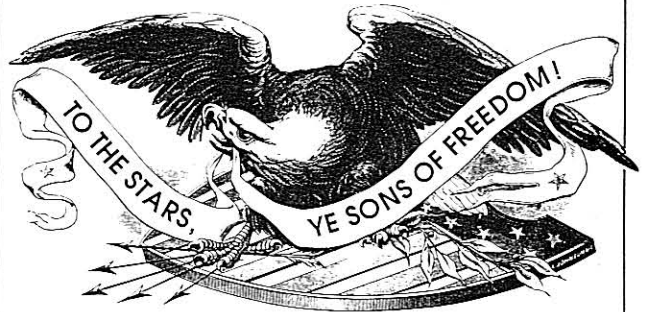
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 luna pies
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 dextrose
 glucose
 lizard bits
 caitian chow
 andorian chow
 vulcan chow
 terran chow
 terran chow with cheese
 instant water
 cubes
 quadrotriticale thins
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**FIRST VULCAN
 INTERPLANETARY
 SECURITIES AND LOANS**

BECOMING A MERCHANT SPACEMAN

by Master Trader Kevin Devlin

TOMORROW'S SPACEMEN

Who answers the call of Endless Space, taking up the life of a merchant spaceman, and for what reason? The drive to explore what lies beyond one's immediate grasp is universal among intelligent species, as shown by the recorded histories of all known civilizations.

Those races whose primitive ancestors could see the stars have been strongly drawn, as the early history of Vulcan, Terra, Andor, and most other worlds with clear skies and dark nights show. Even on the perpetually cloudy water world Paldon V, a basic longing of the native aquatic race to rise above the water's surface and ever-present clouds is noted in their earliest recorded literature. No Paldonian ever saw the stars before the race was contacted by a Federation scout, though their advanced civilization had long since explored their atmosphere, building permanent habitats above the surface of their world ocean. Even so, at the time of First Contact, they already had plans for rocket probes to scan beyond their cloud layer. Less than two years later, 17 Paldonians were UFP/ITA members, serving aboard ships that called on water worlds.

It is not the pure desire for profit that prompts those who become interstellar merchants. Along with the drive for exploration goes a desire to shape what one finds to one's needs and to return home with the best of what the Unknown has to offer. It is this basic desire of intelligent beings to go out and return, bringing back more than they had before, that motivates the interstellar trader.

Trade is the most basic of interactions between cultures, and the methods used for trade say much about a civilization's cultural development. Disregarding specifics (for what is valuable in one place may be totally worthless in another) the more advanced a civilization becomes, the more value it places on intangible qualities in trade. Even a primitive will trade for food; only a sophisticate will trade for philosophies. Even so, new ideas and new thoughts are exchanged each time a member of one civilization buys from another. In the long run, such basic interactions are often far more effective than sophisticated diplomacy. The desire to make such contacts and absorb something of another's culture is also a motivation for the trader.

Because those who strive for a common goal forge bonds that cross gaps between cultures and races, merchant spacemen are members of a common band. The common salutation "Brother Trader" among members of the interstellar merchant's fraternity is no accident, nor is it an empty phrase. Despite his origin or beliefs, a trader always has a common bond with another trader. This is not to say that there will be no disagreements. Turning disagreement into agreement is, after all, a trader's profession. But even through disagreement, there is the knowledge that two traders share something basic—a desire to exchange something of value and to gain more than one possessed before.

Space is the richest territory a merchant has ever known, because the frontiers are endless and ever-widening. It is always along the frontier that a merchant can truly make a difference. Pioneers are the best customers, for they most badly need what

the merchant can provide—the tools for building their homes and the touches of their native places that link them to their origins. As long as there are pioneers, there must be merchants to support their efforts, and such merchants will always prosper.

As you can see, the motivations for entering this field are nearly as varied as the beings making the choices. If any of these motivations strikes home with you, the merchant spaceman's life may indeed be what you seek.

Merchant spacemen come from every known intelligent culture, and every known background. There are merchant careers for every interest. The merchant's life is available, not only to the being who yearns to travel, but also to those who enjoy encountering different ideas and individuals but prefer the security of planetside life. Trade brokers in spaceports get some of the best of both worlds, enjoying a stable personal life while interacting daily with space travelers and cargoes from everywhere in the known galaxy.

Trade operations require the most vital of business decisions every day. The rewards for being correct are great, but the chance for error is equally great. A trader's errors in judgment are multiplied by the great distances involved in trade between solar systems, so that a trader can be sure that his every business decision *matters* in the course of events.

The individualist can truly exercise freedom as a trader, while still obtaining training from those with experience in the field. After academy training, apprenticeship, or entry through the ranks, traders who want to be their own bosses have every chance of making it on their own. The field of interstellar trade is the one business where an independent can still be competitive, as there are always more customers than there are traders. In frontier areas such as the Triangle or the Organian Treaty Zone, independent traders thrive alongside bigger mercantile corporations.

For those who want to get ahead in an organization, promotion comes fast in merchant service for those who deserve it. Individual initiative and *results* are what matters to shipping companies and trade operations, and those who distinguish themselves share in the immediate rewards when their work brings profits for the companies that employ them. In Star Fleet, most officers are recruited and trained as an elite group, separate from the rank and file. Among merchants, a large number of merchant ship captains and others in top positions come from apprentice programs or work their way up from positions of limited responsibility.

In recent years, the life of a trader has opened up new horizons for those in medical and scientific career lanes. Though the merchant training programs offered by the UFP/ITA and similar organizations do not generally include these specialties, many medical and scientific professionals at every level sign on with trading organizations. Testing and quality control laboratories run by trade brokers and shipping lines employ many biologists and chemists. Research projects in all fields of science

related to transport development are operated by large trade organizations. Medical personnel face new challenges and new horizons aboard passenger vessels and trading ships.

Whatever your career goals, chances are you can pursue them as part of the interstellar trade profession, making the life of a merchant spaceman one to investigate when planning a future.



STAR FLEET VETERANS

The life of an interstellar independent merchant is often pursued by retiring Star Fleet personnel, and provides an ideal career for a former serviceman who wishes to stay in space. Many Star Fleet veterans can retire quite young, and such persons have a big head start in obtaining the skills needed for this challenging profession. In addition, contacts made in starports and trade corporations while serving in Star Fleet (particularly in the Merchant Marine Command) are invaluable. Furthermore, Star Fleet and the UFP Council encourage veterans to enter merchant life by offering favored status to Star Fleet veterans in obtaining guaranteed loans for the purchase of small merchant vessels. Also, retiring Star Fleet personnel often have back pay or retirement benefits that can go a long way toward financing such ventures. This can make entering the merchant life after service in Star Fleet very attractive.

There are even special organizations for veterans who become traders, with the UFP/ITA's own Fleet Veterans Trade Alliance and Marine Veterans Trade Alliance (for Star Fleet and Federation Marines veterans respectively) being two of the most prominent. In the UFP/ITA, these branches of the overall organization often take the lead in providing liaison services between the military and private-sector traders, including offering advice and legal assistance involving retirement benefits and loans.

TRAINING TO BE A TRADER

An individual must have special training to become a successful interstellar merchant, either as an independent or as the valued employee of a shipping line or trade concern. To provide this training to the young beings who will form the next generation of interstellar entrepreneurs, the UFP/ITA operates a number of programs that meet the needs and background of nearly every qualified applicant.

MERCHANT ACADEMIES

For those who seek a formal education with a broad base of academic programs aimed toward a career in interstellar trade, the UFP/ITA operates more than 30 merchant academies within the borders of the Federation, including major four-year programs available on most

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Promising individuals who for some reason cannot attend a merchant academy may be eligible for the UFP/ITA Apprentice Training Program. This training program places applicants of age 18 or over (with exceptions as noted above) as apprentices with trained, experienced UFP/ITA traders in active merchant work across the known galaxy. Apprentices work for their assigned sponsors to earn their keep and in return receive a program of instruction designed to supplement their work experience.

An apprenticeship lasts for three solar years. During the first 18 months, the apprentice is well-grounded in the general skills and studies necessary for every interstellar merchant. The apprentices are then screened with a series of evaluation

The UFP/ITA operates a number of programs.

major UFP homeworlds. It also sanctions the curricula of more than 140 other such schools that are operated by planetary governments, trade organizations, and private or public corporations throughout the Federation. Students enter these academies at the age of 18 in most cases, though exceptions are made for those individuals whose normal racial lifespan differs greatly from that of most Humanoids, or for veterans of the UFP armed forces who enter academies after their tours of duty are completed.

Most of these schools place their emphasis on classroom study mixed with practical experience. The first two years of study are usually devoted to a general curriculum equivalent to any good general education program at any mid-level college or university. During the final two years, the academy student trains in the special knowledge of a particular field of interstellar endeavor. These specialty schools include programs in starship engineering, piloting and navigation, communications, security and support, and, of course, trade and finance.

UFP/ITA merchant academies offer the full collegiate experience for the student, encouraging the development of well-rounded individuals, not just single-minded specialists. Students live, work, and interact with others who share their interest in the life of an interstellar trader.

A wide variety of financial aid programs are available to the deserving student, with such programs administered according to need and potential. UFP scholarships and grants, privately-funded scholarships, and Federation-insured student loan programs are all available.

tests, and especially promising individuals may obtain grants for advanced studies at a merchant academy. The rest proceed for a second 18-month program of specialized training in one of the same areas noted above for specialty training in the merchant academies. During this time, the apprentice works closely with one or more working professionals in her/his chosen line of specialized work.

UP FROM BELOWDECKS

The UFP/ITA is also always on the lookout for individuals with potential from the ranks of the belowdecks workers aboard UFP merchant vessels. From those laboring in non-specialized tasks in or about the interstellar trade industry (freight handlers, clerical assistants, sales personnel, etc.), UFP/ITA members sometimes try out the most capable individuals on more rewarding and exciting specialty assignments, under the supervision of trained UFP/ITA members.

When hired laborers serve well in such special assignments, they can receive advanced training on an informal, on-the-job basis that may lead to taking advanced placement or equivalency tests for specialized work. A laborer can thus work his or her way up from a belowdecks job, perhaps earning a shot at an apprenticeship or a scholarship, or perhaps simply rising in status and capability right to recognition as a licensed interstellar merchant. UFP/ITA testing and evaluation procedures assure that those without formal training have a chance to learn skills and enter professions according to their ability, not just their background.

TRAINING OUTSIDE THE UFP

Even if a deserving youngster lives outside the UFP, there may be training opportunities available. Many similar services are available outside the UFP itself, in locations where the UFP/ITA has trade interests, by virtue of the organization's continuing Interculture Training Initiative program.

The Interculture Training Initiative program lends teachers, administrators, and financial consultants to UFP allies and trade partners to help them establish their own academies, apprentice programs, and other training facilities. Many independent worlds have such arrangements, and their programs receive UFP/ITA sanction, allowing their students to be accepted within the UFP/ITA's area of influence as equals with their brother and sister traders of the UFP.

THE UFP/ITA

The UFP/ITA is not a governmental agency. It is rather a non-profit trade association that performs certain functions for the UFP government under contract, much in the same way that the Federation Interstellar Postal Service (FIPS) and the UFP Medical Association perform their functions of delivering interstellar mail and licensing medical personnel. The UFP/ITA performs these functions with a greater degree of efficiency than a government bureaucracy would accomplish, saving the tax money of the UFP member governments and making UFP/ITA independent activities possible at a low cost.

Across the Federation and in many other areas, UFP/ITA guidelines are used to set pay standards for crew positions. UFP/ITA standardized testing and pay grade classifications allow employers to

often referred to as an Interstellar Merchants Ticket. This certification is granted as a result of meeting certain standards of acceptability in general skills involving star travel and the specialty skills associated with the various professions that interstellar merchants represent.

Individuals who learn skills and professions that are not covered by the UFP/ITA's own training programs are still sanctioned and tested by the UFP/ITA when their work takes them into jobs aboard merchant vessels or with trade companies. Medical and scientific personnel in particular still need UFP/ITA certification to practice their specialties in the more demanding environment of space, and UFP/ITA continuing education programs assure they will be ready for such tests.

The UFP/ITA also administers tests for suitability as the captain of a merchant vessel in space. Only individuals who have passed the rigorous tests devised by Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command and administered by the UFP/ITA are granted a license to command a private vessel in Federation space. This license is referred to as a License To Master A Vessel In Space, or more colloquially as a Master's Ticket.

Those obtaining this license are granted all the privileges adherent to being a captain of an independent vessel. These licenses are reviewed and renewed periodically. If evidence is presented that shows a Master as negligent or unfit for command, the license may be revoked permanently by a Board Of Inquiry or temporarily, pending the convening of a Board, by the officer in command of any Star Fleet vessel acting under his or her own authority. There is no greater responsibility than to be Master of a space vessel, and UFP/ITA members who hold this distinction take this responsibility very seriously.

The UFP/ITA is not a governmental agency.

The most extensive such arrangement is within the Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds in the frontier area known as the Triangle. Four merchant academies have been established in the AOFW on Archibald II, Baker's World, Jav VII, and New New Aberdeen, with a fifth proposed on Morning Garden. These are a joint venture of the UFP/ITA and its sister organization, the AOFW/ITA. The AOFW/ITA also runs apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs similar to those in the UFP, and these are also recognized by the UFP/ITA.

A unique arrangement exists within the Organian Treaty Zone between The UFP/ITA and the Klingon Imperial Merchant Fleet. As the Organian treaty requires each side to accept the credentials of the other's merchant vessels, a joint facility on the planet Outreach (in *Klingonaase* called *Natagavrisha*, "that which is handled at a distance") has been established for the joint training of a small number of both Klingon and UFP students. These hand-picked students, who learn both Klingon and UFP merchant procedures, will graduate and become liaisons between Klingon and UFP trade delegations to independent worlds in the Treaty Zone.

By long-standing treaty, the family schools operated by most Orion trade families are also recognized by the UFP/ITA, though their procedures allow for more advancement, based on family status. Graduates of these schools, however, must pass equivalency tests to be granted UFP/ITA credentials for trade within the UFP.

ensure that they hire qualified people. The same system assures the employee a fair wage for his ability and level of responsibility.

UFP/ITA CERTIFICATION

The UFP/ITA administers testing and certification programs for all interstellar merchants operating in the Federation, by contract with Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command. Merchants operating in the Federation do not have to be members of the UFP/ITA (though most are), but testing procedures for licensing such personnel are administered by the UFP/ITA, under Star Fleet's watchful eye.

To serve in a position of responsibility aboard a merchant vessel in space or, in many cases, in a ground-based position affecting maintenance or operations of such vessels, one must possess a UFP Interstellar Merchant's Certification,

ISSUE NUMBER C-8	SERIAL NUMBER 204-B92-29R-F
UFP INTERSTELLAR MERCHANTS LICENSE	
DEPARTMENT OF INTERSTELLAR TRADE AND COMMERCE	
<i>This is to certify that</i> <u>A. JODD KNUTSTEIN</u> <i>having been examined and found competent by the undersigned, is</i> <i>licensed to serve as</i> <u>CHIEF ENGINEER MULTI-ENGINE RATING</u> <i>for the term of 7 years.</i>	
<i>Given under my hand this stardate</i> <u>2/2308.09</u>	
<u>JONAN, ARGELIUS</u> PORT	<u>R. Tetaline</u> R. TETALINE, CAPTAIN OFFICER IN CHARGE OF INSPECTION

**UFP/ITA MERCHANT PAY
GRADE CLASSIFICATIONS**

The UFP/ITA sets standard grades for job attainment, responsibility, and pay in seven job classifications. Firms engaged in interstellar trade operations are encouraged to use these designations for job placement and pay determination.

Grade 0 is a classification given to untrained laborers. Grades 1 through 5 are basic grades applied to most wage earners. Grades 6 through 8 are professional grades used to classify highly skilled and well-educated specialists. Those attaining professional grades are tested for directive skills pertaining to leadership and administrative ability as well as specialty skills, because these individuals are expected to be able to direct others as department heads and group leaders.

A given position may be described by pay grade required for the position. For example, a ship's captain looking for a new assistant engineer aboard a large vessel may decide that the job requires an Engineer 4. Those with less training need not apply, but the captain will expect to pay a salary in keeping with the level of training an engineer of pay grade 4 has attained. Similarly, a large trade brokerage seeking an experienced trade negotiator might require the services of a Clerk/Steward 6, to be certain that applicants with UFP/ITA credentials at this pay grade had skills suitable to their needs.

Specific standards for attainment of each grade are different for each job classification listed, but the basic criteria used for determining those standards is spelled out in the UFP/ITA Pay Grade Guidelines established by the Special Committee on Job Advancement Criteria of the UFP/ITA. These are given in the accompanying sidebar.

Criteria are also available for employers who wish to determine what pay grade classification is needed to fill a particular job opening. Employers who use the standard classification system save themselves thousands of credits because they need not run their own testing program or be concerned with tracing down references.

Documentation on UFP/ITA pay grades and job classification services are available for the asking. For specific information on testing, specific criteria, and classification, visit the local UFP/ITA office or connect with the UFP/ITA datanet.

UFP/ITA JOB CLASSIFICATIONS AND TITLES

Engineering	Engineer
Helm/Navigation	Pilot/Navigator
Financial/Clerical	Clerk/Steward
Security	Security Officer
Communications/Technical	Comm/Tech
Sciences	Scientist/Researcher
Medical	Medic/Doctor

UFP/ITA PAY GRADES

GRADE 0: This individual is untrained; no specialty specified. The individual is useful as untrained labor.

GRADE 1: This individual has only minimal training, probably gleaned from working in proximity to trained personnel. The subject is useful as an untrained helper with some familiarity with the terminology and parameters of the field.

GRADE 2: This individual has limited training, gained from working with trained personnel. He may perform well-defined tasks, take instrument readings, or perform basic maintenance work that does not require interpretation of orders or diagnosis of systems.

GRADE 3: This individual has a basic level of training, gained on the job or as an apprentice under instruction. The subject is able to perform routine work in a specialty, interpret orders or diagnose systems within well-established guidelines, and provide normal maintenance support. This is the minimum level of achievement necessary for graduation from most approved apprentice programs. Those achieving this grade or higher are entitled to the designation "Trained Merchant Specialist" (usually written as the abbreviation "TMS" after the name when signing official documents such as a ship's log or maintenance report).

GRADE 4: This individual has advanced training, gained in part on the job but mostly under trained tutelage or in school. The subject is able to perform routine tasks in the specialty with no difficulty and interpret routine orders or perform non-critical diagnostics. The subject is considered to have mastered the basic non-critical techniques of the specialty field. This is the minimum level of achievement necessary to qualify (under UFP/ITA guidelines) for placement as a department head in departments with less than 10 persons total. It is also the minimum level of achievement necessary for graduation from most approved merchant academy programs.

GRADE 5: This individual has operational expertise in the specialty field, gained mostly under trained tutelage or in school. The subject can perform all normal defined jobs, and make reasonable progress in understanding theory or handling unusual situations based on experience. This is the minimum level of achievement necessary to qualify for placement as a department head in departments with from 10 to 49 persons total.

GRADE 6: This individual has professional expertise in the specialty field, gained mostly in school and by experience. The subject is able to direct teams in professional operations, is experienced in theory and practice of the specialty, and is capable of original development of basic techniques. This is the minimum level of achievement necessary to qualify for placement as a department head in departments with 50 persons or more total.

GRADE 7: This individual has advanced expertise in the specialty field, gained in school and through extensive professional experience. The subject is able to direct teams in professional operations of a highly technical nature and in theoretical development, and is capable of advanced development of techniques and theory.

GRADE 8: This individual has master level expertise, gained in advanced schooling, research, and through extensive professional experience. The subject is able to direct teams in original research and development of new techniques and theory or in advanced operations of major importance, and is capable of major advances in technique or theory. Those achieving this grade are entitled to the designation "Master Merchant Specialist" (usually written as the abbreviation "MMS" after the name when signing official documents).

There are no grades defined by testing or placement above Grade 8, though this highest grade includes a wide variety of experts from local chiefs of large private security forces on tradeworlds to Nobel Prize winners in the sciences. Placement in advanced Grade 8 positions is largely a subjective decision based on an applicant's record. The suggested pay scale for Grade 8 personnel, however, is very much a minimum guideline. More prestigious or experienced individuals can command much greater salaries than the minimum.

UFP/ITA MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

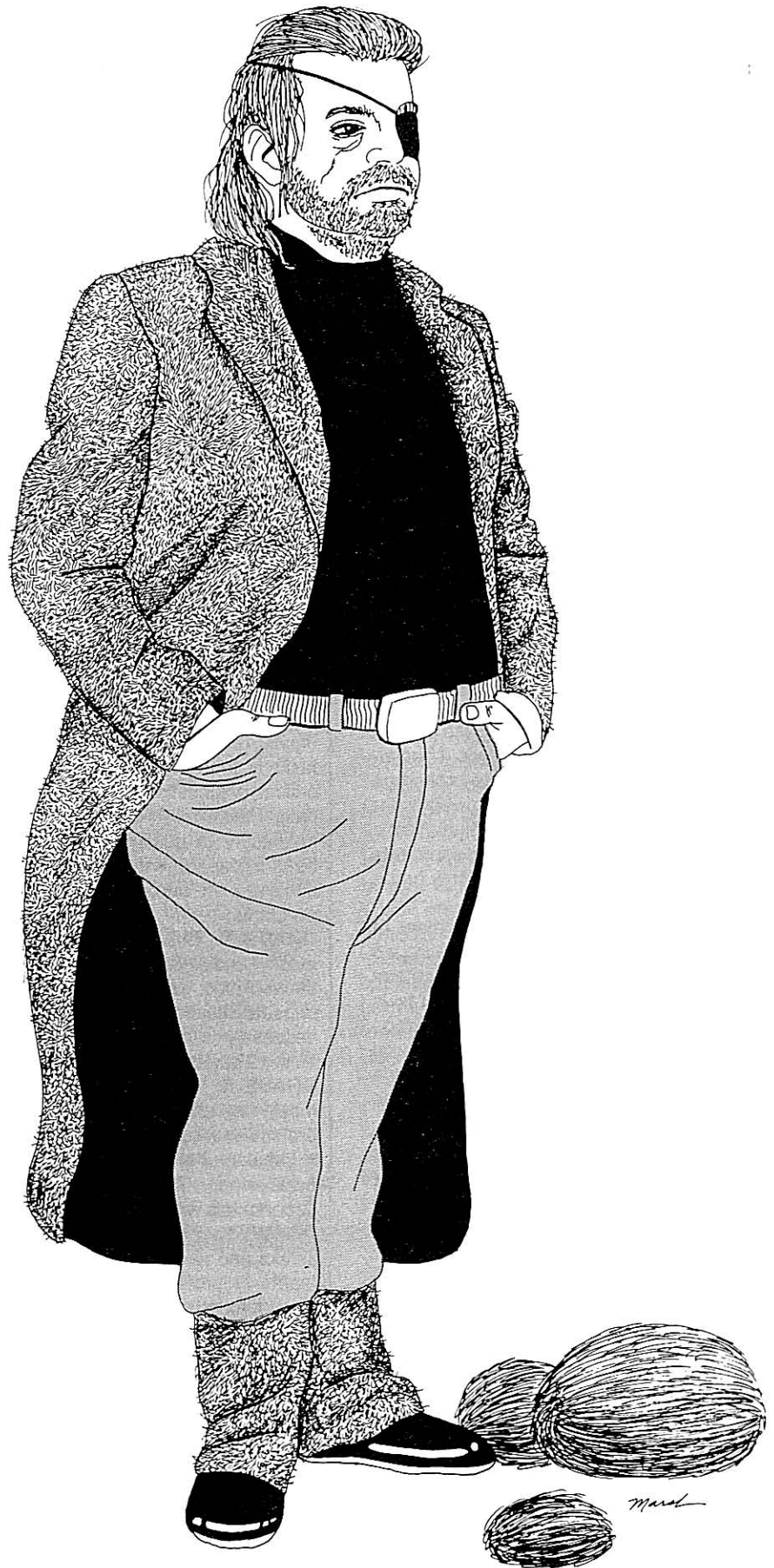
UFP/ITA membership is open to any being who serves aboard a merchant vessel in space, or in any profession or position affiliated with the interstellar merchant trade. Dues are assessed on a sliding scale according to expected income and pay grade, and are very reasonable even at the highest income levels. Dues and assessments are kept low, despite the broad range of UFP/ITA activities and programs, because of income from administration of many official UFP programs relating to interstellar trade.

Members of the UFP/ITA can draw upon the vast array of facilities and programs offered traders within the organization. UFP/ITA offices are maintained all through the UFP and in many locations outside the Federation where members have trading interests. In locations where there is no local office, a UFP/ITA liaison may be available, usually a retired trader still serving the organization by acting as a local contact.

UFP/ITA offices and some liaisons maintain listings of local shippers who have cargoes to be transported by independent haulers, and consulting these listings is free to UFP/ITA members. A directory of members seeking employment aboard ship or planetside is also maintained, as is a file on local businesses whose questionable activities may have been brought to the attention of local members.

UFP/ITA members may call upon other members for help in time of disaster. Local offices can arrange for emergency services, putting members in contact with other members who can help.

Most of all, the UFP/ITA acts as the voice of the independent trader in public affairs. The powerful UFP/ITA Political Action Committee supports the issues that are important to traders, and acts as a watchdog over governmental agencies involved in trade regulation. Throughout its history, the UFP/ITA has been instrumental in setting the trade goals for the entire Federation. It fiercely protects the interests of its millions of members. The UFP/ITA is not a union, nor is it simply a trade association of large corporations. It is corporate employers, trained employees, and independent operators working together to keep the interstellar trade lanes open.



THE CORPORATE MERCHANT

by Jackson McLain

Careers in corporate interstellar trade are varied and rewarding. As markets and the frontier expand, the trading companies and shipping lines of the UFP grow with them. Thousands of new jobs open up every week. Opportunities, pay and benefits have never been better.

In this article, we will take a look at several corporations engaged in interstellar trade operations, and examine some typical positions available in these corporations and the requirements for them. In conclusion, we will discuss how pay and benefits in the corporate sector compare to Star Fleet pay grades and non-trade associated employment.

TRADING COMPANIES AND SHIPPING LINES

Although small independent traders make up a large percentage of the trade in the Federation, trading companies have a place as well. These organizations usually have bases on large planets, but their ships make stops at almost any planet with a spaceport. Almost any cargo can be shipped by a trading company. In addition, passenger service from one planet to another is possible in many cases. There are differences between trading companies, shipping lines, and passenger lines, as mentioned below.

PASSENGER LINES

More than one person has observed that being a passenger on some liners is like being a piece of cargo. In many ways, that observation is valid. From the operations and financial standpoint, hauling passengers is similar to hauling cargo, but passengers require more support services, more care, and tighter scheduling than most cargo.

Passenger lines and cruise lines are organized similarly. Cruise lines must concentrate more on entertaining passengers, while passenger lines must concentrate on adherence to a schedule and anticipation of changing transportation needs.

Some passenger lines carry cargo as a sideline, but few of these have been truly successful. Combined passenger/cargo vessels tend to be inefficient due to the compromises that must be made between the needs of passengers and the need to keep cargo-hauling costs down.

TRADING COMPANIES

Trading companies buy and sell trade items on speculation. That is, the company buys cargo in one area and moves it to another, hoping to sell it for a profit. Trading companies take bigger risks than shipping lines in the hopes of making bigger returns. Some trading companies also haul cargo-for-hire for a steadier income at low risk to supplement the trading business in hard times.

SHIPPING LINES

Shipping lines carry cargo on a for-hire basis. Their profit margin is small, requiring a line to move a lot of cargo to make a go of the business. Some lines also speculate a bit in trade themselves, to supplement the cargo-for-hire business.

POSITIONS IN CORPORATE TRADE

The popular view of a freighter crewmember as a strong back attached to a weak mind couldn't be further from the truth. Today's trade corporation employee is a trained specialist who is as capable as any Star Fleet personnel in an equivalent position. Let's take a look at some of the areas in which employees have a chance to shine in today's corporate merchant fleets.

CARGO AND FINANCE

The heart of any trade operation is the people who actually buy, sell, and haul the goods. From greenest cargohandler to chief financial officer, each must have a clear understanding of his position and duties in the chain of commerce.

Today's cargohandlers must be trained to operate the latest cargo handling equipment, from running all-terrain tractors and magnocranes to manipulating the latest in A-grav lifters and bulk transporters. They learn to handle heavy machinery and run maintenance checks on delicate hand equipment. Mostly, they learn the *methods* used to load cargo. Delicate Xixian crystal to bulky Hanthian metallite ore, each type of goods requires a knowledge of the available methods of transport and loading. Modular packing techniques and use of standardized cargo containers must also be mastered, including manipulating such items in zero-G or hostile environments that require suits.

Trade negotiators learn the ways of commerce on thousands of planets, dealing in many languages and just as many sets of practices, traditions, and taboos. Translation devices make learning hundreds of alien tongues unnecessary, but many traders are more comfortable (and more successful) when they understand the subtle nuances of a trading partner's language. Reading a situation, however, is even more important. A good negotiator must be able to translate what a buyer or seller *doesn't say*.

Name: HIGHLINER CRUISES**UFPSC Symbol: HlnrCr***Home Office Location: Sirius**President/CEO: Dal Rigdr**Chartering Organization: United Federation of Planets**Founding Date: 2/0207***Stock Profile: 1B38***Price/Date: 95.94 Cr on 2/2201**Dividend: none***Balance Sheet, Year Ended: 2/2201**

<i>Cash</i>	<i>Assets</i>	<i>Liabilities</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
11 MCr	651 MCr	506 MCr	1.28

Business Summary:

Highliner is a popular cruise line based on Sirius. They own 45 *Sunshine* Class and 180 *Argon* Class cruise ships. Each ship has a particular home port and tends to make simple round-trip runs.

Some say the best position in a merchant ship is that of cargomaster. Cargomasters preside over both the movement and disposition of cargo, making them the supervisors for both cargo-handlers and trade negotiators. The best cargomasters combine inspired financial genius with absolute organizational efficiency. (And some say that a bit of the spirit of P.T. Barnum, ancient Terran promoter, lives in the very best cargomasters!) Their expertise in locating, buying, loading, transporting, and selling cargo can make or break a company—far more, it is said, than the actions of ship

PILOTING AND NAVIGATION

The pilots who guide cargo vessels from port to port are an important part of the interstellar trade community. Though the popular conception of these captains, navigators, and helmsmen shows them making safe, well-traveled milk runs, this is not always the case. Such officers must be as skilled as any in space.

Navigation in frontier areas is not as well supported by marker buoys and guidance beams as the better-traveled spaceways near the center of the Federation. Merchant ships on the frontier often find themselves being piloted by dead

reckoning, in the hands of navigators who must know their vessels and the area of space around them with great precision. In closer to heavily populated and heavily traveled parts of space, navigation problems are compounded by the great amount of traffic that exists between worlds. Space only seems vast until you are plotting a course across five populated star systems, avoiding known navigation hazards and attempting to make the best possible time in completing the circuit—while thousands of other vessels are attempting to do the same thing!

the midst of UFP territory soon learns that jockeying the big freighters and transports is an art unto itself. With cargo far outweighing the ship's own tonnage, problems in maneuvering are compounded as ships are strained to the limits of their design capacity. Insystem maneuver at a busy docking facility requires a light touch and maximum knowledge of a ship's capabilities and operations.

The ultimate position for a merchant pilot is that of merchant captain. A trader captain in space is the monarch of his vessel, and faces the same problems of command faced by any monarch. Merchant captains must be diplomats, teachers, administrators, financiers, and leaders as well as expert pilots and navigators. The ultimate success or failure of their trade operations rests on their shoulders. They are the top local authority for the trade corporation they represent, and they must guard that company's interests while still caring for the well-being of passengers and crew.

Surprisingly enough, there is plenty of work for those trained in star navigation and piloting even if they never leave their home planet. Traffic controllers at busy spaceports and in-system haulers who bring bulky cargoes down from orbiting ships make excellent salaries and are never away from their families. Likewise, shuttlecraft pilots who make ground-to-ground trips with cargo hauling vehicles are needed, as are operators of ground and water vehicles. A major trade operation's planetside operation often employs 3 to 5 persons in planetside transport jobs for every one starship crewman.

Merchant ships on the frontier often find themselves being piloted by dead reckoning.

captains. A cargomaster must be an expert in trade and commerce, and be able to discern true value of a cargo at a glance. Cargomasters also must be able to handle the day-to-day administration of a ship's finances, and be able to deal with the complex bureaucracies and red tape encountered in starports galaxy-wide.

Aboard passenger-carrying vessels, the ship's purser is the authority responsible for seeing to the needs of the passengers. A purser and that officer's assistants serve the clerical and entertainment needs of the passengers, overseeing food preparation and recreational facilities. The purser, in cooperation with the ship's security officer, is responsible for safeguarding the stored valuables of the passengers.

Planetside, many more cargo and finance specialists are employed to interface with interstellar traders as liaisons, buyers, and trade negotiators. They are the life's blood of any trade brokerage concern, being responsible for finding and purchasing goods locally that can be resold to traders for off-planet shipment. Trade brokers are experts in both their planet's import-export regulations and the loopholes that can save a company MegaCredits. Planetside brokers must be both expert negotiators and very competent administrators, as well as savvy traders. Planetside financial officers and advisors need to have an insider's knowledge of the stock and commodities markets and a background in economics and mathematics.

reckoning, in the hands of navigators who must know their vessels and the area of space around them with great precision. In closer to heavily populated and heavily traveled parts of space, navigation problems are compounded by the great amount of traffic that exists between worlds. Space only seems vast until you are plotting a course across five populated star systems, avoiding known navigation hazards and attempting to make the best possible time in completing the circuit—while thousands of other vessels are attempting to do the same thing!

Helm duties are no easier for the merchant pilot. On the frontier, unknown dangers crop up as almost daily occurrences. Even the pilot assigned to runs between heavily populated systems in

Name: SATERLUY TRADING COMPANY

UFPSC Symbol: SatTC

Home Office Location: Terra, Sol

President/CEO: James C. Saterluy

Chartering Organization: United Federation of Planets

Founding Date: 2/1702

Stock Profile: 3C96

Price/Date: 55.85 Cr on 2/2201

Dividend: none

Balance Sheet, Year Ended: 2/2201

Cash	Assets	Liabilities	Ratio
65 MCr	830 MCr	822 MCr	1.01

Business Summary:

Owned by James Saterluy, Saterluy Trading Company is a medium sized trading company located on Terra. They will buy and sell almost any sort of cargo, but prefer luxury goods. Saterluy tends to operate within a 2000-parsec sphere around the Sol system.

Saterluy owns 47 Argon Class tradeships and 130 Zeus Class robot freighters. Saterluy's ships are all in very good condition and are extremely dependable.

REPAIR AND ENGINEERING

When a merchant vessel is all alone in space, all hands must depend on her maintenance and engineering officers to operate and preserve the ship's powerful yet delicate machinery. Besides the usual drive, power, communications, and support systems found aboard most ships, engineering personnel are responsible for the maintenance and repair of cargo handling and storage systems.

The "black gang" (an appellation from the appearance of the engineering crew from the early coal-fired sea-going ships) aboard a commercial vessel is responsible for the systems that make the ship go, including the massive and touchy matter-antimatter power systems, the warp and impulse drives, and the auxiliary power taps that supply energy to the rest of the ship. These are perhaps the most critical and most dangerous jobs in engineering. One mistake in interpreting a reading can lead to an engine burnout or a much more catastrophic fate if the ship's safety overrides do not act fast enough to prevent a matter-antimatter explosion. Chief of this gang is most often the ship's assistant chief engineer, who is presumably the second most experienced engineering officer aboard. This officer and the members of this team must be knowledgeable in both the physics and mathematical theory behind warp drive, as well as possessing thorough knowledge of warp and impulse drive hardware. They must also be able to perform their duties in bulky radiation gear, and sometimes outside the ship in environmental suits.

The ship's systems chief specializes in the auxiliary devices that keep the ship going, such as deflector shields, communications, sensors, transporters, and the massive and complicated computers. The "systems gang" provides expertise with the theory and repair of all these systems, and must be skilled with them and in computer programming, computer science, and computer repair. They also maintain ship's boats and shuttlecraft. As their jobs also include repairs to hull and superstructure, these engineers must be trained for zero-G work in environmental suits.

Maintenance of all systems provided for the comfort and support of the ship's passengers and crew are the responsibility of the support systems chief and his "support gang". These engineers maintain life support, food processing, ship's lighting and internal power, recreational systems, and all small equipment. Small systems engineers repair items like handheld communicators and electronic tools, while the ship's armorers do the same for hand weapons on ships large enough to

require separate departments for these functions. On smaller vessels, a support engineer must be capable of reprogramming a faulty food processor one day, replacing broken lighting panels that evening, and responding to an emergency life support failure the next morning. On passenger vessels, support engineers perform all needed maintenance in "passenger country" for the comfort and convenience of the paying guests of the line.

Maintenance and design engineers are also employed by large trade corporations for planetside maintenance of ships, cargo handling equipment, shuttles and ground transport, and buildings and facilities. Experienced starship engineers can also aspire to work as design consultants for shipbuilding firms planetside or as workers in orbital drydocks and other planet-circling facilities such as orbital factories.

SECURITY

This department is more important than it might seem at first glance, particularly aboard ships carrying passengers. The security officer is responsible for all areas of shipboard safety and for protection of crew, passengers, and cargo from intrusion or dangerous situations inside a vessel. On cargo vessels, security personnel guard cargoes during onloading, flight, and offloading. They also accompany trade negotiators on planetside excursions, a particularly important job for frontier merchant operations opening up new ports of call far from the UFP.

In passenger ships, security personnel protect the passengers and act as spacegoing police, carrying the authority of the ship's captain to maintain order, enforce the ship's regulations, protect the belongings of passengers and crew, and mediate problems among the passengers. They also form the last line of defense against hijackers or pirates engaged in boarding actions.

Planetside, security personnel are employed at every spaceport and private facility as watchmen and guardians of the safety of all using the facility. On trade-worlds and corporate-operated freeports, a private security force may be the only local police agency in existence, in which case they fill all the traditional police duties of investigation and incarceration as well as private security duties.

Security personnel in all these situations need to be skilled with both lethal and non-lethal weapons, and in hand-to-hand combat techniques. They must also be able to provide first aid on the scene in emergencies, be familiar with the laws and police procedures of their area, and be able to operate the communications, vehicular, and defense equipment they are issued.

SPECIALTIES

Many specialized professionals are employed by interstellar trade companies as support for their operations. These professionals may not be directly engaged in trade, but they are an important part of the corporate family nonetheless.

Name: TRIANGLE SHIPPING

UFPSC Symbol: TriShp

Home Office Location: Comstock, Schull

President/CEO:

Chartering Organization: United Federation of Planets

Founding Date: 1/9904.30

Stock Profile: 2F42

Price/Date: 27.05 Cr on 2/2201

Dividend: none

Balance Sheet, Year Ended: 2/2201

<i>Cash</i>	<i>Assets</i>	<i>Liabilities</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
44 MCr	534 MCr	517 MCr	1.03 Cr

Business Summary:

Triangle Shipping is a small shipping company located on Comstock. Their primary business is contracting to carry for most planets and companies in their area of the Triangle. The company also does some brokerage of cargoes, but they have not done well in this endeavor.

Triangle owns 122 ships at this time, including 36 *Nilron* Class, 40 *Argon* Class, 20 *Liberty* Class, 14 *Laweya* Class, and 12 *Zeus* Class freighters. These ships are well maintained, thus Triangle keeps most of their ships in operation at any given time.

Medical personnel are assigned aboard ships and at planetside and orbital facilities by most trade organizations. Shipboard medics are necessary to meet the needs of the crew and, on passenger vessels, of the passengers as well. Large planetside facilities often have clinics or dispensaries, especially at starports where trauma victims must be treated quickly on the scene in the event of a starship or landing craft crash or dockside accident.

Personnel trained in the sciences are also employed by trade companies. Planetside, these individuals may work in inspection or quality control laboratories at spaceport facilities. There, testing is done to assure the purity and safety of goods like foodstuffs and textiles coming in from offworld sources. In space, scientists and lab technicians serve aboard larger trade vessels as advisors on planetary conditions and exploitation of planetary resources.

One of the most interesting new fields for traders is the profession of trade scout. Trade scouts use fast courier ships to investigate worlds along the frontier and negotiate trade agreements with newly contacted cultures. The drive

Many specialized professionals are employed by interstellar trade companies as support for their operations.

of intense competition often sends these teams of specialists to contact cultures very soon after they are first reported by Star Fleet or independent scouts. Thus, these trade negotiators may have only the sketchiest of knowledge about the worlds they visit. The job is occasionally hazardous, but always new and exciting.

These missions require the expertise of individuals trained in trade and commerce, and of the best pilots and security personnel. Scientists are also important to such ventures, to study the resources of a planet and discover what can be exploited by the newly contacted culture as trade items for export. Trade scouts can help a newly contacted society make a smooth transition from a single-world economy into membership in the galactic trade community. They provide a valuable interface between these new worlds and the worlds of the Federation.



PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay for jobs in corporate trade is usually determined by UFP/ITA standard pay grades. In this section, pay for each of the UFP/ITA pay grades is given, and some examples of jobs that fall into each classification are entablatured. Pay rates for Star Fleet ranks also are listed for comparison purposes.

PAY RATES FOR UFP/ITA PAY GRADES

Regardless of classification, UFP/ITA standard pay grades are given comparable pay rates, as shown in the accompanying table. The table only gives basic pay rates, with modifiers applicable for unusual responsibility or job requirements. The rates for both UFP/ITA and Star Fleet are assumed to be all found, which means that room and board aboard ship are provided in addition to the wage. Were this not the case, the rates given in the tables would be much higher.

If a single individual holds two jobs that are combined normally aboard a small vessel, the larger of the two salaries is paid, with the appropriate bonuses for that salary. An individual who is temporarily required to handle the responsibility

for two jobs is likewise paid the higher salary and bonuses. The exception is the ship's commanding officer, who acts as cargo purchasing agent on a ship where there is no cargomaster. In such a case, the Captain's Purchasing Bonus is paid in addition to the captain's normal bonuses.

The owner of the trade operation may pay any amount of salary he wishes, as long as it is higher than the rate given for the pay grade. Many private vessels and trading companies pay year-end bonuses to the crewmembers, based on years of experience and service. These are usually paid at the end of the corporate year. The amounts vary, but a typical bonus would be one-tenth the monthly pay multiplied by the years served. Thus, an officer who had served six years could receive a bonus of 360 Cr.

One final benefit may be provided: profit sharing or commission. When the employees are acting as buyers for the trading company, they may be awarded a bonus based on the profit that their ship made for the company. The amount of the bonus will vary, but a bonus of from 1 percent to 5 percent is not uncommon, paid either on a monthly or yearly basis.

BASE PAY RATES FOR UFP/ITA PAY GRADES

Grade	Pay Per Month
GRADE 0	300 Cr
GRADE 1	350 Cr
GRADE 2	500 Cr
GRADE 3	1000 Cr
GRADE 4	1300 Cr
GRADE 5	1800 Cr
GRADE 6	2300 Cr
GRADE 7	2600 Cr
GRADE 8	3000 Cr

MODIFIERS ADDING TO BASE PAY

Officers (Scientists, Watch Officers, Bridge Crew, Security Chief)	+ 300 Cr
Department Heads (Chief Engineer, Science Officer)	+ 400 Cr
Chief Medical Officer	+ 500 Cr
First Officer	+ 550 Cr
Captain	+ 600 Cr
Fleet Captain (in charge of several vessels)	+1000 Cr
Captain's Purchasing Bonus (captain buys cargoes)	+ 200 Cr

STAR FLEET PAY GRADES

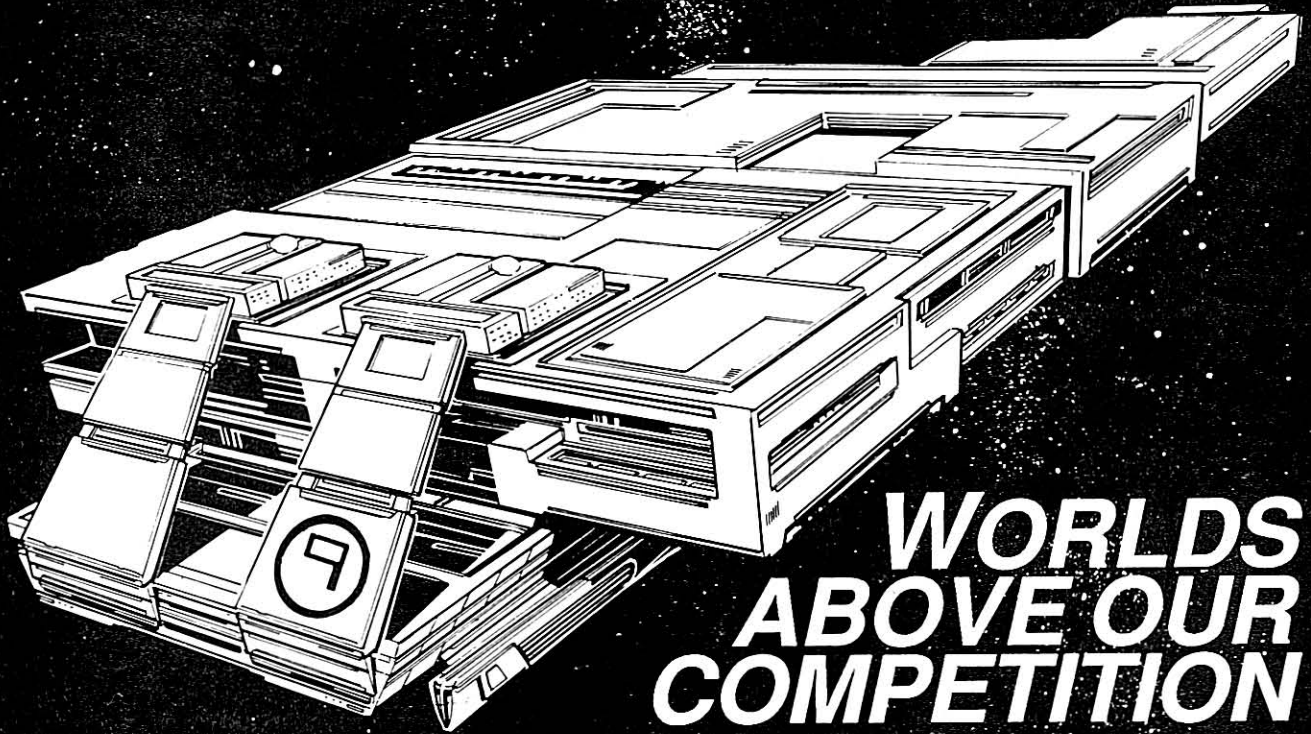
Rank	Pay/month
Admiral	4800 Cr
Commodore	4000 Cr
Captain	3400 Cr
Commander	2800 Cr
Lieutenant Commander	2400 Cr
Lieutenant	2000 Cr
Lieutenant, junior grade	1800 Cr
Ensign	1600 Cr
Cadet or Midshipman	400 Cr
Chief Warrant Officer	1400 Cr
Warrant Officer	1300 Cr
Master Chief Petty Officer	1400 Cr
Senior Chief Petty Officer	1000 Cr
Chief Petty Officer	900 Cr
Petty Officer 1st Class	700 Cr
Petty Officer 2nd Class	600 Cr
Enlisted 1st Class	500 Cr
Enlisted 2nd Class	400 Cr
Recruit	400 Cr



ATTENTION!

ATTENTION!

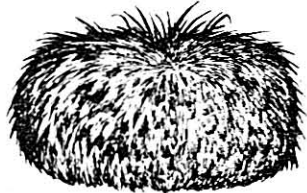
ATLAS CARGO



**WORLDS
ABOVE OUR
COMPETITION**

**TROUBLED BY
TRIBBLES?**

 WE BUY ALL
KINDS & SIZES 



 **PERCULATOR
FURRIERS**

JUST ASK FOR HANZ

**THIS
SPACE
FOR
RENT**

THE INDEPENDENT MERCHANT

By Paul Jesse

The heart and soul of interstellar commerce is the independent merchant ship, plying the trade lanes in search of profit. The rapid expansion of the Federation into the galaxy could not have been supported by a formal merchant marine service or large corporate trade organizations alone. The Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command must concern itself mainly with supplying the fleet and performing the essential support efforts that an organized body like the Federation must maintain regarding trade and commerce. Large corporations supply large-scale trade needs, but their operations are efficient only because of their size. They require well-established, safe trade lanes, which must be blazed by others. They cannot exist on the frontiers by themselves, but must wait until those areas are opened up by the hardy, stubborn, and enterprising independent. In the words of the immortal trader Sarah Hastings, "We are the lifeline of the pioneers."

Few indeed are the spacehands who have not considered the freedom of independent status. Even though they know that freedom includes freedom to starve or be lost in space, the frontiers still abound with independents.

Why? Certainly some do make their fortunes in independent trade, but more never quite manage to break even. Competition against the huge corporations and against the big family-owned trade operations of Vulcan and Orion is tough, especially in the first few years. UFP/ITA statistics show that an independent single-ship captain/owner or part-owner crewmember will make 39 percent less on the average during the average lifetime than a corporate-employed individual in the equivalent job.

Perhaps interstellar traders go independent because the range is greater. As an employee, one never goes hungry but one never (or very rarely) makes the big haul that nets a fortune. The corporation may profit big, but the individual employee shares those profits only in a limited way. As an independent, however, one *directly* benefits from a windfall. The fact that one is directly affected by a financial catastrophe is something that is perhaps ignored in the pursuit of possible wealth.

This may indeed be the reason, but as a trader myself I don't believe it for a moment. The true reason that the independent risks it all is the knowledge that, win or lose, he is master of his own destiny.

In this article, we will discuss the concerns that face an independent merchant on the frontiers of space, learning about the life of an independent merchant by examining the decisions that merchant must make to stay in business and stay alive.

KICKING THE WARP NACELLES

What separates an independent trader from a corporate employee is owning a ship. Certainly, many of our sister and brother traders are planet-based independents, but this section will deal with shipboard life, for the most part. The planet-based independent owns a business, but it is not as centrally dependent on a single piece of hardware.

An apocryphal story about the late, great Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh tells of the time his ship the *Fflaad* was boarded by Orion pirates in deep space. The pirate captain had heard of Ggavittchh and, having what he wanted in the trader's ship and cargo, offered to drop Ggavittchh off unharmed at a neutral port. "You've lost your ship," said the pirate, "but you'll be alive." Ggavittchh faced the armed pirate with a look that would be considered especially sour even on a Tellarite and asked with complete seriousness, "Wouldn't you at least *consider* shooting me instead?" According to the story, the Orion was so impressed (or at least amused) that he kept only the cargo and returned Ggavittchh to his ship.

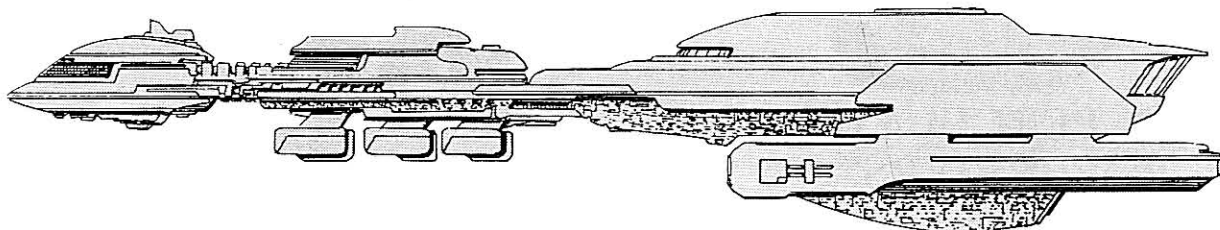
The interstellar trader lives in, for, and by the ship which is his base of operations, freight hauler, and home. Some independents that make scheduled runs do maintain homes planetside. In fact, more than a few have managed to have homes *and families* at *both* ends of a profitable regular trade run. One individual of my acquaintance, always known for overdoing a good thing, managed to have husbands on all three stops of her favorite Triangle run...but I digress!

Distances in space usually require that the trader spend more time shipboard than in any one port. The gypsy trader, who travels from port to port wherever there is cargo, may have no home at all but a ship, and it is often all the home the trader desires.

In any case, a trader's ship is his most important possession. Too often, the spacehand who decides to go independent does not put proper consideration into the purchase of a trade vessel and ends up spending too much effort trying to pay for that mistake over a period of years.

THE RIGHT SHIP

Before choosing a ship, decide what type of ship will be needed. This requires a thorough knowledge of the trading area to be exploited. Examine each point listed and apply that information to the decision of what ship to buy.



Crew Availability

What type of crew will you have aboard your ship? If you can afford to hire any crew you choose, you are probably not the average merchant spacehand preparing to go independent for the first time! If you are on a tight budget for crew salaries, you may have to limit yourself to a small vessel that can be run by fewer crewmembers rating lower pay scales.

One approach for very limited budgets, and one that is often popular among independents, is to cut your crew in for shares of the profits in lieu of part or perhaps all of the normal salary at their pay level. UFP/ITA rules permit this, as long as such crewmembers are granted a proper lien on the ship to reflect their financial interest. On the frontiers, such agreements are common, particularly among traders who have known each other for some time. Many Star Fleet veterans who enter independent trade do so in conjunction with other recently separated comrades in this manner.

Availability Of Passengers

Do you want a ship that is all cargo, all passenger, or a combination of the two? In areas where regular passenger runs are common and cheap, passenger staterooms may not pay for themselves. On the frontier, however, picking up an extra passenger or two for a run may make the difference between just breaking even and showing a good profit on a short trade run.

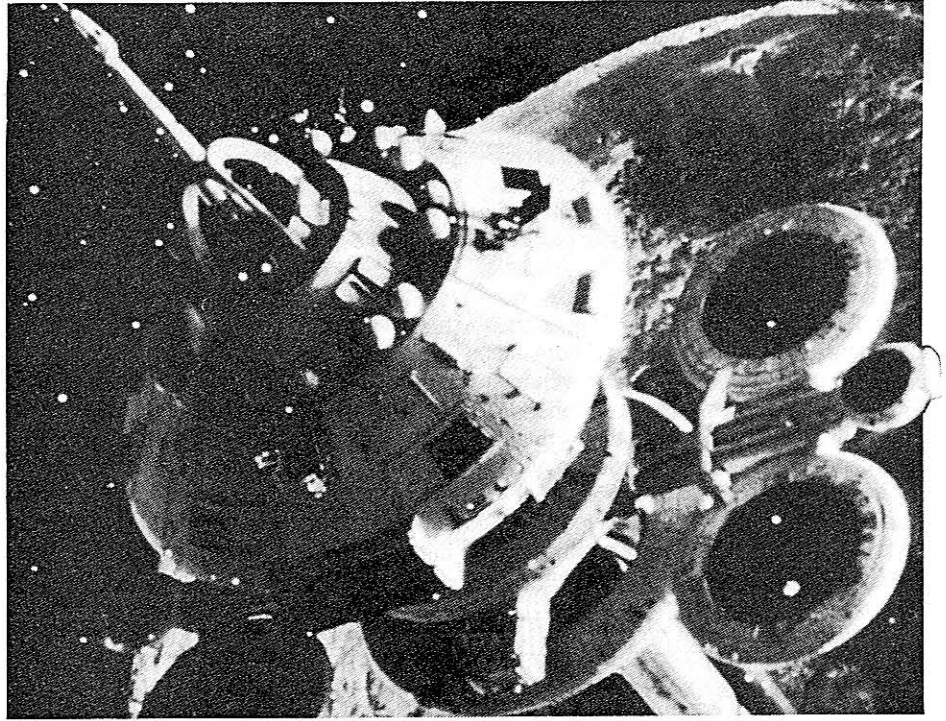
Passenger staterooms are useful when a special cargo must be accompanied by a representative of the shipper, or when the ship is hired out for special runs to supplement trade income. On large cargo vessels, a few extra staterooms is a good idea. On small vessels, the choice is more difficult, and depends largely on the specific types of run the ship is expected to make.

Remember the words of Sarah Hastings: "Running a passenger-and-cargo ship can be like writing a jokebook in Vulcan—a singular experience that is highly unprofitable."

Distances Between Ports

What ports will the ship make, and how far apart are they? This is very important, as it is necessary to know the average distances the ship will travel between stops when considering things like top warp speeds and service requirements. If a ship is too slow to travel efficiently between distant points, it will be too expensive to operate and will not be able to compete with faster vessels. Where distances between ports are shorter, speed is a less important factor.

A ship that must travel long distances without aid must be extremely reliable, and it usually requires more



maintenance than one that makes only short hops. This is not to say that short-distance vessels are able to be unreliable, but ships that are hard to service or have a reputation for requiring constant attention are not suitable for long voyages.

Facilities At Ports of Call

What are the facilities for ships available at the planned ports of call? If a ship will be traveling to small starports a great deal, it may be harder to find proper maintenance materials for a less-popular ship design. If the ship calls upon worlds with no orbital transfer facilities or possibly no starport other than a large stretch of flat land, the ship needs atmospheric maneuver and landing capability, well-equipped shuttles, or versatile transporter equipment for cargo transfer. A cargo transport that hauls standard cargo containers is fine for big starports, but useless for picking up freight on small agricultural worlds that have no facilities for packing, loading, and transferring containerized shipments. For these worlds, a self-contained freighter is better.

If the ports of call have sophisticated maintenance and service facilities, and traffic is heavy, there will likely be a good supply of spare parts available for most ships. If you call at less developed worlds, or ones that get less traffic, a more common and reliable ship type may be called for by the conditions under which you operate.

Available Cargo Types

If you intend to haul bulk grain to agricultural planets, don't buy a ship designed to haul low-bulk miscellaneous cargo. Look at what cargo is likely to be

available in your area of operation, and make sure the ship you choose can efficiently handle such cargo. Also take into account cargo type when choosing the size of your vessel. Bulk cargoes are normally sent in larger quantities, so a small two-man freighter outfitted for bulk liquids is probably not much use. Likewise, you would not want a huge multi-deck ship if you were going to have to make a living by picking up small miscellaneous cargoes here and there.

Cargo Capacity

Use care when examining cargo capacity. More is not always better, especially if much of it has to go empty. If a ship's cargo capacity is more than you can fill on 75 percent or more of your selected runs, you might be better off purchasing a smaller vessel that is less expensive to buy, operate, and maintain. It is better to have to turn away some business than to be constantly scrambling to find enough cargoes to break even.

Do not be too conservative, however. You may want to buy a ship with a bit more cargo space than you will need at first to allow room to grow. In the first growing period of an interstellar trade business, your cash flow will always be tight. If you are successful and want to expand, it is far less demanding on your available capital if you can do so without buying a new ship immediately. Plan for some growth. A ship that has a capacity of 25 to 50 percent more than you will need your first year or two is about right. If the Great Bird of the Galaxy smiles and your business grows faster than that, you will be able to *afford* that new ship.

The Dangers Of Space

Choice of a ship design should be influenced by the safety of the region of space you will have as a trading territory. In well-traveled areas of the Federation, slow, unarmed freighters are most profitable, but in the Triangle and other places on the frontier, one soon learns the value of a ship with fast "legs", good shields, and "teeth".

On tri-d shows, a ship can always shoot its way out of danger, and the spacelanes belong to the biggest guns. In reality, you will not be the person with the biggest guns! The cost of heavy phaser/disruptor hardware will see to that. Arming a merchant ship is recommended only for the merchant who cannot afford to be without such protection in less patrolled areas like the Triangle. Even so, there is

well-patrolled, where the ports of call are all well-established homeworlds and colonies with advanced starport facilities, will have much of the trade already tied up by large corporate outfits. Frontier areas with greater risks (both financial and physical), smaller starports, and plenty of struggling colonies will have less corporate competition around, and more potential for making big profits fast.

Of course, profit potential works both ways. A trading area that allows for big profits fast also allows for financial disasters to occur just as quickly. The ancient Terran financial principle that greater risks bring a greater range of possible returns is absolutely true of the interstellar trade business.

Your choice of a ship should reflect this fact. If you are going to operate in an

small mistake can wipe out all profit for a run. Everything must be carefully planned, but once plans are made, they usually stay the same for a while, remaining profitable over the long run. Where profits are higher, you can be more free wheeling to a point, assuming your mistakes are canceled out by good judgments made elsewhere. New ideas will be needed more often, and your plans will be constantly changed by circumstances. Flexibility is the key.

The Competition

A common failing of beginning traders is that they forget there are an almost endless number of other traders out there competing for the same cargoes and the same credits. A new trading outfit must offer something more than its predecessors, or at least appear to offer more. Established trading firms have the edge, as they already have solid connections. You will have to be faster, more efficient, or perhaps more willing to take a risk on a new idea. If you can't compete in one area, find one in which you do have something to offer. If the local corporate trade firms are extremely efficient in shipping large cargoes to well-established destinations on regular schedules, specialize in small shipments to out-of-the-way places on a moment's notice (and be sure to charge the customer accordingly for the extra service and convenience).

In even the most well-organized and long-established trading community, there are holes where a need is not being adequately met. Find those needs and meet them, and you can't possibly fail to make a profit. In the words of Sarah Hastings, "There is always someone who will buy something new, pretty, and expensive. If the item also has some small amount of real value, consider that a slightly significant bonus."

"If you can run away from it, don't shoot at it."

an ancient Orion word for captains who rely on weapons alone for protection—*llurvem* (literally "life-opposite", or dead).

More important to the first-ship buyer is a ship's speed. Speed works for you all the time by making travel times shorter and so reducing expenditures. It is also important to your safety. The rule of thumb in the Triangle is, "If you can run away from it, don't shoot at it". This may sound like cowardice, but for a businessman it is just good sense. Taking chances you can avoid isn't good business, and risking ship, cargo, and lives unnecessarily is stupid. Given a choice between buying more "legs" and more "teeth", go for speed not firepower.

Many ships carry no shields other than navigational screens, but experience shows that even in relatively safe areas even a limited combat shield capability can make a critical difference. Exactly how much shielding you need depends on where you are operating. Ships operating in frontier areas need more, and ships used part-time as scouts in unknown areas more still. Ships making known runs in patrolled space need less. But having even a weak shield that will be punched through by any heavy weapon can make the difference between taking a crippling hit immediately and deflecting enough of that first shot that your engines are left capable of warp drive. If you have legs and you survive the first shot, you can try to escape. And if the attacking vessel hasn't learned about "legs" vs. "teeth", you may outrun him!

Profit Potential

The profit potential of an area is inversely proportional to how safe the area has become. A trading area that is

area of great profit potential, you should both prepare to take advantage of it and prepare for greater setbacks. Frontier merchants should allow for having more cash-on-hand, perhaps by investing less in a first ship, than those in safe areas. Cash-on-hand is the best buffer against financial setbacks; without it, you can lose your ship by making one mistake in judgment. Money mends a lot of fences. Also, ready cash allows you to take advantage of a hot opportunity you might otherwise miss. As Garggash Dlumppheg said, "One Orion credit is worth much more than a million Orion promises."

Those in frontier areas should allow for more versatility in their chosen ship design. When one area of profitability is suddenly closed due to the rapidly-changing conditions in frontier areas, you will need to adjust your trade methods

"One Orion credit is worth much more than a million Orion promises."

accordingly. When there is a big mining strike, you'll want the ability to shift from miscellaneous cargo (like food and luxury items being hauled to the miners) to bulk cargo (like ore being hauled away for processing elsewhere) smoothly and efficiently to take full advantage of the opportunity. Likewise, if a favored port is closed abruptly due to a change in government (which can come pretty quickly on the frontier), you need to have the range and "legs" to switch to making longer runs for the same goods.

Low-profit potential areas require that you make extremely conservative judgments about everything, because a

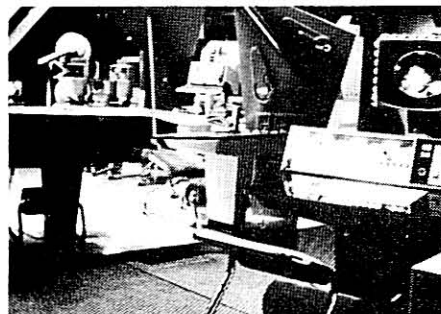
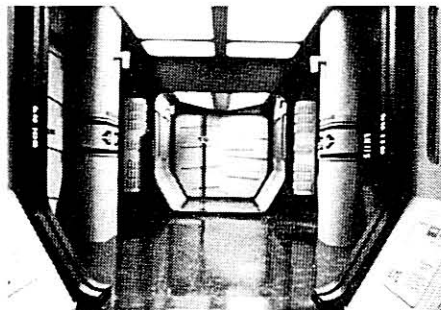
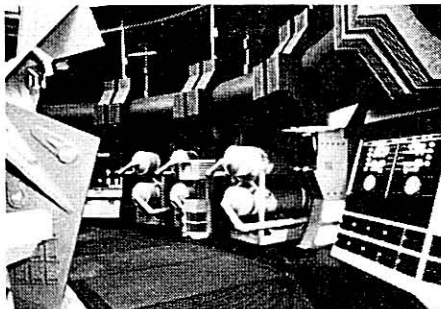
In frontier areas where it is not yet efficient to operate huge trading firms, the independent trader is king of the spaceport. Competition in places like the Triangle is fierce, but it is mostly all on your level. You will be entering a market that is growing, where the need for passenger and cargo transport and demand for goods is far greater than the available merchant traffic can satisfy. The hot markets are farther and farther from the UFP center every year, but the independent merchant, unlike the corporate giants, is free to push outward with the frontier and stay in the zone of greatest activity and greatest profit.

Personal Preferences

Being an independent merchant means you have the freedom to pursue your own aims. Take these into account when choosing your vessel. How much interior space will you want for specialized uses? What kind of crew comforts, recreational facilities, and auxiliary equipment will you need? What talents do you have that will require facilities aboard ship if you wish to take advantage of them to enhance your profitability?

Take your individual needs into account when buying a ship. You will not be able to afford everything you want, but see to it that the basic design allows you to add as much of it as possible later, as your financial position permits.

Most of all, don't choose a design you don't feel comfortable with, even if it meets all your criteria otherwise. You will have to live with your decision for a long, long time, and so it is best to spend a bit more time looking than to grab the first adequate ship that comes along, only to find later that it does not satisfy you at all. An independent merchant's ship is more than a means of transport. It is home, and one should always have a home in which one can have pride.



NEW VS. USED VESSELS

The choice between purchasing a new or used starship is usually made for you by the realities of economics. It is not often that a new independent can afford to purchase a new starship, but a new ship is not always a good buy anyway.

The most affordable of new ships are those based on long-standing designs like the *Monarch*, *Argon*, and *Mission* class vehicles. Manufacture of components for these ships in quantity can bring the initial cost of such vessels down considerably, and this ready availability of components will also keep maintenance costs lower. New designs are very expensive, because starship companies usually try to recoup design costs in the early runs of a ship, not knowing for certain if there will be later runs. The most expensive type of ship is one that is custom-designed for the individual. Only the most affluent of traders can afford such a vessel.

The availability of new ships depends on the development of the planet you are on, and the size of starport it supports. Large starports on urbanized homeworlds or high-technology industrial colonies may have construction facilities, and this is the only place ships may be purchased directly from the construction firms. The closer one is to a center of population, the better one's chances to find a shipbuilding facility where vessels are available for immediate sale.

Starships are almost never built totally on speculation. Only the most popular designs are constructed without a buyer having already contracted for them. Even so, many ships built for a client become available for open sale when the client defaults. Such default is not uncommon, especially by large trade outfits and shipping lines. In fact, some default is planned from the beginning!

For example, a shipping line may order 20 *Monarch* Class freighters for the coming five-year period from one of the many shipbuilding facilities that constructs *Monarchs* or look-alikes. The shipping line pays a certain amount to ensure the delivery of these ships. In actuality, their growth projections indicate they will need only 15 to 18 such vessels in this time period. The additional order covers them in case they grow faster than predicted. The shipyard accepts the contract, knowing that about 10 to 25 percent of these vessels will not be purchased in the long run. This is no problem, as there is a ready market for such vessels, and the guarantee payments made by the shipping line more than make up for the extra trouble of placing the remaining ships with ship brokers for sale. ("Blessed

are they who can sell things that never existed, for they are the true Heroes of Trade." —Sarah Hastings)

Of the ships that become available for open sale, about half are sold to clients who call at the shipyard itself. The other half are usually placed with a starship broker. A starship broker purchases a ship on speculation, then takes it elsewhere for sale to traders based away from industrial planets where shipyards are available. In most such transactions, little money actually changes hands when the ship is delivered to the broker. Instead, the broker pays a small payment to insure the transaction, with the rest to be paid over a long term. The ship is moved by a hired crew (often independents raising money to buy their own vessel) and brought to a tradeworld, freeport, or other popular starport where it is sold for from 3 to 10 percent more than its base purchase price. This additional amount covers moving the ship and taking the risk of finding a buyer, and traders expect to pay more away from a shipyard port. For the trader, it is well worth the extra money not to have to travel to a port off the usual trade runs to obtain the new vessel.

Brokers are savvy individuals who know their potential market very well. They seldom make mistakes, simply because the cost of a starship is too great to risk making an error. Often, they have a buyer in mind long before the deal is closed with the shipyard. Even so, mistakes are made and brokers do occasionally overbuy, and the sharp trader can sometimes pick up a quick bargain by checking around some of the smaller port areas. A ship broker cannot afford to keep a ship for too long, and he may be forced to take a small loss just to move it out and avoid mounting berthing costs and maintenance on a slow-moving design.

Starship brokers also buy and sell used starships. Some act as repossession agents for shipyards and many offer surplus or outdated vessels from government fleets (a common example being *Mission* class scout/couriers, which are easily converted into the freighter version), but this is not necessary for them to obtain used ships. There are always more failures than successes in business, along the frontier especially, and starships of one sort or another are always available.

Used vessels are cheaper and easier to find than new ones, but may be less reliable, or not exactly what you need for your applications. The next section will deal with the perils of purchasing used star vessels.



WOULD YOU BUY A USED STARSHIP FROM THIS MAN?

BUYING A USED STARSHIP

Buying a used starship is a compromise between what you need and want and what you can afford, find, and make to work. Starships are not purchased in the same way one would buy a family gravcar. For one thing, few used family gravcars will put you in debt for the next 20 to 40 years, with monthly payments in excess of 200,000 credits!

The operational life of a starship is measured in decades, and so a well-maintained previously owned vessel should be nearly as good as a new one. All vessels used for interstellar trade that call at UFP ports must maintain a rigid schedule of regular maintenance and pass periodic inspections. Thus, any ship with her UFP/ITA logs in order will meet these minimum standards of regular maintenance and repair.

Even so, it is in the best interests of a trade ship's captain and crew to be extremely careful when inspecting a vessel being considered for purchase. A starship is a complex, expensive, and delicate collection of hardware — and it is the only thing between you and unforgiving Space.

This is not a technical journal, and so a discussion of the mechanics involved in starship inspection is not appropriate here. Instead, bear in mind some critical points in the psychology of ship buying.

First, *never* take the word of *anyone* for *anything* when it comes to a ship's reliability or operating condition! In the immortal words of Sarah Hastings, "The only greater liar than an Orion ship dealer is the trader who says she got a *great* deal from one!" It is *your* financial and physical well-being at stake! Check everything. On portions of a vessel's anatomy

you are not qualified to check yourself, locate and hire trustworthy individuals whose reports you can trust. No reputable ship broker will object to an independent evaluation of a ship's condition.

Second, remember that a ship is a long-term investment of great importance. Be certain that the ship you choose can earn you more than enough to pay your expenses. Chart the expenses involved before you buy!

Finally, do not lose sight of the age of a ship in considering a purchase. An older ship that is in fine condition now will still require more maintenance than a newer vessel. Generally speaking and all other considerations being equal, a new ship that requires some minor work is still a better buy than a considerably older ship that is in better repair at this time. Once the newer one is fixed, the repairs will generally hold longer than with an older vessel. Do not let relative ages of ships be your only criteria when purchasing, but do consider it as part of the overall list of important points.

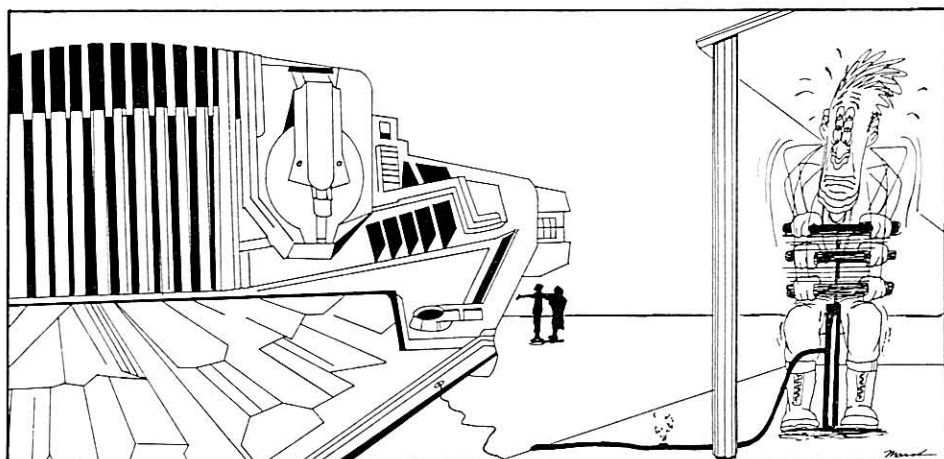
FINANCING A STARSHIP

Starships are not something one buys out of petty cash! Prices of starships, even much-used ones, are measured in MegaCredits. If an individual or even a small group of average traders had to depend on savings or other personal financial stake to purchase a ship outright, there would be few, if any, independent traders at all.

Fortunately, long-term loans can be obtained for interstellar trade ventures. Many veteran traders and others who decide to go independent can qualify for special loan funds administered by the UFP/ITA and backed by the Federation's desire to encourage independent trade. Other locales have similar programs, especially the Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds in the Triangle, which constructed their own trade loan program with UFP/ITA advice and assistance. These loans offer low interest on 20- and 40-year repayment terms, with payments to be made monthly.

Anyone intending to operate an interstellar trade business with a ship or ships licensed within the UFP may apply for the Federation-supported loans, but preference is given to veterans of Star Fleet or the Federation Marines, and applicants who have established good records as active traders working in the corporate sector.

UFP-supported loans with 40-year repayment periods are available to qualified applicants for the purchase of new vessels only. The interest percentage varies, but monthly payments will generally add up to a total paid of between twice and three times the purchase price of the ship. This may seem like a lot, but on a speculative venture like starship loans, this is a rather small interest rate. A 20-year repayment period is available for those purchasing used star vessels, with



DON'T BE FOOLED BY INFLATED PROMISES!

the final total paid being somewhat lower. Check with your local UFP-registered financial institutions for exact rates offered.

Unsupported private loans are also available, but at substantially higher interest rates. An unsupported 20-year loan will be paid off with a final total of almost three times the actual cost of the ship, and a 40-year loan will require the payment of well over three times the ship's value in the long run.

Loan payments are contracted to be made monthly. In practice, the debtor usually makes arrangements for payment deductions to be made automatically from his bank account, so that delays in interstellar communication of transactions do not interfere with making payments on time. Lending institutions are always connected with existing interstellar data communications by subspace radio, which forms the backbone of the UFP's universal monetary system. The same system that allows your ID card to pay for purchases anywhere in the Federation (or even outside it, where UFP financial institutions have reciprocal agreements, such as in Orion space or the AOFW in the Triangle) also means that your loan payments can be automatically deducted from your personal or corporate account, no matter where you go.

The rate of loan default is higher on starship loans than on any other type of lending, which is to be expected when the property that secures the loan (the ship itself) may be far off in space when payments are missed. The distances involved require some leeway in payment policy. Missing a single payment will not bring the repossessioners next time you hit port. But missing several payments in a row will initiate a hold order sent routinely to all ports and Federation vessels in the operational area of the vessel in question.

Hold orders are probably not even processed or noted by any being at most modern ports or aboard most ships. Carried on a sub-wave attached to routine financial traffic, such orders are automatically noted by financial control computers systems directly. If a defaulting loan holder's ship appears in port, directives are automatically sent out for local officials to hold the ship for non-payment of loan. Such a ship will not be refueled, unloaded, or allowed to take off until arrangements are made with the local officials (normally the portmaster's office) for settling back debts. Similarly, the personal or corporate accounts of a defaulting individual may be frozen by a hold order, preventing that person from making routine card-controlled transactions.

A hold order will also be noted on any routine check of a ship's registry by a Federation vessel encountering it in

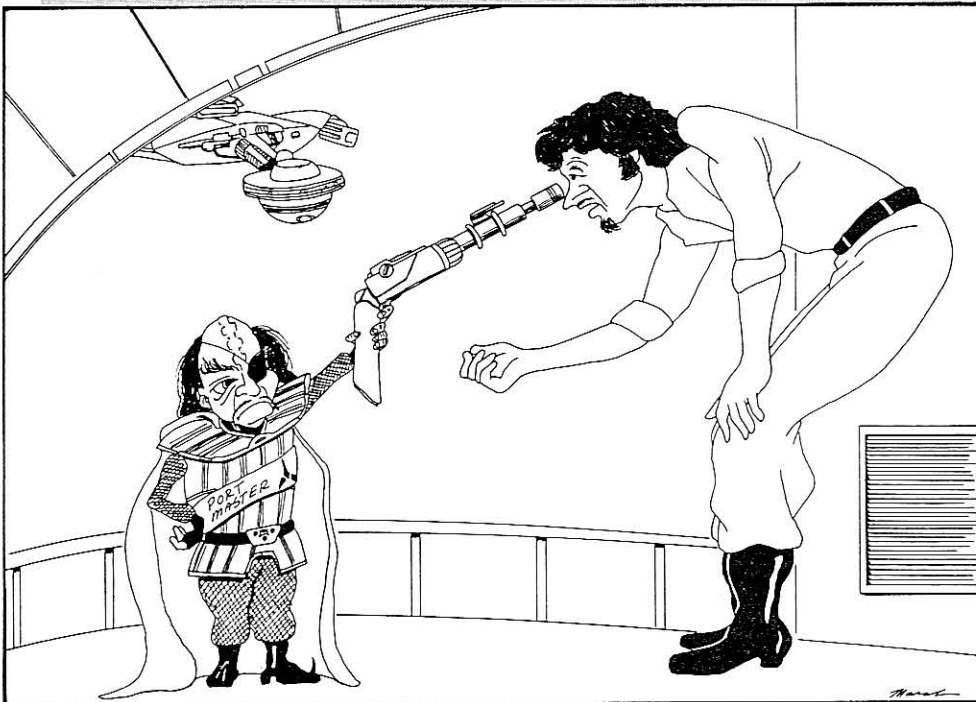
space. Normally, a Star Fleet vessel will not challenge a private vessel that is flagged with a hold order unless there are other charges against the ship and crew. Under UFP law, however, a Federation ship's captain who decided to be a stickler for the law can order such a ship to heave to, search the vessel, and seize cargo to pay the debt, or even take the ship under tow after relieving her master of command. In practice, this is almost never done unless the ship is suspected of being used in piracy or hijacking, or is actually listed as stolen after blatantly missing quite a number of payments with no explanation.

STARSHIP REGISTRATION

Every trade vessel that calls at UFP ports must be registered with the Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command and periodically inspected by UFP-approved inspection teams. The inspection costs are paid by a .01 percent Space Vehicle Tax, paid when the ship is purchased and registered, and by an inspection fee of 50 Cr per 100 tons of vessel displacement. Inspections are required at least once per solar year, but must also be completed any time a ship is damaged in any substantial way in space or in port due to combat, systems failure, or accident.

Inspections are also made on a spot-check basis for illegal weaponry. Private merchant vessels are only allowed to possess ship-mounted weapons for use against spaceborne targets if application for such weaponry is approved by a Star Fleet Merchant Marine Command review board. Weaponry permits are only granted for ships that travel unescorted in areas considered hazardous, such as the Triangle, along the frontier of unexplored space, or in areas of close contact with potential hostiles such as near the Romulan Neutral Zone or the Organian Treaty Zone. If weapons are permitted, a weaponry permit fee of 50,000 Cr must be paid at the time of installation. This one-time fee is reassessed if the weapons already mounted are replaced by different weapons systems, or a weapons system fails to pass a safety inspection and must be ordered dismantled.

Repairs made aboard ship must be logged and the records furnished for inspectors during their periodic checks. Repair facilities will do this as a matter of course, providing a record of the repairs performed to Star Fleet. Field repairs are usually less expensive to perform, but if field repairs fail to pass mandatory inspection later, you will have to pay for a professional repair anyway. ("There's no percentage in shortchanging your own ship." — Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh)



A PORTMASTER PREPARED FOR A CALM DISCUSSION OF SHIP'S FINANCES



"WELL, YOU COULD EMPTY THE WASTEBASKETS MORE OFTEN, BUT JUST THIS ONCE..."

THE OPERATIONS AREA

If you intend to buy and sell speculative cargoes, where you choose to set up trading operations is very important to the profitability of your enterprise. Independents who make their living solely by transporting cargoes-for-hire still need to know this information to be able to set competitive prices for a run and still make a profit on the venture. Before looking at shipping for hire and speculative trading, we must understand how to chart an operations area.



NAME: ARNOK
RACE: AQUAN
POSITION: CARGO TRANSPORTER
DESTINATION: OPEN

To know how to plan trade routes and obtain cargoes, you must first know how to use planetary records and star charts to find out about planetary exports, distances between star systems, and restrictions on cargoes. The UFP/ITA planetary codes for merchant operations are widely used even outside the UFP to designate a planet's export and import record. This helps you know what to buy and sell, or where to find shippers who have cargo to move. Star charts will tell you how far you must carry a cargo to find a favorable place to sell it, or how distance will affect your rates for carrying for-hire cargoes. ("How the heck are you going to fleece a Vulcan merchant out of his last credit if you don't even know where you are?"—quote attributed to Gargash Dlumppheg)

PLANETARY TRADE PROFILE (PTP) CODES

The standard UFP/ITA Planetary Trade Profile code gives general information on the types of cargo likely to be imported or exported on a particular world by charting the demand for that item by the planetary populace. Items in high demand are likely to be imported more, while low-demand items are more likely available for export. The code does not tell everything about the import-export profile of a world, and it can be a bit deceiving. (For instance, there is little demand for luxury items on Alihara IV, where the inhabitants are part of a human religious/social cult living a simple agrarian lifestyle that

believes in the denial of all but the necessities of life. In this case, this does not mean much in the way of luxury items is available there for export. It DOES mean that luxury goods will not bring much of a high price there, however.) Even so, it is the most useful single piece of information one can learn about a world where one will call with a merchant vessel. ("I can sell an atomic heater to a Vulcan in the desert, but I may have to give him a big discount." — Sarah Hastings)

The standard PTP listing consists of an eight-letter code (Terran standard alphabet), followed by a one-letter population rating. The first seven letters represent a relative value placed on the following types of trade goods: Foodstuffs & Agricultural Goods, Normal Minerals & Raw Materials, Radioactives & Special Minerals, Drugs & Refined Medicinal Agents, Low Technology Goods, Medium Technology Goods, High Technology Goods. The last item, Luxury Goods, is rated on a different scale and is separated from the others by a slash (/). At the end, the population rating is enclosed in parentheses. (See the sidebar for examples of the categories of common trade goods.)

The first seven items listed in the PTP code are rated on a scale from A (lowest) to H (highest), with D as an arbitrary center point representing a normal level of demand. The D level is based on the trade record of Terra, so the home planet of Humans has ratings of D in all seven positions, by definition. Each level

PTP CODE

Vulcan
 — Planet name

F — Foodstuffs & agricultural goods
 B — Normal minerals & raw materials
 E — Radioactives & special minerals
 C — Drugs & refined medicinal agents
 A — Low technology goods
 — Medium technology goods
 — High technology goods
 / — Luxury items
 D (B) — Population rating

As examples of the use of PTP codes, the designations for five Federation homeworlds are shown below, as well as a PTP for Janus VI, the mining colony (home of the Horta) featured in the STAR TREK episode "The Devil in the Dark" and the FASA STAR TREK role playing adventure "Witness for the Defense".

TERRA	DDDDDD/D	(A)
VULCAN	FBCEAEF/D	(B)
ANDOR	AFGEABE/D	(C)
TELLAR	EAAGADG/A	(A)
CAIT	BEFCDEG/B	(C)
EDO	BBCBBBC/B	(C)
JANUS VI	FBAFDH/A	(X)

below D indicates a reduction of demand of about 1/4 normal and each level above indicates an increase in demand by like amount. Thus, a planet rated B in one commodity has a demand level of about half a planet with a D rating. A planet with a rating of H has a basic demand level of about twice that of a planet with a D rating.

Luxury Items Code

The luxury items category is coded a bit differently than the others, because the demand for luxury items fluctuates much more widely than other categories. There are only four ratings here, from A to D. An A rating indicates a world whose consumption of luxury items is high, while

overall trend, at best. Trade in luxury items is a fast way to make a bundle or go quickly broke, depending largely on the luck of the trader in importing an item that is currently popular. Most traders in luxury goods diversify their cargoes so that making an incorrect judgment will not be an devastating move. (As Garggash Dlumppheg is rumored to have said, "If he won't buy the goods, sell him the crate.") If a cargo brought in does not bring a high price, it can be held for sale elsewhere, with other more stable cargo items taking up the slack in covering the expenses for that run.

Population Code

The final code indicates the population rating of the planet. What good would it be to carry a large cargo of foodstuffs to an industrial colony if that colony were too sparsely populated to absorb the load into their local economy? The population rating helps a trader estimate how much cargo a certain world can absorb, keeping the trader from glutting the market and forcing prices down in a certain area. The

Using these ratings can bring a trader excellent profits.

The demand level for a commodity will indicate a relative price one can expect for goods of that type. For example, a planet with an H rating in foodstuffs and agricultural products generally will buy and sell those products at about twice the price of a planet with a D rating.

The major factor that affects a planet's rating is what its major exports and imports have been in the past. An agricultural colony that exports a lot of food will have a lower rating in foodstuffs and agricultural products. Such products will be cheap there, and will not be imported to any great extent. Such a planet, however, may have a great need for advanced machinery to run homes and farms. As an agricultural colony, the world in question probably has little in the way of advanced manufacturing capability. Therefore, the rating for that world on medium and high technology manufactured goods will likely be higher than normal. There will be a demand for such goods, and they will bring high prices.

Using these ratings can bring a trader excellent profits. A trader can buy foodstuffs cheap at agricultural colonies, and transport them to an industrial world that consumes more food than its limited native farming can produce, where imported foodstuffs bring good prices. Farm machinery and other mechanical devices can then be purchased at low cost direct from the local manufacturing concerns with the money earned. These can then be transported back to the agricultural world where they will bring in even more profits. This sort of run is made between what is known as a trade pair; the relative risks and rewards of this sort of trading will be discussed later.

Ignoring the ratings can invite disaster. If a trader tries to buy foodstuffs at an industrial world with a thick atmosphere and limited topsoil, the trader will pay more than the cargo will be worth elsewhere. Likewise, hauling high technology hardware to a world that already produces such hardware will make it difficult for the trader who must bear the cost of shipping and tariffs to compete in the marketplace with goods produced locally where the costs of interstellar shipping do not need to be added to the selling price.

a D rating indicates a low consumption of such items. The C rating is considered as normal, though this normal rating is completely arbitrary and is not based on the consumption statistics of Terra, as are the other ratings. (Terra, as a highly urbanized world with a strong economy whose inhabitants have much leisure time, carries an A rating.) A planet rated B has about 1.5 times the normal demand for luxuries of a C-rated world, with a planet rated A showing twice that demand. A planet rated D consumes half the amount of luxury goods as a world rated C.

Ignoring the ratings can invite disaster.

The luxury items code is less specific than the other codes, however. Luxury items fluctuate widely in price and demand, in comparison with other goods. As such, a particular item at a particular time may bring a high price or a low one, despite the code for that world. The code for luxury items is a mild indicator of an

population codes are read as follows:

- A - Very Heavily Populated
- B - Heavily Populated
- C - Moderately Populated
- D - Sparsely Populated
- E - Very Sparsely Populated
- X - Small Station or Colony

PTP CLASSIFICATIONS OF COMMON TRADE GOODS

Foodstuffs & Agricultural Goods:	Fruit, grain, vegetables, seed, wood, breeding animals, fertilized animal ova
Normal Minerals & Raw Materials:	Metals, crystals, natural chemicals, fossil fuels, water
Radioactives & Special Minerals:	Special alloys, hullmetal, radioactive ore, processed radioactive materials, dilithium crystals
Drugs & Refined Medicinal Agents:	Pharmaceuticals, herbs, rare medicinal plants, transplant material
Low Technology Manufactured Goods:	Steel, formed metals, basic tools, blades, natural textiles
Medium Technology Manufactured Goods:	Polymers and plastics, machine tools, projectile weapons, manufactured textiles
High Technology Manufactured Goods:	Computers, electronics gear, energy weapons, air and spacecraft, robots
Luxury Items:	Gourmet foods, liquor, antiques, gems, rare animals, spices, curios, entertainment recordings, works of art

A population rating of A corresponds to a densely populated, heavily urbanized world such as Terra or Tellar. A rating of B would represent an advanced, well-populated world where the population is not as concentrated in urban areas, such as Vulcan. A population rating of C represents worlds where population is controlled and evenly distributed, or where advanced urbanization has not taken place, such as Cait or Edo. A rating of D designates a world such as Axanar, where inhospitable conditions hold sway over much of the surface.

A rating of E is applied to a world where the population is spread over only a small part of the world, as on a developing colony, or is spread extremely thinly, as on the resort world Liebschen, where the only permanent population is scattered in over 300 small resort settlements scattered about the planet. The population rating of X is reserved for worlds where there is only a relatively tiny population, such as worlds containing a single new colony settlement, a military base, or a scientific station.

The following are some examples of PTP codes for well-known worlds:

Terra	DDDDDD/A (A)
Vulcan	FBECAEF/D (B)
Andor	AFGEABE/D (C)
Tellar	EAAGADG/A (A)
Cait	BEFCDEG/B (C)
Edo	EFHFEDB/C (C)

CHARTING A TRADE AREA

Examining the PTP codes of worlds in the area you have chosen will help you find groups of worlds where trade routes can be established. There are a number of things to look for in choosing trade routes, to assure profitability.

Decide how many worlds you will want to visit on a regular basis. For a small vessel, short runs to four worlds or less will be most profitable. A larger vessel that carries a wider variety of cargoes may want to visit a few more worlds in a trade circuit. Be sure not to overreach. The routes you choose now will change as conditions change, so don't be too concerned with taking advantage of every possible opportunity right away. You will get to them eventually.

Trade Pairs

The simplest type of trade route is between a trade pair, where you buy a cheap commodity at one location, move it to the other half of the pair, and sell it for a higher price. At the second stop, there must be available an inexpensive cargo that one can move back to the first world and sell at a profit. Such natural pairs are rare, and most of those that are found by one trader are already known to many others who quickly glut the market with the twin cargo items involved. For this reason, trade pairs are a risky, short-term trade route to pursue.

If planned well and run correctly, the triangle route can net enormous profits for a trader. The profits build rapidly through reinvestment. Triangle routes are less subject to rapid burnout through glutting the market than trade pairs. Also, triangle routes are easier to find than trade pairs, because trade pairs must have two worlds, each of which pays dearly for what the other sells cheaply. If one world's trade pattern changes, finding somewhere else to unload the cargo can be difficult. The triangle worlds need only allow one to make a modest profit on each, as the profits build on each other's multiple ties during one circuit. ("Give me three good triangle runs and I'll make enough credits to buy my own planet. Give me four, and I'll make enough to buy one from a *Vulcan*." — Sarah Hastings)

Multi-Cornered Runs

Four-cornered and five-cornered arrangements can be made, where the appropriate mix of worlds can be found to keep the circuit active and profitable on all runs. On multi-cornered runs, some parts of the circuit can be only marginally profitable or even rely on picking up cargo-for-hire or passengers to break even for that leg of the trip, as long as the overall circuit is quite profitable. Vary the arrangement to suit the trade patterns of nearby planets.

If you are still not making a profit, the run is unsuitable.

Triangle Routes

Far better is a triangular arrangement, where planet A supplies at low cost an item that is valuable on planet B. At B, that item is sold and the money reinvested in a commodity that can be sold at planet C for an even bigger profit. At C, the second commodity is sold and the money reinvested again in a *third* product that can be sold on planet A again for yet another profit.

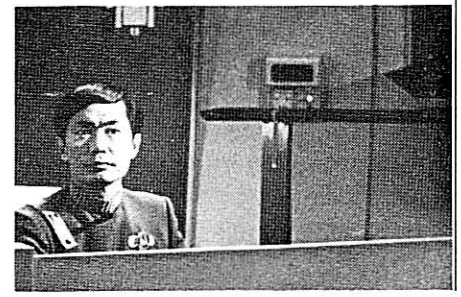
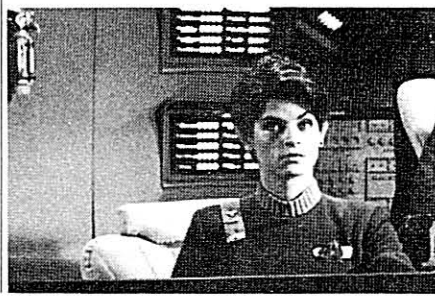
Such triangle routes work best when the first commodities are bulky, inexpensive items such as agricultural products, raw materials, or unrefined chemicals or metals. The money is then reinvested on the second planet in a more refined (and higher cost-per-ton) item such as refined metals, machine parts, or low-to-medium technology goods. These are sold and the much-increased stake is used to purchase high technology goods (at the highest cost-per-ton) to resell at the first world on the circuit.

Setting Up Routes

When setting up the routes, read the star charts carefully, and plot the average travel time from world to world. This will be an important piece of information in determining profitability, as longer trips cost more than short ones. A run between two worlds where a big profit can be made is still a financial disaster if they are so far apart that your profits are eaten up by the costs of running a starship and paying a crew. Compare the most conservative view of possible profits with the most extreme view of possible costs for the trip. If you are still not making a profit, the run is unsuitable.

Above all, do not rely too much on a single trade route arrangement. Unforeseen circumstances are the rule, not the exception, in interstellar trade. Plan alternate trade routes, and know of at least two possible places to sell a cargo for a profit before purchasing it. Be flexible enough to recover from any change in the trading pattern of a world. ("Success in trading consists of knowing when you've been a damn fool before your competition finds out." — Sarah Hastings)





STAR CHARTS AND TRAVEL TIMES

The vast distances shown on star navigation charts may seem daunting at first glance, but what counts is not how far away a destination lies, but rather the travel time required to get there at a certain warp speed. To calculate a ship's estimated costs for a run, decreased travel time must be balanced against the increased cost in ship wear-and-tear and in materials consumed faster at higher warp speeds (such as dilithium power rectifier crystals). Most times, it will be to a trader's advantage to make a run at his maximum safe cruising speed, but the prudent captain will look at several different speed and expense combinations to find

the most efficient combination for a particular run.

Examining a star chart will show the distances between two locations, but the travel time must be computed according to the capabilities of one's own ship. Two ports of call may be uneconomically distant for a big, slow transport where a smaller, faster mini-freighter might make the same trip in no time at all.

Most UFP/ITA star charts are coded with representative travel times between worlds, and computer charts make most travel time conversions automatic. Even so, a trader should develop a feel for the differences various warp speeds can make to travel time. The table below shows conversion factors for taking a

known travel time at one speed and finding the travel time for the same trip at a different speed.

To use the table, find the known speed in the vertical column at left, and cross-index with the proposed speed at the top in the horizontal row. This will give the conversion factor. Multiply the conversion factor by the travel time at the known speed to get the travel time at the proposed speed.

The column on the far right is the speed of practical subspace radio as used on most commercial vessels (Warp 15). The two rows at the bottom show the actual time to travel one light year and one parsec respectively, and are given as a reference.

WARP SPEED CONVERSION TABLE

TRAVEL TIME X MULTIPLIER = TRAVEL TIME
 (Known Warp speed) (from table below) (New Warp Speed)
 To convert decimal remainders (days) to hours, multiply by 24
 To convert decimal remainders (hours) to minutes, multiply by 60

	Warp 1 1C	Warp 2 8C	Warp 3 27C	Warp 4 64C	Warp 5 125C	Warp 6 216C	Warp 7 343C	Warp 8 512C	Warp 9 729C	Warp 10 1000C	Subspace Radio Warp 15 3375C
Warp 1 1C	1	.125	.037	.0156	.008	.0046	.0029	.0020	.0014	.001	.0003
Warp 2 8C	8	1	.2963	.125	.064	.037	.0233	.0156	.011	.008	.0024
Warp 3 27C	27	3.375	1	.4219	.216	.125	.0787	.0527	.037	.027	.008
Warp 4 64C	64	8	2.3704	1	.512	.2963	.1866	.125	.0878	.064	.019
Warp 5 125C	125	15.625	4.6296	1.9531	1	.5787	.3644	.2441	.1715	.125	.037
Warp 6 216C	216	27	8	3.375	1.728	1	.6297	.4219	.2963	.216	.064
Warp 7 343C	343	42.875	12.704	5.3594	2.744	1.588	1	.6699	.4705	.343	.1016
Warp 8 512C	512	64	18.963	8	4.096	2.3704	1.4238	1	.7023	.512	.1517
Warp 9 729C	729	91.125	27	11.391	5.832	3.375	2.1254	1.4238	1	.729	.216
Warp 10 1000C	1000	125	37.037	15.625	8	4.6296	2.9155	1.9531	1.3717	1	.2963
Time to Travel 1 Light Year	1 year	45 days 15 hrs	13 days 12.12 hrs	5 days 16.7 hrs	2 days 22.1 hrs	1 day 16.3 hrs	1 day 1.4 hrs	17 hours 31 mins	12 hours 16 mins	8 hours 46 mins	2 hours 38 mins
Time to Travel 1 Parsec	3.26 yrs	148 days 18 hrs	44 da.ys 6 hrs	18 days 13.5 hrs	9 days 12.5 hrs	5 days 11.4 hrs	3 days 10.8 hrs	2 days 9.11 hrs	1 day 16 hrs	1 day 4.6 hrs	8 hrs 34 min

SHIPPING FOR HIRE

In this section, we will examine how a merchant vessel for hire finds cargoes to transport, and how those cargoes are delivered at the other end of the trip. Speculative trading will be discussed in a later section.

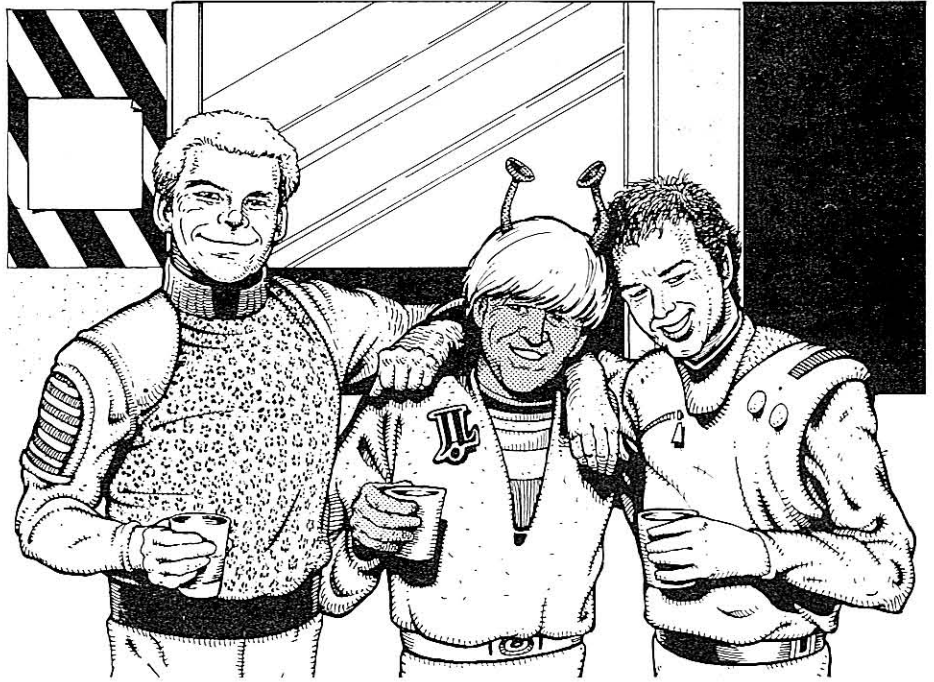
OBTAINING A RUN

The free-lance independent hauler-for-hire must be concerned first with finding someone who has cargo to move and contracting to move it for that individual. Such individuals and companies are plentiful in large starports, less so in places that see less traffic. Either way, there are a number of ways to seek them out.

The first step in obtaining a cargo in any UFP port (or any port where UFP trade interests are active, such as those in Orion space or many locations in the Triangle) is to contact the local UFP/ITA datanet. Local UFP/ITA offices maintain up-to-the-minute files on members who are in port and seeking work-for-hire, but you must remember to patch in with the local datanet and inform the UFP/ITA of your availability every time you make port. Many small ports that do not have official UFP/ITA field offices still have datanet bulletin boards maintained by local part-time employees of the UFP/ITA who are often retired traders themselves. Be sure to update your listing according to how much cargo room you have presently, the type of space available (bulk cargo, specialty cargo, etc.), and your preference in destination.

Datafiles are then provided to shippers who contact the ITA datanet looking for haulers. In most places, the UFP/ITA datanet is the first place a prospective shipper will look, so be certain it is the first call you make as soon as you hit dirt.

Shippers also will advertise in datanet classifieds, and the hauler looking for a money run should consult these files as well. Registry with the ITA will not guarantee that you will be contacted by every shipper who has a cargo. The ITA provides a list of qualified shippers as a free service when requested, but there is no guarantee that the shipper will contact every name on the list. Getting out and seeking out shippers who advertise assures that you will be considered. A trader actively seeking shippers with cargoes may also wish to place ads in the datanet. Such ads can be placed for only a credit or two in most commercial datanets.



Of course, any trader worth the name will develop contacts in ports visited frequently. Nothing will bring more cargoes than a friendly bartender in a place frequented by industrial management personnel or a person in a local shipper's dispatch office who owes you a favor. Cultivate such contacts carefully and they will pay off for you. Sometimes, it takes more than a friendly word to keep such contacts active, and this is just another fact of life for the active trader. The UFP/ITA does not endorse or condone bribery and kickback payments. It is nice to remember your friends in port in some tangible form, however, and interstellar traders have a reputation for generosity.

Another source of cargoes-for-hire is the local starport trade broker. There are many such brokers in most ports. Though they are usually sources of speculative cargo, they will occasionally act as an agent for a shipper with an unusual or special cargo. Trade brokers receive a payment of around 5 percent of the final shipping fees for locating haulers to carry cargoes that require special handling, are especially risky, or are going to unusual destinations. Shipping fees for such cargoes can usually be set by the hauler at 5 percent to 10 percent higher than normal, which makes the extra trouble of locating and negotiating with a trade broker worthwhile. A friendly trade broker in a major port can throw a lot of high-profit cargoes to a wise trader.

CONTRACTS

When a trader agrees to ship a cargo-for-hire, a contract will be made to deliver the cargo to a certain place in a certain manner by a certain time. When these conditions are not met, penalties may be assessed. For this reason, a trader must read the penalty clauses of any shipping-for-hire contract carefully.

Many shippers use the UFP/ITA model contract, which requires a hauler to deliver a cargo in the same condition as when it was loaded and signed for aboard ship. The cargo must be delivered to a specified spaceport and unloaded to that port's incoming cargo warehousing facilities, where it must be called for by the recipient.

The run also must be completed by the target date set, with a normal grace period of 50 percent of the specified travel time being allowed. That is, if the cargo is due to be delivered in ten days, the grace period allows a delay of five extra days before penalties are assessed. This grace period is allowed by most contracts dealing with interstellar shipping, due to the possibilities of normal delays on the ground or in space. Sometimes, a grace period can be used to good advantage by a careful and smart trader to make additional stops enroute that improve one's profit for a run. This is a common practice among small haulers.

If the terms of the model contract are not met, this standard document provides for certain standard penalties. The hauler is responsible for loss or damage to the cargo in transit starting from the time it is signed for upon loading and ending when it is again signed for by the receiving dock. Insurance carried by the shipper

Nothing will bring more cargoes than a friendly bartender or a person in a local shipper's dispatch office who owes you a favor.

usually covers this risk for normal and unavoidable conditions (such as damage to the ship because of natural conditions in space, hijacking, etc.), though if the hauler is found negligent, then the hauler (or the hauler's insurance company) may be held liable for the loss.

Under the standard UFP/ITA contract, the hauler who fails to deliver to the specified location is liable for the cost of additional transportation. Thus, if your ship is stranded enroute to a delivery, you must arrange other transport at your own expense to complete the run. Failure to do so results in the same penalties as if the cargo is late past the grace period for other reasons.

Failure to deliver on time (allowing for the grace period) results in a penalty of 10 percent of the shipping fee per day late. If the cargo is reduced in value because it is late past the grace period, the hauler is also liable for this loss of value, up to a maximum of the standard market value of the shipment at the destination port. For example, a delay in shipping an item that will not be accepted by the recipient after a certain date may require that the tardy hauler pay the entire value of the shipment.

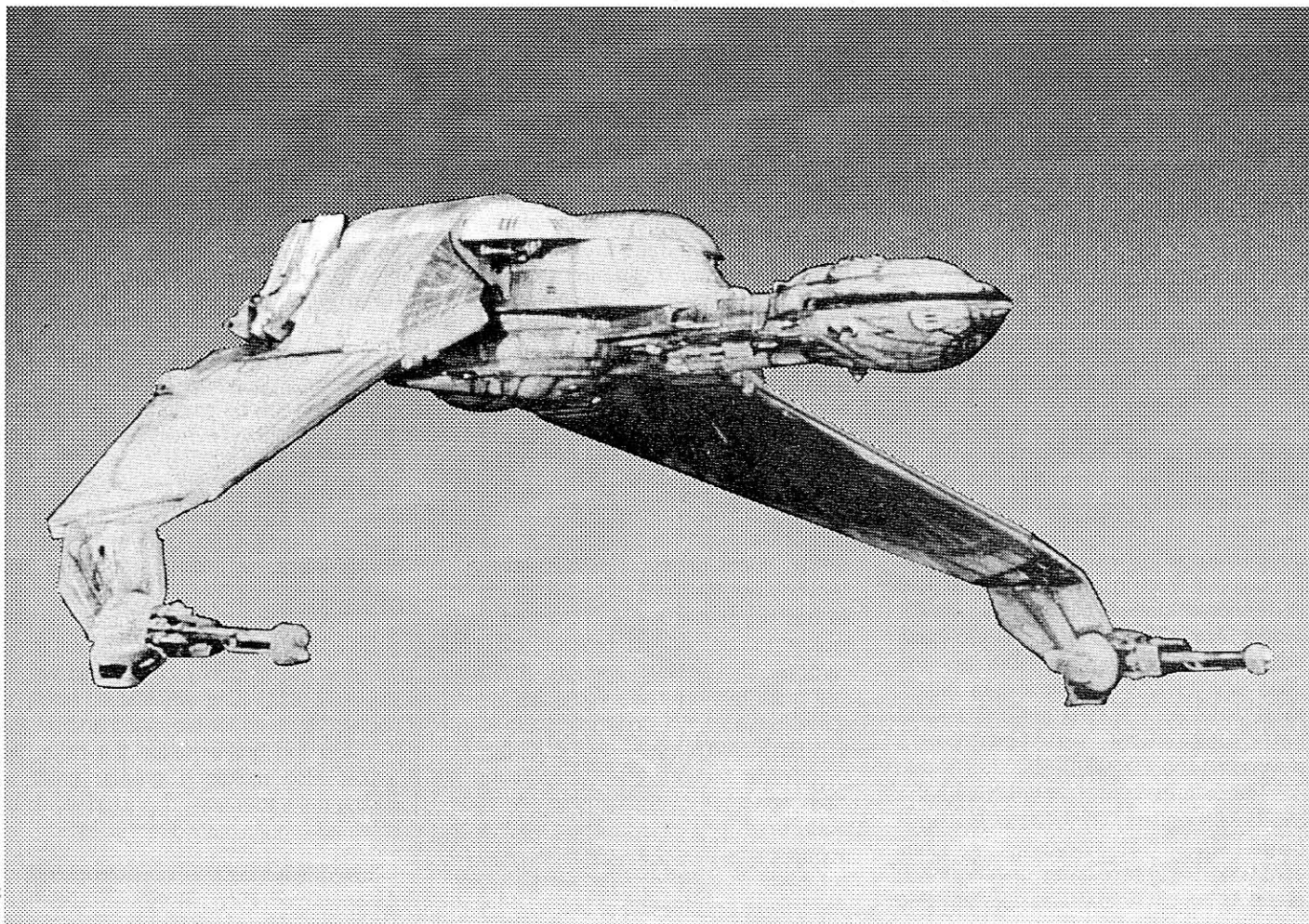
Under the standard UFP/ITA contract, the hauler is never liable for penalties to exceed the full amount of the shipping fee and the standard market value at the destination port of the shipment. This full penalty is only assessed if the shipment is not delivered at all or returned to the shipper.

Special cargoes may call for special contract terms and penalty clauses, which must be made known to you when you sign the contract. For example, a shorter or completely deleted grace period may be required for a time-critical shipment, or an agreement that the hauler is responsible solely for security against hijacking or other loss may be required for a valuable cargo that is not insured.

One common requirement, especially with very valuable cargoes, is the posting of a bond to cover loss or non-delivery. The shipper is required under such contracts to place an amount equal to the value of the cargo on hold with a neutral third party (usually a bank), to be paid to the shipper in part or in full if the shipment is lost, damaged, or just not delivered by the shipper. Otherwise, the bond is returned to the hauler. A cash bond can be posted if the hauler can afford it. If not, a bond can be secured by

putting up collateral, most commonly the ship itself. A financial institution like a bank will put up the bond, charging about 1 percent to 5 percent of the bond, which must be paid in cash by the hauler first. In the event of non-performance, it is then up to the bank to pay the bond and secure repayment from the hauler through repossessing the ship, if necessary. Only the paid-up portion of a ship can be used as collateral. For example, if the ship is half paid for, only 50% of the current market value of the ship will be considered in figuring how much of a bond can be secured in that fashion. The hauler will figure the cost of obtaining a bond in his figures for determining a fair shipping fee.

Such special clauses will of course cause the reasonable trader to raise his fees accordingly, figuring in the cost of additional expenses or risk required by the contract. Such fees can go as high as 3 to 5 *times* the normal fee for especially risky runs. Remember when making agreements that any oral contract agreement made by two parties and recorded by a public datanet are as binding as a written contract. Do not make agreements hastily. If the clauses of a contract do not suit you, ask the shipper to renegotiate certain points, or decline the contract.



SPECULATIVE TRADING

Perhaps the most rewarding pursuit for an independent trader is speculative trading. All the rewards are not financial, though speculation in cargo is indeed the most lucrative (and most risky) of trade operations. Speculative trading allows you to truly be the master of your own fate. Your success or failure will be solely determined by your ability to read the markets and be in the right place at the right time with the right goods. You will be your own boss, but this also means you must take full responsibility for your business.

OBTAINING A CARGO

When buying cargo for resale, a trader may go directly to a local planetary supplier, such as a farmer, manufacturer, or mining company. This is practical when a large load of a single type of item is to be carried, but is not as practical for obtaining a number of smaller cargoes, or one or two fill-in cargoes to top off a load and make it profitable. For the latter, a trader may seek out a trade broker.

Buying Direct

Choosing a cargo for export should be done based on making the maximum profit for the minimum expense, effort, and risk. Examining the PTP of the world where a direct purchase is made will reveal much about what that world has to offer in terms of cargo for export. Traders must learn to recognize through the PTP what products a planet will have available at low costs, costs that will make it profitable to move them over interstellar distances before selling them.

Agricultural worlds, for example, are not usually a good place to buy micro-circuits or other high-tech items. By the same token, buying foodstuffs for export on a methane-atmosphere world useful only for heavy industrial operations is a sure ticket to bankruptcy. Buy what is plentiful and cheap, and carry it to where the same item is scarce and dear.

Never purchase a cargo without a good idea of where it is to be sold. Speculative trading does not mean that you should guess blindly. As Master Trader Jym Ggavittchh is said to have observed, "The best gamblers are the ones who usually bet on a sure thing." Know what your options are and how to best exploit what you have before purchasing speculative cargo.

Once a decision is made, scout the available suppliers. Try to avoid dealing in cargo where the availability is tightly controlled by one supplier or a tight-knit group of suppliers that may be engaging

in active or passive price-fixing. Instead, buy where competition is keeping prices low, and keep that competition active by shopping around for the best deals you can find.

Don't be afraid to let it be known that you are comparing prices. Suppliers who get the idea that you will go elsewhere if the price isn't right will generally offer the best prices they can to obtain your business.

Buying From Trade Brokers

A trade broker's job is obtaining cargoes for export by buying locally produced items to sell to traders. They also buy imported items from traders for local sale. Some of these purchases find no local home and are resold for re-export. In fact, tradeworlds and freeports thrive on cargoes that are brought in from one location and resold to be carried elsewhere. The lack of trade restrictions, taxes, and tariffs in such locations makes this especially profitable. Items purchased for local sale by trade brokers that are not quickly sold can sometimes be purchased from these brokers at substantial savings.

Never purchase a cargo without a good idea of where it is to be sold. Speculative trading does not mean that you should guess blindly.

Trade brokers are convenient for interstellar traders, as they always have an assortment of items available and help the trader eliminate the need to track down profitable items to carry off-planet. Buying through a trade broker will cost a bit more than purchasing the same items direct, but dealing with the broker eliminates the delays and expenses involved in hunting cargoes, and much of the paperwork in preparing them for export. Generally speaking, a trade broker will make a profit of about 5 percent on cargo purchased locally for resale to a trader. (It is hard to tell for certain, however, as no experienced trade broker will tell the truth about how much was paid for a commodity. To quote Master Trader Ggavittchh, "Anyone who believes that Vulcans do not lie has never met a green-blooded trade broker".) The prices brokers pay for cargoes vary widely enough, however, that most brokers have some bargaining room available, so don't be too quick to accept a stated price.

Trade brokers are easily found in most spaceports of any size. A trade-world port or other spaceport on a well-populated urbanized world may have hundreds of trade brokers. Small spaceports may have only one or two.

SELLING A CARGO

Once transported to the port of sale, a cargo must be brought to a buyer and sold. A trader may try to move goods at a number of levels. Generally speaking, the closer to the end-user a sale can be made, the greater the profits for the trader. It is generally more time consuming and more difficult to locate a sale to an end-user of a commodity than to make a sale at a level farther removed from that end-user.

If a sale can be made to the final user of a commodity, the profits will be at their highest. This isn't easy to accomplish, however, since it is rare that such a sale can be made in bulk. It is not a trader's business to sell a cargo in individual sales, because doing so is so time consuming and costly (for traders who are not set up for retail sales) as to eat up potential profits in most cases. Also, an end-user will generally only buy directly from a trader on smaller items or when the items can be bought at a substantial savings over that offered by local merchants. Only when cargoes can be sold in bulk to an end-user does this

become truly profitable, such as the sale of agricultural robot parts directly to a large farming concern.

The next level to be considered is sale to a retail merchant. Retail merchants may take somewhat larger lots than the end-users, but they will still want better prices than those available locally. Direct-to-retail sales are still best attempted only with fairly small cargoes of specialty merchandise.

Sales can be made at the wholesale level with slightly more success. Wholesalers can often move large amounts of a commodity, and many of the larger ones are used to dealing with interstellar traders directly. They pay less, but can handle large cargoes much more efficiently for the trader.

The easiest deals to make are with trade brokers. The trade broker will make an offer for most any cargo, and will do the work of finding wholesale, retail, or end-user outlets for the merchandise. But because the broker takes the risks, the broker also makes a greater profit by paying the trader less than what would be obtained through more direct sales.

UFP/ITA GUIDE TO EQUIPMENT

Excerpted and digested from various regional editions of The UFP/ITA Guide to Goods and Services, Edition XXXVII, compiled and published by the United Federation of Planets Independent Traders Association.

This section provides average costs and prices in Federation credits for common vehicles, weapons, and equipment that traders would find useful in the course of their travels. The prices given are average retail prices one would expect to pay on an urbanized planet such as Earth or Andor, not those one would pay for trade goods.

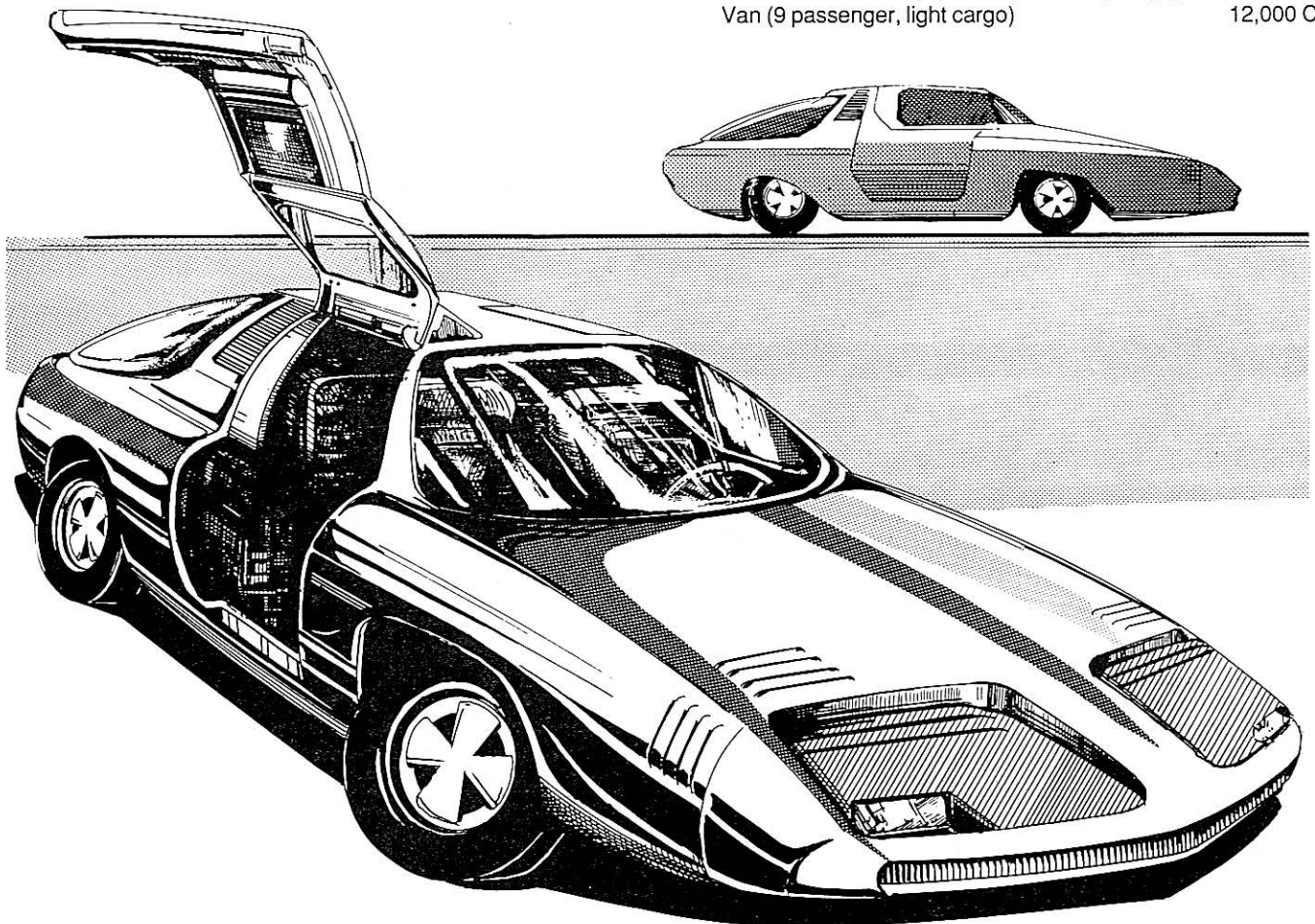
Prices in this volume should be adjusted according to the local situation. Starport prices will often be up to 50 percent higher than listed. Sophisticated technical equipment will be from 50 to 100 per cent higher on a nonurbanized, nontechnical world. Agricultural products will be 25 to 50 percent higher on worlds where agriculture is inhibited by local conditions.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Land Vehicles

Automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, vans: This type of land transport is used little on urbanized planets such as Earth, as they normally have extensive mass-transit systems or use A-Grav or GEV vehicles. These are still in use on many less urbanized planets in the outer reaches, where the market for used vehicles has gotten quite extensive. Most modern ground vehicles are powered by micro-fusion packs, and are totally emission free. The farther away one gets from the more modern planets, however, the more likely one is to find battery, solar, or even fossil-fuel vehicles.

Automobile, Compact (4 Passenger)	8,000 Cr
Automobile, Midsize (5 passenger)	10,000 Cr
Automobile, Full size (6 passenger)	13,000 Cr
Automobile, Luxury (4 to 7 passenger)	18,000 Cr
Automobile, Sport (2 passenger)	15,000 Cr
Delivery Truck (2 passenger, light cargo)	14,000 Cr
Motorcycle (2 passenger)	1,500 Cr
Pick-up Truck (3 passenger, light cargo)	10,000 Cr
Recreational vehicle (6 passenger, light cargo)	16,000 Cr
Semi-tractor, trailer (3 passenger, heavy cargo)	40,000 Cr
Van (9 passenger, light cargo)	12,000 Cr



DANA KNUTSON

All-terrain vehicles:

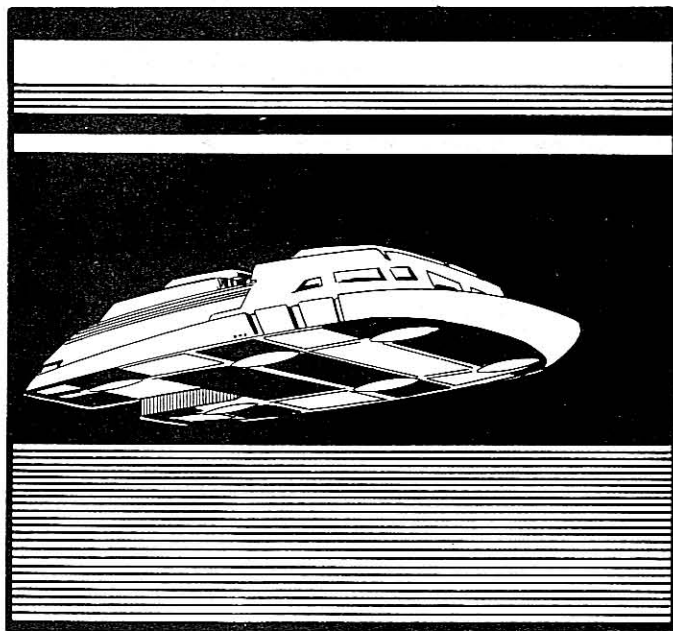
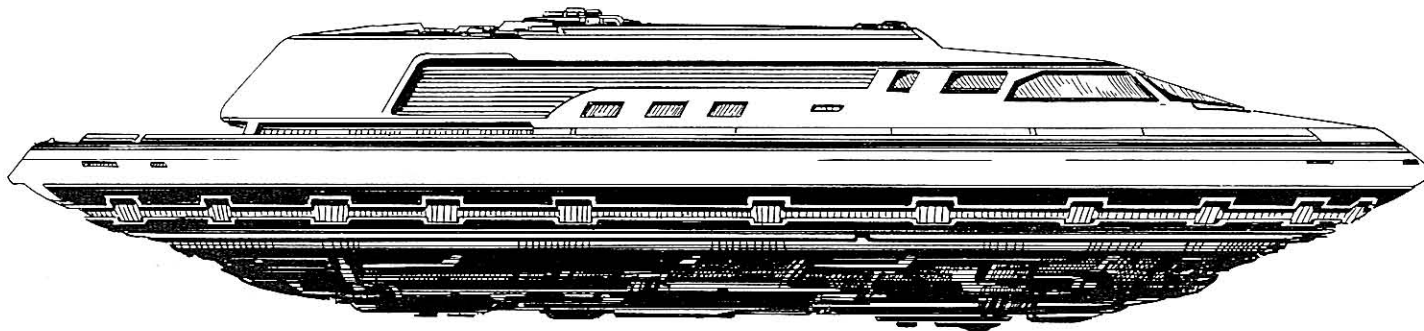
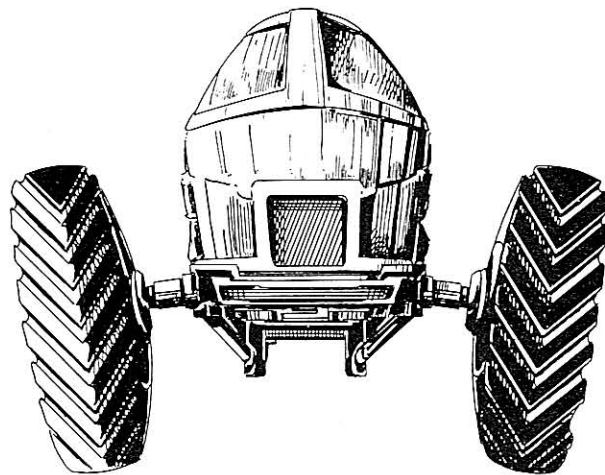
These rugged micro-fusion powered vehicles come in both wheeled and tracked versions, and are used for sport and for light work. The smaller models have little cargo capacity, being meant for two passengers and little personal equipment. The larger models can carry large payloads, depending on bulk and mass and the terrain being traveled.

ATV, small (2 passenger)	2,500 Cr
ATV, medium (4 passenger, light cargo)	9,500 Cr
ATV, large (4 passenger, heavy cargo)	15,500 Cr

Ground effect vehicles:

These are popular on most medium technology worlds, where A-Grav technology is scarce, but the older style land vehicle is almost obsolete. Ground-effect vehicles ride on a cushion of air over land or water. They are capable of traversing most terrain. Heavily overgrown or extremely rugged terrain does pose problems.

GEV, Compact (4 passenger)	12,000 Cr
GEV, Midsize (5 passenger)	15,000 Cr
GEV, Full Size (6 passenger)	20,000 Cr
GEV, Luxury (6 passenger)	27,000 Cr
GEV, Semi tractor (heavy cargo)	60,000 Cr
GEV, Sports (2 passenger)	18,000 Cr
GEV, Truck (3 passenger, light cargo)	15,000 Cr
GEV, Van (9 passenger, Medium cargo)	17,000 Cr



A-Grav vehicles:

The A-grav vehicles are high-technology devices, requiring a high-tech environment for repairs. This can be a high-tech planet where repairs would be generally available, or it can be a trader who happens to visit a planet occasionally with parts and/or services. A-gravs are generally found closer to the hubs of highly developed areas. A-gravs operate nap-of-earth, that is, they follow the contours of the terrain below them. Most A-gravs are not powerful enough to operate higher than tree-top level. Because of their method of travel, A-gravs are not hindered by terrain features as are other types of vehicles. A-gravs are in wide service in most high-tech military organizations, as they make excellent scouting vehicles.

A-grav, Compact (4 passenger)	16,000 Cr
A-grav, Midsize (5 passenger)	20,000 Cr
A-grav, Full Size (6 passenger)	26,000 Cr
A-grav, Luxury (6 passenger)	36,000 Cr
A-grav, Sports (2 passenger)	32,000 Cr
A-grav, Light Truck (3 passenger, light cargo)	20,000 Cr
A-grav, Cycle (2 passenger)	8,000 Cr
A-grav, Van (9 passenger, light cargo)	24,000 Cr

Water Vehicles

Row Boat (300 Cr): Made of high-strength, low-weight materials, such as stressed carbon fiber, for durability and ease of operation. Holds up to 4 persons, or 360 kg, depending on use.

Row boat motor (600 Cr): Small electric motor for use on small boats. Unlike older fossil-fueled models, this motor uses a rechargeable, detachable power pack that provides up to 5 hours use at moderate speeds. Top speed rated at 55 kph.

Canoe (300 Cr): Constructed similarly to the row boat (above), this model holds over 200 kg, including passengers. More maneuverable and lighter than a row or motor boat, the canoe's versatility is borne out by the fact that it can be carried by one person over rough terrain.

Rubber Raft (100 Cr): Made of stress-tested elastic materials, this model folds up small enough to be carried in a back pack. The raft holds up to 180 kg when inflated using a small inflation cartridge of compressed gas.

Inflation Cartridge (10 Cr): For use with raft, above.

Sport Boat (5,000 Cr): Small fishing or skiing craft, capable of holding almost 500 kg. Top speed 75 kph.

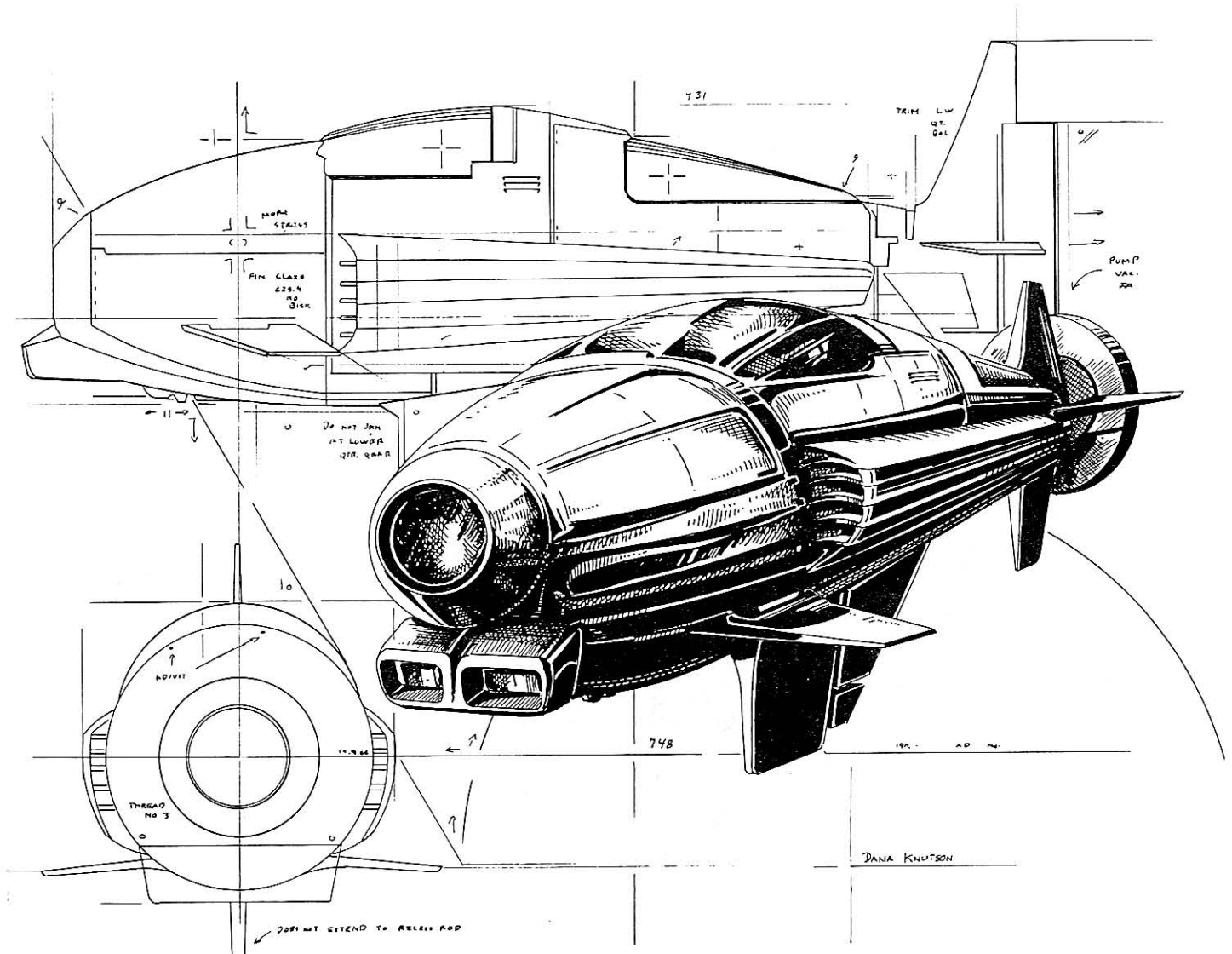
Speed Boat (10,000 Cr): Very fast, high-performance craft. Designed for speed and little else. Capable of carrying up to 180 kg. Top speed 145 kph.

Air Boat (4,000 Cr): Flat-bottomed boat that skims the surface of water, swamp, mud, and so on. The vehicle is driven by a large airplane-type propeller mounted in back. Carries up to 225 kg. Also known as a swamp buggy. Top speed 45 kph.

Hydrofoil (20,000 Cr): Extremely fast speedboat with great maneuverability. Once at 2/3 maximum speed, the front of the vessel rises from the water on ski-like foils or runners that serve to minimize drag. Top speed 175 kph. Holds up to 340 kg.

Houseboat (20,000 Cr): Flat-bottomed boat with living quarters. Usually used for recreation purposes. Sleeping accommodations for up to 6 persons. Top speed 30 kph.

Submarine (50,000 Cr): Two-man submarine often used for oceanographic studies or recreational purposes in waters of medium depth. Four-man submarines (85,000 Cr) are more durable and capable of attempting deeper dives, for use in undersea archaeological exploration or underwater salvage operations.



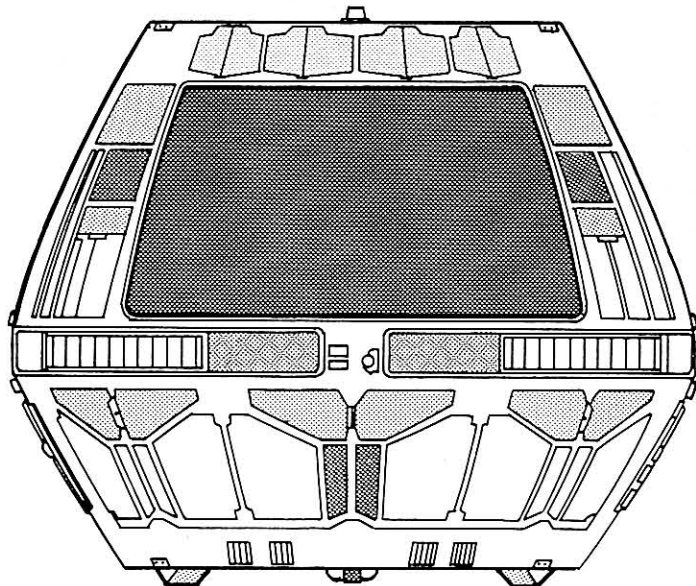
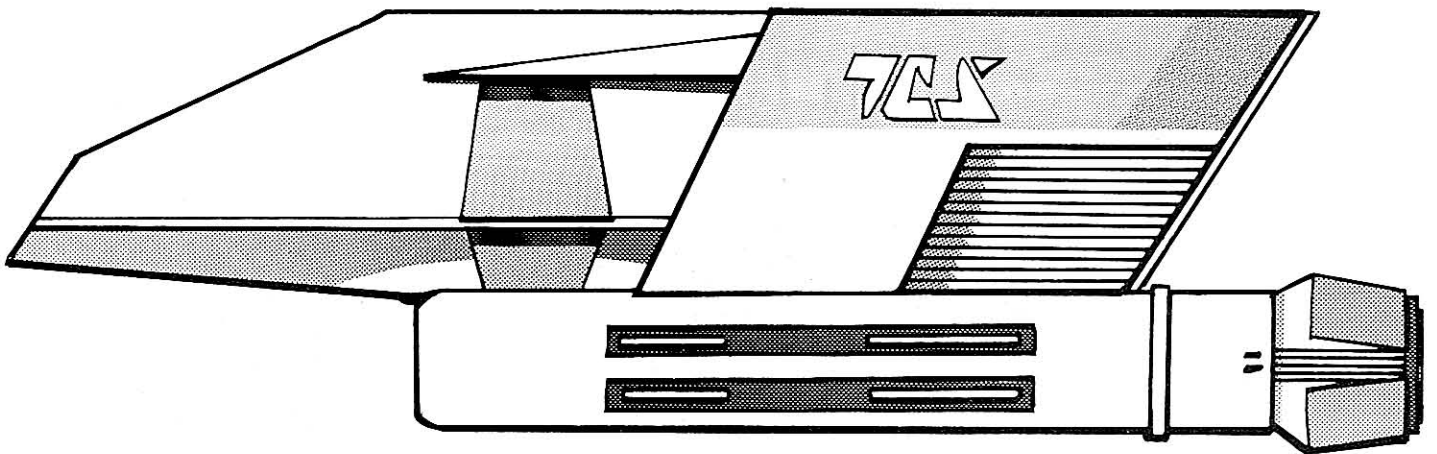
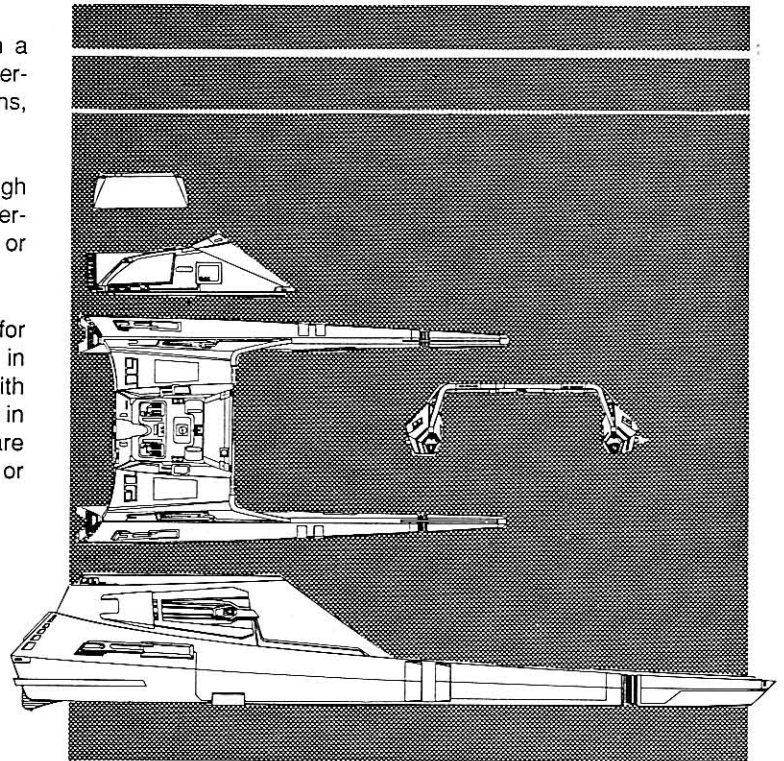
Air Vehicles

Hang Glider (300 Cr): One-man glider, usually launched from a height or towed aloft. Silent, motorless operation and maneuverability make it useful for some types of commando actions, though it is usually flown for sport.

Ultra-Light (1,000 Cr): Basically a powered hang-glider, though some more closely resemble true airplanes. One-man propeller-driven vehicles, often powered by a small fusion pack or rechargeable electric motor.

Passenger Carrying: Propeller driven aircraft are used mostly for sport on high-tech worlds, though they may still be found in serious service on some planets. Jets are even scarcer, with most planets having banned them back in the fossil-fuel days in favor of rapid-transit systems circling the planet. Helicopters are still in use in most areas, with power provided by fusion packs or rechargeable motors.

Private Plane, Two-Seat	15,000 Cr
Private Plane, Four-Seat	25,000 Cr
Private Plane, Six-Seat, Two Engine	45,000 Cr
Private Jet, Six-Seat, Two Engine	150,000 Cr
Private Jet, Ten-Seat, Two Engine	225,000 Cr
Helicopter, Single Seat	10,000 Cr
Helicopter, Two-Seat	28,000 Cr
Helicopter, Four-Seat	90,000 Cr



Space Vehicles

Small Shuttle (500,000 Cr): A four-seat vehicle capable of jumps from planetary surface to orbital sites and reverse only. These are often carried aboard privately owned craft for such excursions. Not suited for planetary exploration in most cases, as they are not equipped for landings in rough terrain.

Shuttlecraft, Star Fleet Standard Design (350,000 Cr used, 700,000 Cr new): Star Fleet standard shuttlecraft are for sale, new and used. New are available directly from the manufacturers outlets. Used are available on the occasion when newer vessels are coming into service and older units are being replaced.

Repair Bug, One-Man (65,000 Cr used, 100,000 Cr new): Small craft incapable of atmospheric landing. These are in use by Star Fleet at all repair facilities and large space facilities. Equipped with "Waldos" (mechanical manipulator arms) with a variety of tool operations.

Weaponry

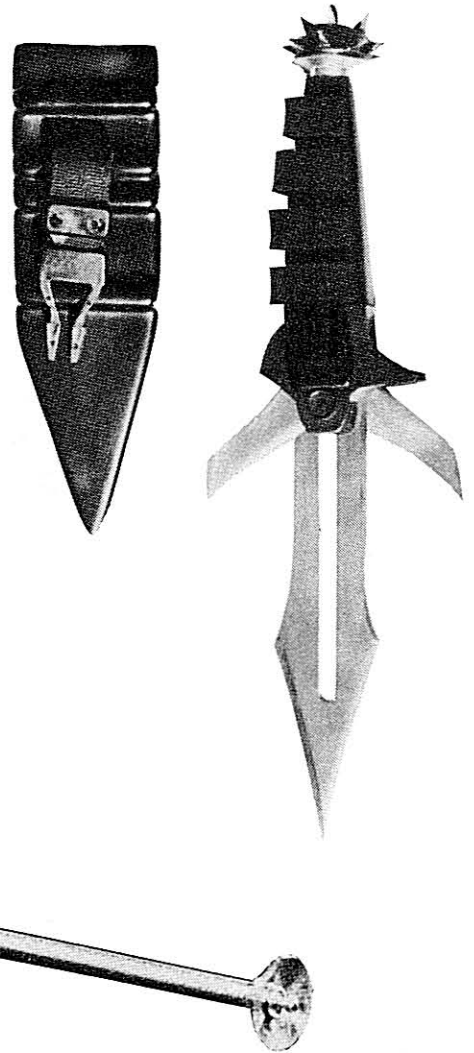
Ancient Weaponry: Generally available only as collector's items, or for sporting or athletic use on most technologically advanced worlds. On less advanced worlds, they are more available and in many instances are carried daily. On many worlds, the carrying of one of these is illegal. Those listed are functional models, with purely decorative models available at half the cost.

Pocket Knife	15 Cr
Belt Knife or Dagger	20 Cr
Throwing Knife	12 Cr
Foil	75 Cr
Sabre	100 Cr
Cutlass	120 Cr
Shortsword	150 Cr
Broadsword	200 Cr
Hand and a Half Sword	250 Cr
Longbow	60 Cr
Compound Bow	150 Cr
Crossbow	200 Cr
Mace	225 Cr
Flail	175 Cr
Axe	45 Cr



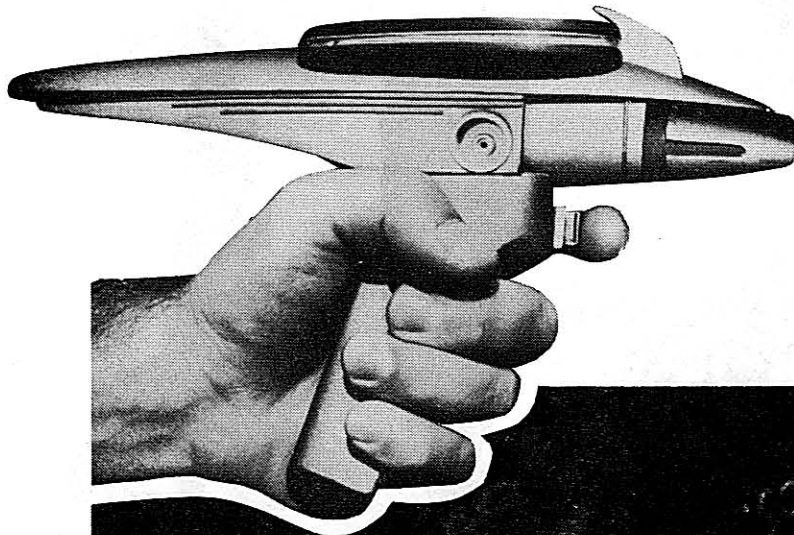
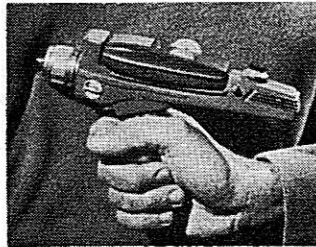
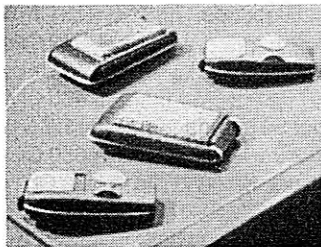
Firearms: Mostly collector's items or used by sportsmen. Possession or use of operational firearms is a criminal act on many advanced worlds. Few Federation worlds allow the carrying of operational firearms in a loaded state for any purpose. Some worlds have banned them entirely.

Revolver, Small Caliber	100 Cr
Revolver, Large Caliber	250 Cr
Automatic, Small Caliber	150 Cr
Automatic, Large Caliber	300 Cr
Rifle, Small Caliber	150 Cr
Rifle, Large Caliber	300 Cr
Rifle, Large Caliber, High Power	500 Cr
Ammunition, Small Caliber, per 50 rounds	2 Cr
Ammunition, Large Caliber, per 50 rounds	15 Cr
Shotgun	200 Cr
Ammunition, Shotgun, per 50 rounds	12 Cr
Automatic Rifle (or Carbine)	400 Cr
Ammunition, Automatic Rifle, per 50 rounds	15 Cr
Submachine Gun	650 Cr
Ammunition, Submachine Gun, per 40 round clip	20 Cr
Machine Gun	1000 Cr
Ammunition, Machine Gun, per 1000 round belt	250 Cr



Laser Weapons: Old-fashioned laser weaponry is still to be found in some planetary backwaters, though they have mostly been replaced by the phaser on Federation worlds. Laser, phaser, and disruptor recharge packs operate in a similar manner, taking about 20 minutes for a full recharge on most models. They are not, however, interchangeable in use between types and models. Low-power non-lethal variations at half the price are available on most high technology worlds for sporting uses.

Laser, Hand	250 Cr
Laser, Hand, Recharge Pack	75 Cr
Laser, Rifle	500 Cr
Laser, Rifle, Recharge Pack	100 Cr



Phaser, Disruptor Weaponry: Available for sale in some areas, although most Federation planets have made carrying phaser weaponry illegal without special permits. Basically identical to Star Fleet issue, though those found for public sale do not have the overload feature. Many found for sale on frontier worlds are low-quality copies that tend to fail to fire at the most inopportune time, or fail to take a charge after several uses. Disruptor weaponry is illegal within Federation boundaries, although it can be found for sale in the Triangle or on many frontier planets.

Phaser I-A	200 Cr
Phaser II-A	400 Cr
Phaser Rifle-A	550 Cr
Phaser I-B	300 Cr
Phaser II-B	500 Cr
Phaser Recharge Pack	100 Cr
Hand Disruptor-A	150 Cr
Disruptor Rifle-A	450 Cr
Hand Disruptor-B	200 Cr
Hand Disruptor-C	300 Cr
Disruptor Rifle-C	600 Cr
Disruptor Recharge Pack	100 Cr

Police Stunner (150 Cr): Used by law enforcement agencies on high technology worlds, this is basically a Phaser I with only a stun setting. This weapon is legal for carrying on most Federation planets, as it is not considered a deadly weapon. Uses the phaser recharge pack.

Stun Club (100 Cr) A flexible billy club that stuns on impact with a neural shock effect similar to a low-strength phaser stun shot. Useful for close combat and riot control, the stun club is a favorite of many police, bartenders, and bouncers. The stun club is sturdy enough to be used to parry a blow from a fist or light hand held weapons. The club uses a special long-life energy pack that is easily replaced. The pack lasts about 100 uses, and costs 20 Cr.



Medical Equipment

Most medical equipment can only be purchased by a licensed physician or medical technician, or with a physician's permission. Of course, there is always the black market.

Field Kit (200 Cr): Contains spray dressing, Feinberger, and hypo with small drug supply, including six doses each of light and medium sedatives, light and medium stimulants, Coradrenaline, Dylovene, Sterilite, and Tri-Ox compounds. These items are carried in a small pouch with a fold-over top. The pouch is designed to be carried on a belt.

Medical Pouch (2500 Cr): Contains several spray dressings, a Feinberger, the same hypo kit as in the field kit (above), protoplaser types 1 and 2, laser scalpels and other field surgery equipment, along with extra drugs, including Hyronaline, Masiform-D, and a neural paralyzer. Twelve doses of the drugs in the field kit are included. All this is contained in a roll-up pouch with pockets, and is carried in a bag equipped with a shoulder sling.

Feinberger (50 Cr): A small hand-held unit capable of giving heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and body temperature of a patient. Simple to use.

Heartbeat Reader (150 Cr): A more sophisticated model of the Feinberger, capable of more accurate and faster readings. Also equipped with a computer patch, capable of being connected to any standard computer input port.

Laser Scalpels (all types each 300 Cr): Small hand-held scalpels that cut by use of a fine laser.

Protoplaser (either type 450 Cr): Heals wounds without the aid of sutures, stitches, and so on.

Dressing Sprayers (50 Cr): A device that is used to spray plastic/synthetic "skin" over a wound, which stops superficial bleeding and contains an antiseptic and anaesthetic agent. When the wound heals, the dressing is absorbed. Charges cost 5 Cr for 20 sprays.

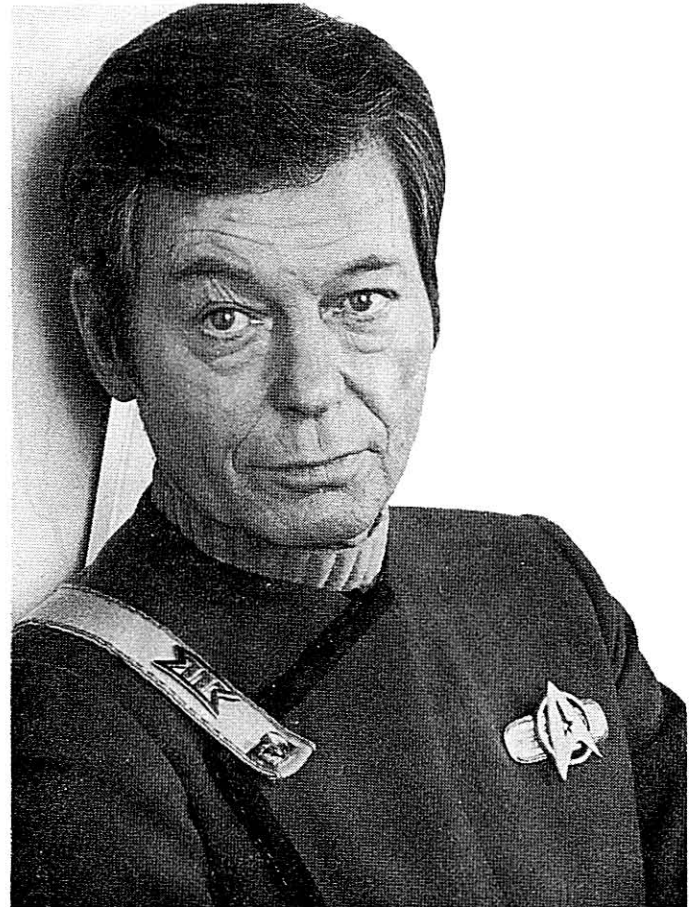
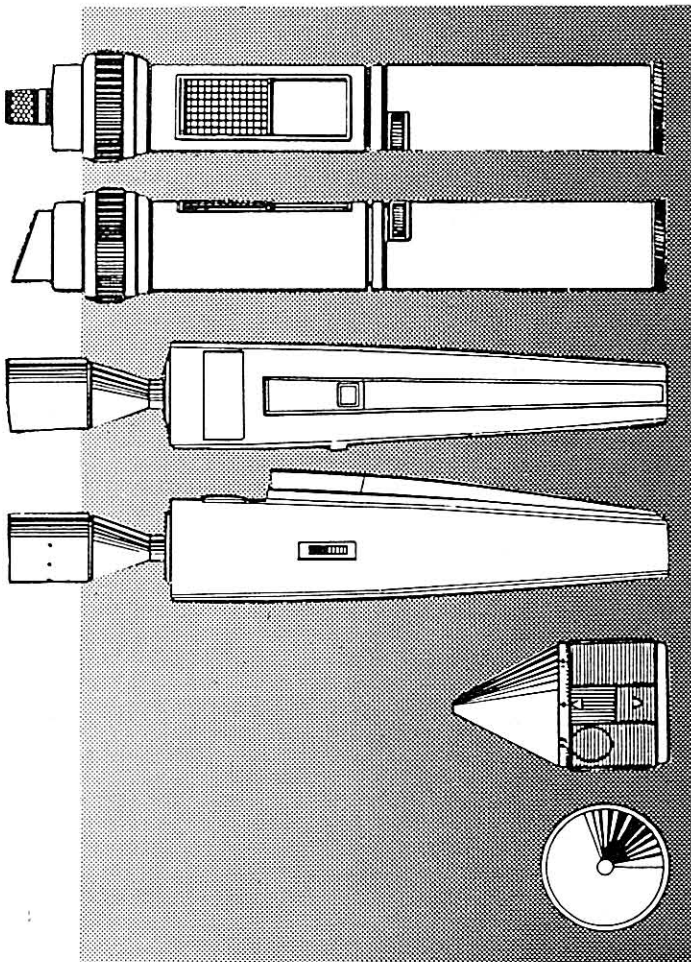
Medical Tricorder (400 Cr): A device capable of giving detailed biological and chemical readings on life forms.

Biocomputer (1000 Cr): A portable unit capable of analyzing life form samples and processing biological data. Can tie into a larger mainframe.

Hypo (20 Cr): A high-pressure pneumatic hypodermic syringe. Injects drugs through the skin painlessly, without a needle. Drugs are contained in micro-injector vials.

Drug Charges (6 doses per capsule):

Light stimulant	2 Cr
Medium stimulant	4 Cr
Light sedative	2 Cr
Medium sedative	4 Cr
Heavy sedative	6 Cr
Coradrenaline	4 Cr
Dylovene	5 Cr
Hyronaline	20 Cr
Masiform-D	20 Cr
Neural Paralyzer	100 Cr
Sterilite	3 Cr
Tri-Ox Compound	2 Cr



Clothing

Normal clothing: Prices given are for average clothing items for middle-class Federation family. High-fashion clothing would be 150 percent to 300 percent of the listed prices. Serviceable clothing can be purchased at 50 percent to 75 percent off the listed prices.

Leisure Clothing	50 Cr
Work Clothing	75 Cr
Dress Clothing	150 Cr
Leisure Footwear	15 Cr
Work Footwear	25 Cr
Dress Footwear	35 Cr
Light Jacket or Windbreaker	15 Cr
Heavy Jacket	40 Cr
Gloves, Heavy Duty, Insulated	15 Cr

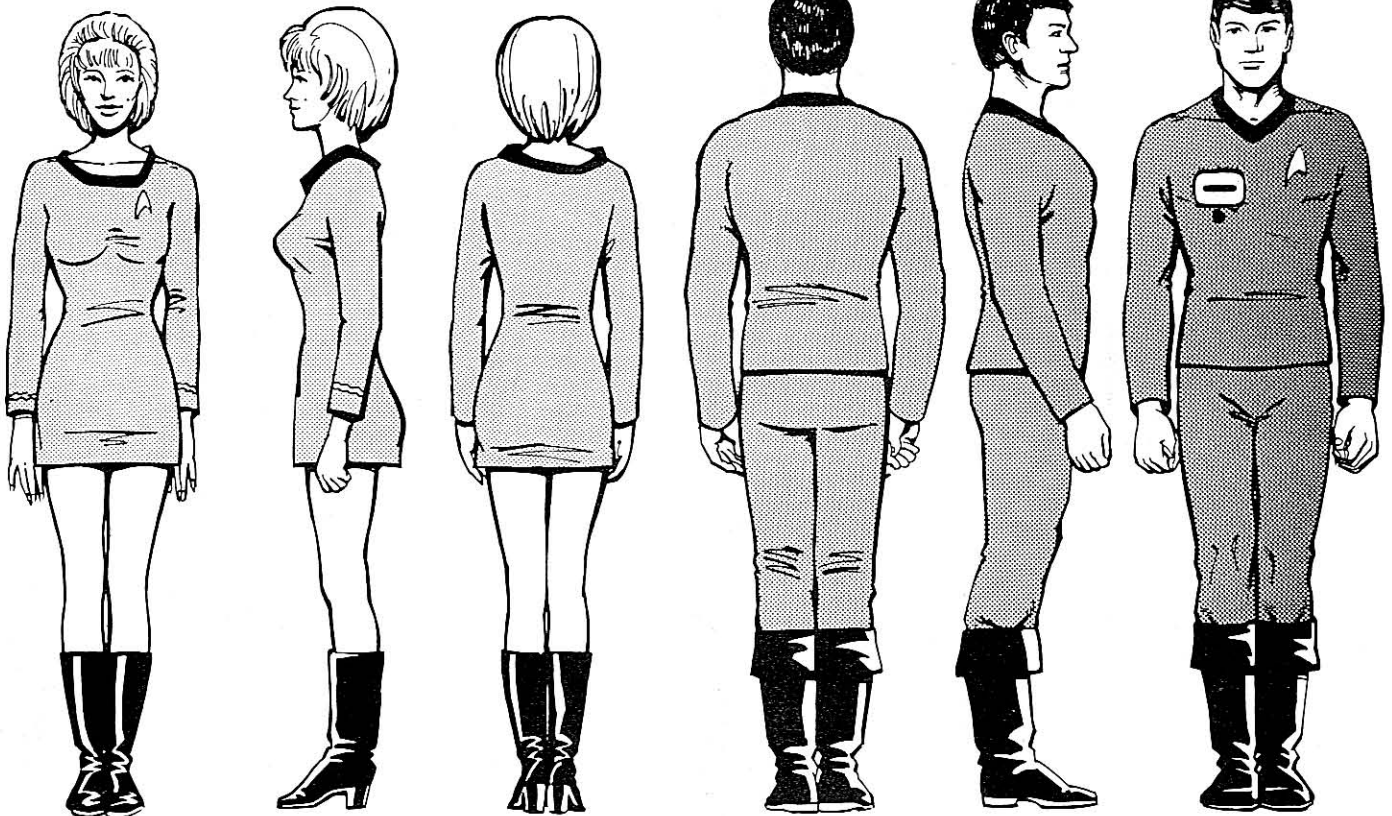
Thermal Oversuit (75 Cr): Heated suit for use in cold environments. Runs on an easily recharged power pack that lasts 48 hours without recharging, which takes 3 hours.

Temperature Compensational Oversuit (200 Cr): Complete with hood and half-face mask. Powered for 48 hours by a rechargeable pack. The suit provides a comfortable temperature for the wearer in either hot or cold climates. The suit has air conditioning and heating units, but will not protect against vacuum or hostile atmospheres.

Wet Suit (200 Cr): Used by divers, this suit provides warmth in cold waters. The suit has adjustable buoyancy control packs, which enable the user to easily ascend or descend.

Rain Gear (40 Cr): This outfit includes coat, hat, overshoes, and a small waterproof bag that can be placed over equipment the size of a small briefcase. The gear is transparent. Due to the polymers used, water, mud, and so on will slide right off. The suit can be shaken dry in a matter of seconds.

Environmental Suit (2500 Cr): A suit that provides a self-contained environment (air, heat, and pressure) for up to 24 hours. The suit is safe for vacuum and hostile environments. The helmet is completely transparent, providing an unobstructed 360 degree view.



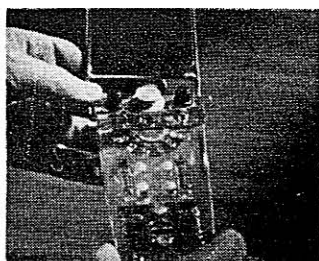
Personal Equipment

Personal Transactor (50 Cr): This is the basic model of the pocket-sized device used to make cashless transactions between two private individuals on most Federation worlds. The device allows money to be transferred from one card to another, but the transfer is not actually recorded until the next time one or the other party places his card into a bank machine, store transactor, or other device which is actually tied into the bank master datanet. In practice, this delay has little or no effect, since your card knows the money has been exchanged. Most personal transactors can be plugged into a common communications terminal for a quick update from the bank computer if desired. Standard transactors are not equipped with retina scanners, so they are used only for transactions between two people who know each other.

Replacement ID Card (100 Cr): Replacement cards are deliberately expensive to discourage people from losing them. If lost, they can be replaced at a bank machine equipped with a retina scanner.

ID Forgery Unit (15,000 Cr+): These are devices that allow a forger to create faked ID cards or change the information on real ones. The device is only useful to someone very skilled in its use. It is pocket sized, and at first glance appears to be a normal personal transactor. Possession of a forgery device is highly illegal in the Federation.

Tricorder (400 Cr): A data gathering and recording mechanism, similar to the standard Star Fleet issue tricorder. Can gather data on energy sources, physical composition of an object, and life form data.

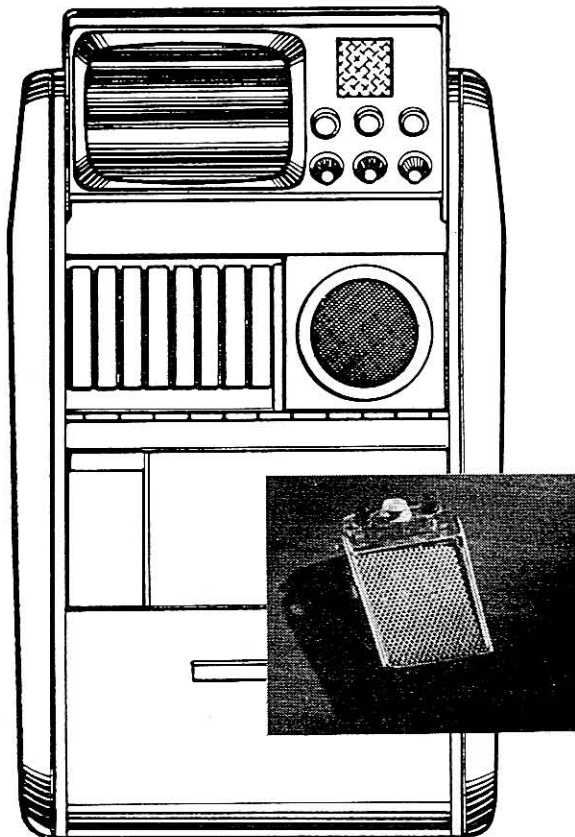


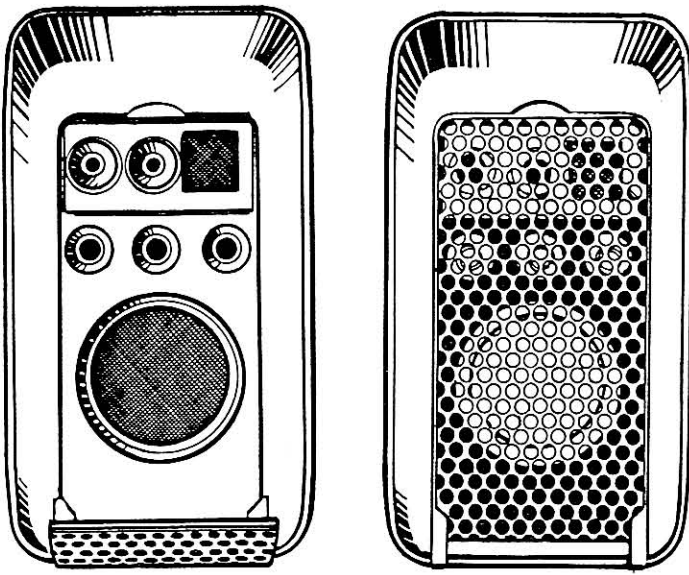
Pocket Computer (30 Cr): A basic unit about 15 X 8 X 2 centimeters that combines a simple flatscreen text display with a limited memory capacity (about one million characters) and moderate data processing capability. A normal pocket computer will read standard computer carts, though it is not equipped with 3D graphics or high resolution flatscreen display. Cannot be plugged into communication terminal for connection with larger data networks. Pocket computers that do not have keyboard inputs or voice recognition circuits may be much, much smaller, but they must rely on preprogrammed data carts for all input.

Personal Computer (800 Cr): Much more versatile than the pocket computer, this device is pocket-sized or briefcase sized (depending on exact manufacturer and model) but has a small high-resolution screen capable of displaying digitized color photographs (or video) images as well as text. It normally accesses more on-board memory than a pocket computer (up to 5 million characters). Plug-in modules allow it to act as a personal transactor (20 Cr), a video cart viewer (100 Cr) with 3D display, if plugged into an auxiliary display unit, or to make direct satellite-link contact with a world-wide database (communications module, 200 Cr), if such a system is present at that world, or to ships in the vicinity.

Computer Carts (5 Cr for 3 carts): These standard sized square carts are color coded according to the type of data or intended use. Information is stored on a molecular level, with each small cart holding up to eight million characters of data.

Briefcase (40 Cr): Will hold the complete personal computer system listed above, including ten carts. Can also be used as normal briefcase. The high-impact duraplasic cannot be scratched by normal wear and tear. Comes standard with an electronic lock that can be coded to an electronic key (included) or to one of several possible ID cards. Combination locks are also available, with electronically coded combination latches and miniature numeric keypad.





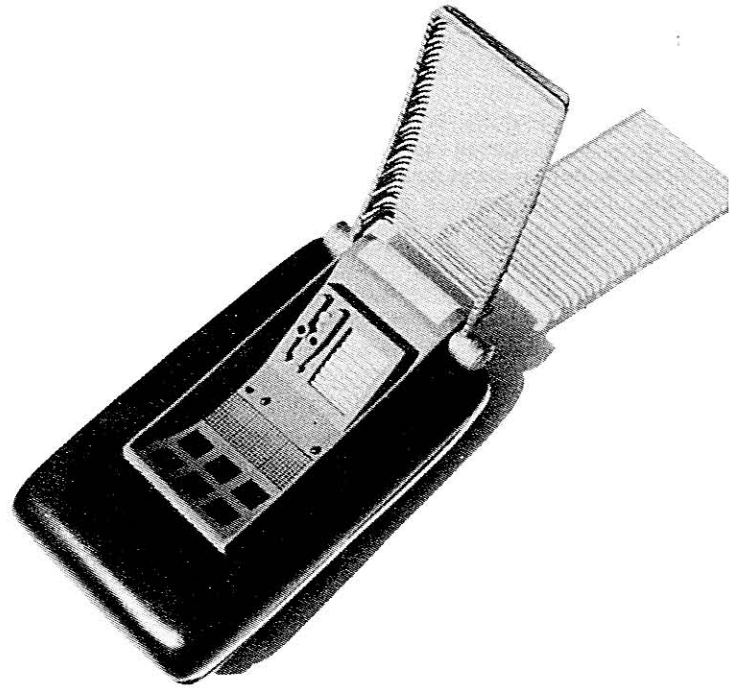
Portable Cart Viewer (400 Cr): The unit is about the size of a pocket radio, and has a high-resolution screen. It is used to view visual (still and video) recordings only, and cannot be used to scan data carts. The camera, about the size of a large writing stylus, and record attachment, about the size of computer data cart, allow making new vision/sound recordings. A larger camera with two lenses can be used for 3D recordings. Uses color coded carts the same as the personal computer, but coded for video data only.

Pocket Communicator (30 Cr): For voice communications only, these units do not have the range or variety of features of Star Fleet issue communicators. They are capable of linking with a local communications net (present in most urban areas) for satellite relay. Can also be used for line-of-sight communications up to 30 km. A shuttlecraft or other surface station may relay communications to orbital target.

Long Range Communicator (75 Cr): Capable of voice communications to orbital satellite relay directly (as opposed to the pocket communicator) or starship, but still not up to par with Star Fleet issue. The unit can, however, be used as a locator signal for transporter operations.

Earpiece receiver (10 Cr): This is a "one-size-fits-all" model, unlike the custom tailored Star Fleet issue models. A custom fitted earpiece can be purchased for twice the price, but requires one day for fabrication, and the purchaser must be available for a one-hour fitting.

Wrist Chronometer (5 to 100 Cr): Basically a digital wristwatch. Accurate to one second per year. Higher priced models have alarms, calculators, short-range communicators, built-in video games, pagers, pulse, respiration and temperature sensors, and more. A favorite feature in urban environments is a loud piezoelectric alarm that can be set off manually as an anti-mugging device. This feature usually costs about 15 Cr.



Binoculars (100 Cr): Images are enlarged and enhanced by precision optics aided by a tiny microcomputer chip. Most models can be fitted with cameras, infrared viewers, or light enhancement filters at additional cost.

Film Camera (30 Cr): Flat image camera (with through-the-lens viewing), producing instantly developed pictures plus a digitally encoded strip that serves as a "negative" for additional prints or enlargements. Advanced electronically enhanced optics allow most cameras in this price range to take closeup and telephoto shots with a simple adjustment

Holographic Camera (400 Cr): Creates a digitally-encoded cube (like the film strip) that can be recreated as a "solid" 3D image after processing. Holocube photographs are quite common on even medium technology worlds. These photos are three to six inches on a side when prepared. The image is generated within a virtually invisible clear plastic hollow cube, when the photo is to sit on a desk for public viewing. Otherwise, it can be transferred to a standard cart for viewing at any 3D-capable terminal. A single exposure cube costs 1 Cr.

Infra-Red Lens Kit (200 Cr): Attachments for standard cameras or binoculars, allowing detection of objects by their heat generation. These devices will allow easy visual detection of a warm living being against a colder background or within another object that conducts heat (like the walls of a shuttlecraft). Also available at 225 Cr in goggle form.

Light-Enhancing Viewer (250 Cr): Also known as "starlight scopes", these devices enhance even the smallest light source to visible levels, but with a corresponding loss of detail. These can be attached to cameras or binoculars. Available in goggle form for an extra 25 credits.

<p>ATTENTION!</p>	<p>ATTENTION!</p>
 <p>PHASERS ARE US! ANNOUNCES A STUNNING SALE</p>	 

Gas or Oil Lanterns (8 Cr): Still used for illumination on some worlds, these produce a circle of light of six-meter radius. Gas or oil refills available in modular plug-in canisters for .5 Cr. Each lasts three hours.

Pocket Lantern (8 Cr): About the size of one's fist, these rechargeable units produce illumination for 24 hours without failing. They are capable of unidirectional (like a flashlight), semi-directional (like a lantern), or omnidirectional (like a light globe) illumination, with variable beam intensity. At high intensity setting, the flashlight beam will dazzle someone at close range. They can also produce an illuminated area of 30-meter radius at high intensity. Some units have color caps attached for signalling.

Aqualantern (15 Cr): A small, hand-held light source that can be safely used underwater. Illuminates a ten cubic-meter area.

Beltlight (12 Cr): A light source that is worn like a belt. It will shine a light ahead of the wearer about 100 meters, in a beam 2 meters wide. These are useful as they can leave the hands free for other uses.

Coldlight Glowsticks (1 Cr): Disposable chemical packets (about the size of a pencil) that emit a "cold light" of a greenish-white hue when struck sharply, then shaken. Illuminates an area of six meters radius for ten hours. Easily carried in a pocket or pouch for emergency use.

Sleeping Bag (50 Cr): Lightweight sleeping bag that folds to pocket size when not in use. It retains body warmth very well, due to the advanced types of insulation.

Backpack (40 Cr): Very lightweight modular frameworks of high-strength plastic. These are covered with easy-access pockets.

Tent (50 Cr): A basic two-man tent, available in a variety of colors, with waterproof insulated floor and insert netting. Folds to the size of a small briefcase, with collapsible poles and pegs and plasteel cable lines.

Pressure Tent (100 Cr): Will hold pressure in vacuum or hazardous atmosphere. Proof against most atmospheric corrosives as well. Has airlock-like flaps, but these are not convenient to use and take time to rig. A separate air processing unit is required to maintain pressure and/or to filter harmful atmospheres. The two-man tent takes up twice as much room as the normal model when stowed with the air processing unit which is about the size of a box of facial tissues. The air unit is good for three weeks without recharging its power pack and chemical filtering pack, which takes 24 hours.

7-Man Collapsible Shelter (350 Cr): Holds pressure as per the pressure tent. Airlock flaps more convenient in this size. Folds to the size and form of a backpack, for carrying by one person. Internal air processor and power supply maintains pressure, air conditioning, and lighting for up to six weeks on a microfusion power system. Available as a replacement pack for 75 credits.

Portable Power Supply (1000 Cr): Back-pack sized microfusion plant provides power for most items for 20 weeks without service or replenishment. Can also act as recharging station. Weapons still require an intermediate recharge pack be plugged into this unit. Other equipment can be plugged directly into the station. Replenishment packs for the PPS cost 200 Cr.

Computerguide Electronic Map (100 Cr): A computerized map display device that incorporates a small inertial tracker. If calibrated before leaving a known point, and programmed with local maps, it will allow pinpoint accuracy in determining current location. Battery pack lasts 30 days without recharging. Map programs may not be available for non-civilized areas, but inertial tracker will still tell position relative to starting point.

Magnetic Compass (5 Cr): 75 percent of civilized worlds have magnetic fields strong enough to make magnetic compasses useful. This model is very durable and extremely accurate.

Filter Mask (30 Cr): Small, lightweight mask that filters most harmful atmospheres. Good for 12 hours without replacement of filter unit. Filter replacements cost 2 Cr.

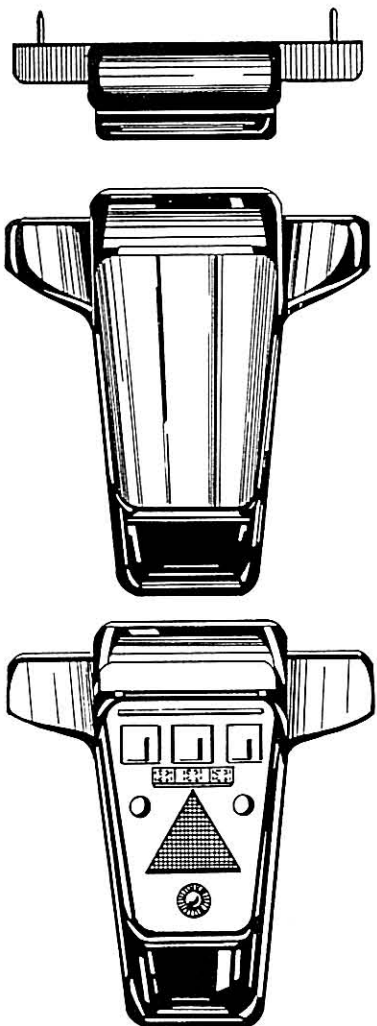
Life Support Mask (100 Cr): Filters like the smaller mask, plus warms or cools atmospheres and pressurizes thin atmospheres. Powerpack and filter good for about twelve hours. Replacement packs cost 10 Cr.

Air Pack (100 Cr): Lightweight pack with supercompressed breathing mixture, fitted with mask. Good for six hours. Two can be worn on back without slowing or hindering movement.

Skin Diving Equipment (50 Cr): Mask, flippers, and other accoutrements for skin diving, including buoyancy control belt.

Scuba Tank and Regulator (200 Cr): An advanced system that uses multiple airpaks for operation up to twelve hours underwater. Very lightweight, with little or no restriction to movement of user.

Gillpak (300 Cr): The ultimate underwater diving device, the gillpak is carried on the back. It weighs only 60 kg. A gillpak, when used with a wetsuit for warmth, allows operation underwater almost indefinitely. Unlike SCUBA gear, gillpaks produce no telltale bubble trail.



Metal Detector (150 Cr): Sensitive detector, about the size of a tricorder, that detects small metallic objects with great precision. More sensitive and specialized readings than can be obtained with a tricorder.

Water Purification Device (50 Cr): Pocket-sized device that will filter and purify one gallon of water every two minutes. Will purify 100 gallons of water before its chemical pack and filters must be replaced. Recharge kits are available at 5 Cr.

Snow Ski Set (35 Cr): Made of lightweight, almost unbreakable duraplast, and coated with a special polymer coating for speed.

Portable Anti-Grav Unit (125 Cr): A small hand-held device with magnetic clamps or sticky pads capable of lifting up to 100 kg. Several may be used together to lift heavier objects.

A-Grav Platform (400 Cr): A floating disk-shaped work platform about three feet across. Will raise and lower to any height with a belt device. Will support about 200 kg.

Universal Translator (12,000 Cr): A hand-held device that is capable of translating most alien languages after listening to roughly 30 minutes of the language. The unit is very expensive due to its very recent development. Costs should lower at least 50 percent in the next five years.

Force Field Box (1,000 Cr): A special box with an interior force field that can be used to transport antimatter samples. The interior field is controlled by a remote control unit.

Rope (20 Cr per 100-meter length): A plasteel cable that will support up to 500 kg.



UFP/ITA GUIDE TO SERVICES

Excerpted and digested from various regional editions of The UFP/ITA Guide to Goods and Services, Edition XXXVII, compiled and published by the United Federation of Planets Independent Traders Association.

This section provides average costs and prices in Federation credits for common services and intangibles that traders will find useful in the course of their travels. The prices given are average retail prices one would expect to pay on an urbanized planet such as Earth or Andor.

Prices in this volume should be adjusted according to the local situation. Starport prices will often be up to 50 percent higher than listed. Services requiring sophisticated technical equipment will be from 50 to 100 percent higher on a nonurbanized, nontechnical world. Agricultural services will be 25 to 50 percent higher on worlds where agriculture is inhibited by local conditions.

Food, Lodging, And Service

Travel services have not changed much over the past 100 years or so. Hotels are still hotels, and what can be said about food? The main changes have been in how the services are provided. Many lodging and food establishments are highly automated, even the run-down businesses. The higher quality hotels have automated check-in via your personal transactor, and automated bellboys, which are basically carts having an electronic homing device to follow the key-pad given you at check-in time. This key-pad opens and locks your room, allows you to order room service, even controls the lighting and air conditioning in your room. The middle-quality hotels provide a mixture of the old and the new. The low-quality establishments also provide a mixture, using obsolete, worn-out equipment sold long ago by the upper hotels.

High Quality, per day	22 - 100 Cr
Medium Quality, per day	10 - 28 Cr
Low Quality, per day	6 - 15 Cr

Food establishments are the direct opposite. The cheaper facilities (fast-food) are almost always entirely automated. You enter your order into a keypad, pay with your ID card, and your order pops out of a fabricator. The higher-priced restaurants are at the other end of the spectrum, with beings doing everything from waiting tables to doing the cooking. The higher the price, the more you can be assured your food is being fixed without the aid of a processor.

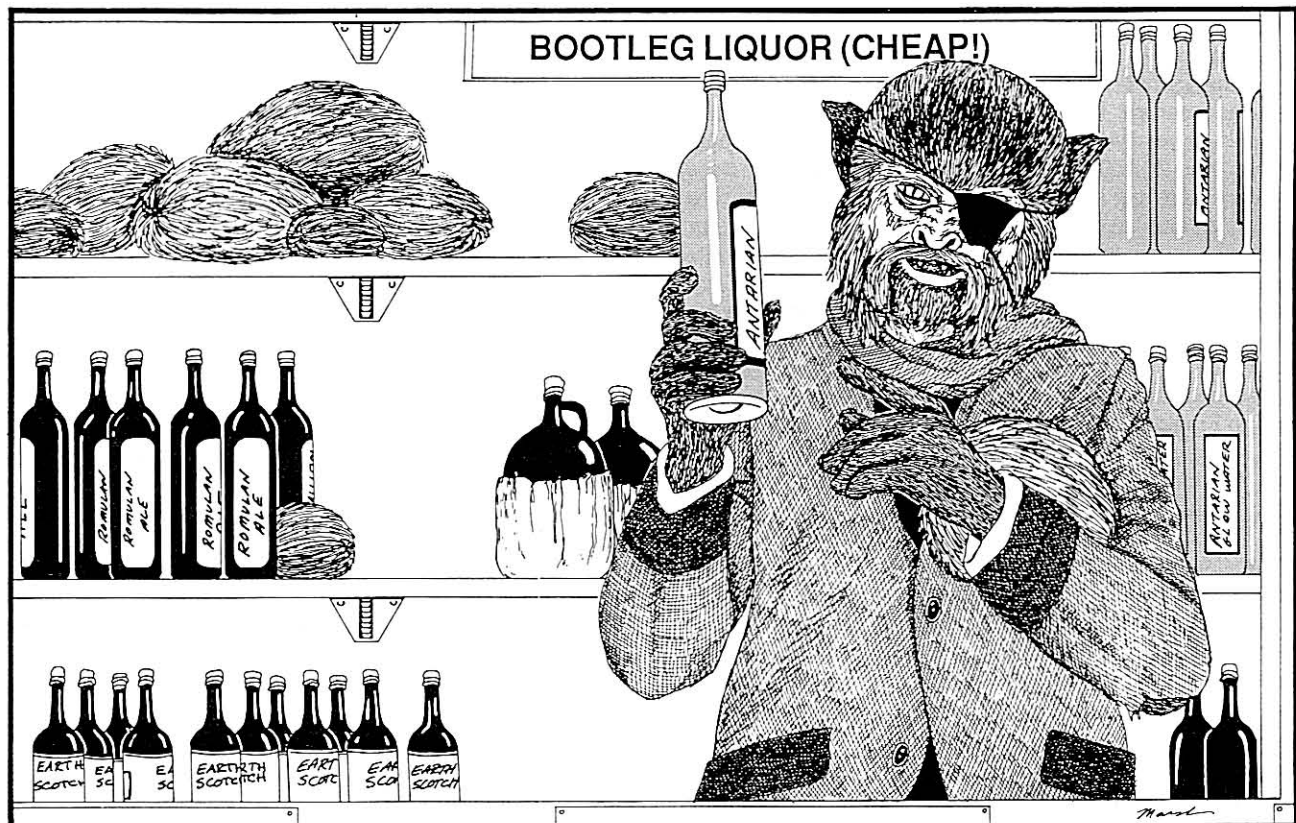
High-Quality Restaurant, per meal	18 - 80 Cr
Medium-Quality Restaurant, per meal	18 - 26 Cr
Low Quality (Cafeteria), per meal	2 - 20 Cr
Fast Food (Totally Synthesized)	1 - 7 Cr
Alcoholic Beverage, Night Club	2 - 25 Cr
Alcoholic Beverage, Corner Bar	1 - 6 Cr

Travel is provided by mass transit on most planets. Mass transit systems cover most high-technology planets with mono-rail systems. Transportation is provided on lower technology planets by the older style taxis.

Limousine	2 Cr per km
Taxi	1 Cr per km
Mass Transit	.1 Cr per km

Many other services are available. Below are sample prices you may expect to pay on the average urbanized Federation planet.

Night Club Act	1 - 5 Cr
Play or Show	4 - 22 Cr
Movie Admission	2 - 7 Cr
Saurian Brandy, Liter	30 Cr
Antarian Brandy, Liter	15 Cr
Earth Scotch, Liter	35 Cr
Romulan Ale, Liter	100 Cr+
Spican Flame Gems	10-50 Cr
Antarian Glow Water, 25 ml	10 Cr
Tribble	10 Cr



MAKING THE FREELOADER RUN

By Captain Anson Robertson

Eighteen-year-old Jaan Holona, a citizen of the planet Wall along The Triangle border, has just signed on as a clerical assistant and go-fer to the Cargomaster of the small freighter *Alisa*. He is about to make his first trip into space to the nearby Orion tradeworld, Freeloader.

HANDLING THE GOODS

Though Jaan had watched unloading of cargo many times at the Wallport Star Cargo Facility, he'd never felt a thrill such as this one. This time, it was *his* ship being loaded, and the watching was part of his responsibility as the newest crewman aboard the freighter *Alisa*. Jaan knew he wasn't much more than a glorified errand boy, counting crates and checking the manifest, but he didn't care. He was finally going into space!

Jaan had grown up around the starport. His father's many years of work as a cargo handler brought the young Jaan into contact with interstellar traders almost every day of his life from the time he was old enough to walk to the port after school to watch his father at work.

Father and son were alone in the world, Jaan's mother having died in the colony-wide Green Plague epidemic soon after Jaan's birth. But the boy was well taken care of by the many friends Big Jaarod Holona had among the people of the starport. Knowing the ways and the talk of the port had been what first brought Jaan to the attention of Cargomaster Kinnda of the *Alisa* after Big Jaarod's death in a warehouse fire. Jaan was determined to follow his dream into space, to justify the faith the Cargomaster placed in him, and as a memorial to the long hours of work his father had put into securing Jaan's education.

Jaan had scarcely been aboard the *Alisa*, but he already loved the ship, a relatively small freighter in this big, busy port. Massing less than 20,000 metric tons, the venerable *Argon* class ship had hauled ore out of Wall for a number of years, returning with foodstuffs and occasional cargoes of mining tools or radioactives to power the drives of the system-defense boats manufactured here. Her skipper, Linn Yland, was a grand lady known well at the port for being both a tough bargainer and a fair employer.

It was a busy first day, as the *Alisa's* cargo of raw titanite ore was destined for transfer to a long-range vessel they would soon meet on Freeloader. Captain Yland and Cargomaster Kinnda had wrangled quite a deal, all negotiated by subspace radio messages. The long-range freighter *Oregon Trail* would make port in Freeloader just long enough to offload a shipment of dilithium. If Captain Yland could deliver the titanite ore just purchased in time for transfer to the other vessel before it left Freeloader, a tidy profit could be made. The *Oregon Trail* had a buyer for just such a load on Epliey, but couldn't spare the time to divert to Wall for the load, and so offered to split the profits with Captain Yland if the delivery could be made on time.

It had sounded easy when the deal was negotiated, but the problems were beginning to stack up against them. Loading the ore should have been easy. Jaan was well-acquainted with the abilities of both the men and the machines of the loading facility where his father had worked for so long. But according to the Chief Cargohandler, automatic loaders that would carry the new Series L bulk cargo carriers were just a fraction too large to enter the *Alisa's* main cargo hatch! Thus, the older Series F carriers had to be pushed around by hand, using clamp-on A-Grav units. The process was intolerably slow compared to the semi-automated loaders.

"We'll be at this all week at this rate," sighed Bob Taplin, a cargohandler who had worked with Jaan's father and had stopped to say hello. "These new machines are great for the newer ships, but they aren't as flexible as the older loaders. We used to just fly along with Series F carriers. I'm sorry about this. Your Mr. Kinnda paid well, but we just don't have the equipment."

Jaan nodded as he checked his electronic clipboard, calling up the current estimates of loading time. It didn't look good, and he'd overheard the Cargomaster say the delay might just cause them to miss the rendezvous on Freeloader. "Can't you use the old loaders anymore?"

Taplin shook his head. "Those were sold off not too long after your father died. Didn't think they'd be needed, but then we haven't had to load up such a large ore shipment in such a small ship since then. This way will work, but the time factor's the problem."

"What happened to the old loaders," asked Jaan.

"Some little warehouse bought most of them." Taplin caught on to Jaan's idea. "Say, do you think we could rent a few back?"

Jaan smiled. "Worth checking out, I suppose! I'll see if Mr. Kinnda can give me an hour off and we'll track them down!"

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Cargomaster Kinnda's dark eyes sparkled as the old but functional loaders were brought into place. The gruff, gravel-voiced trader was almost smiling! "Where did you ever find those antiques, Holona? They look ready for the robot rest home!"

Jaan grinned. "Well, it took some finagling, sir. The warehouse they'd been sold to hadn't been able to use them after all. Their clients all changed over to the new carriers just after the mines here did!"

Kinnda nodded. "So you offered to rent them?"

"No, sir," said Jaan. "They didn't really have any use for them, but they didn't want to admit they'd made such a mistake. Bad for business. So I played dumb and asked where they had purchased their Series F loaders. The manager admitted he might know where some could be found, if the price was right. "We dickered —"

The cargomaster interrupted Jaan, a horrified look on his face. "You didn't think I was going to *buy* these relics, did you, Holona?"

"Oh, *no*, sir! I let him think I was an offplanet native connected with a cargohandling firm that might be in a buying mood, though. I never said that. He just assumed it because I asked about getting them down to the spaceport. He must have thought I was pretty stupid. But I insisted on trying out a few of the machines to see if they were in working condition and he didn't raise too much of a fuss. This is our trial run," he said, pointing to the machines now loading the ore. "After the loading, we'll leave them here. I promised him an answer on Monday about buying the lot."

"But on Monday, we'll be on our way to Freeloader —" Kinnda stopped as Jaan gave him a reasonable attempt at an innocent expression. Finally, he nodded slowly. "My boy," said the cargomaster, "we may make a trader out of you yet!"

UP SHIP!

Belowdecks, Jaan fidgeted in his bunkroom, awaiting the warning klaxon that would sound just before the *Alisa* lifted from the ground and made the leap into space. Somehow, it wasn't as he pictured it. It seemed every crewmember aboard had a job to do, but as the newest crewman, he had not yet been assigned a lift station. Still mostly untrained in the ways of merchant ships, he had retired to his bunkroom, fearing he would be in the way elsewhere.

"Holona!" Jaan was momentarily startled as Assistant Cargomaster Olvar Tarrelsen appeared in the open doorway. He handed Jaan a small computer clipboard. "The Boss says get this up to the bridge on the double!"

Jaan glanced at the clipboard. The screen was blank. In fact, there was no data cassette installed in it at all. "What's this?" he asked, though in fact he was glad for any excuse to visit the bridge just before lift.

Tarrelsen grinned. Despite his position, he was only ten years older than Jaan, and remembered what it was like to be making his first trip. "Nothing! But I suggested to The Boss that a valuable man like yourself shouldn't be sitting in his bunkroom during his first lift!"

Jaan returned the smile as he rushed out the door and down the corridor. "Thanks! I owe you one!"

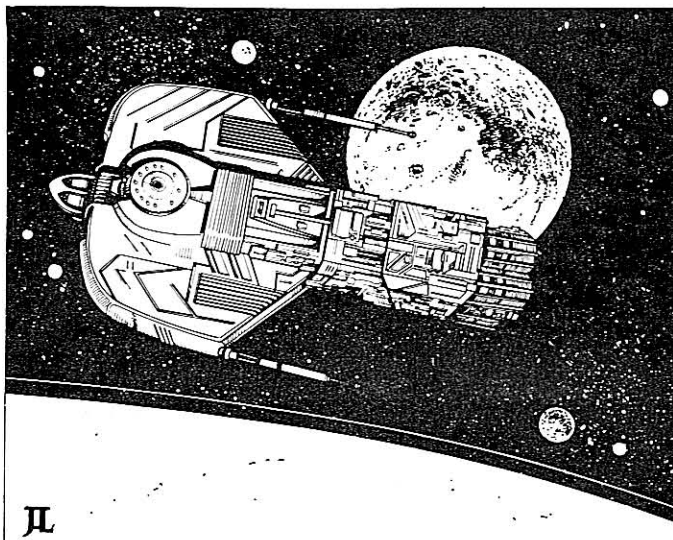
"I'll remember that," Tarrelsen returned as Jaan rounded the corner on the way to the lift. "Welcome aboard!"

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The bridge of the *Alisa* was small compared to that of a big starship or even a major freighter, but to Jaan it was the busiest, most wonderful place he'd ever seen. The Chief Pilot, a dour Tellarite named Hhervv, growled in his guttural native tongue as he made final checks of his instruments. Assistant Engineer Lovak, a native of the planet Ja-eq, towered over his console. The low gravity of his native world had done its work. His ancestors had been normal Earth Humans, but Lovak and those of his generation were all 2.5 meters tall or more.

Communications Officer Lockridge waved Jaan over and took the blank clipboard. "Stand over there and don't say anything. If anyone asks, you're waiting for me to sign a memo." Obviously, Lockridge was in on the conspiracy to put Jaan on the bridge. Jaan stood where he was told, and kept quiet.

In the center seat, the Holy Place where only the Skipper herself ever resided, Captain Yland waited impatiently for final lift clearance. "You'd think just *once* we'd get out of here on time. Today of all days!"



"Port Control says there's still a system-defense boat in our sky, Cap'n," reported Lockridge. "Another minute or two at most."

The skipper leaned on the arm of her command chair and fumed. "Probably some orbit jockey taking a shortcut home for lunch," she muttered. Her bright red hair framed a face now set in somewhat grim lines. "Tell them to get on with it."

"Control, this is merchant vessel *Alisa*," Lockridge sent, with more diplomacy than orders had truly indicated, "Please advise on final lift clearance."

There was a short pause, then the controller's voice answered. "Clear sky, *Alisa*! Lift at your own discretion."

The skipper wasted no time. "Engineering?"

"All green, Skipper!"

"Very well! Mr. Hhervv, up ship!"

The Tellarite pilot nodded curtly. "Raising ship, Captain." A control was pushed forward, another moved two notches to the right. Jaan felt a subtle change in the humming that was always part of the ship's environment whenever the matter-antimatter drives were in operation. The *Alisa* was off the ground.

"View forward," said Captain Yland, and the comm officer snapped on the main viewer, revealing the port's heavy block buildings beyond billows of dust raised by the ship's landing thrusters. As the buildings disappeared below viewer level, the Captain called for a downward viewer angle. The screen then showed the port dwindling below the rapidly rising vessel.

"Leaving starport control area," reported comm officer Lockridge. "Approaching orbital velocity." Jaan was amazed. The old ship's inertial compensator worked so well that there was little feel of acceleration.

The captain, however, was still a bit impatient. "Call orbital control and ask for permission to bypass orbital holding. Mr. Hhervv, plot us a direct insertion into an outsystem course, just in case."

The sour-tempered Tellarite nodded. "Already plotted, Captain."

Meanwhile, Lockridge had been conversing with orbital control. "Cleared for direct outsystem course," he reported.

"At last," said the skipper, "Good news! Bypass orbital holding, Mr. Hhervv, and take us out of the orbital plane of the system at full impulse power!"

"Aye, aye," Mr. Hhervv acknowledged. "Estimated outsystem time, 3 hours and 45 minutes standard." That was a short outsystem time, indeed, which Hhervv had made possible by leaving the system at a 90-degree angle to the plane in which the

system's planet's rotated. Once out of the star system's gravity well, the warp drive could be safely engaged for the trip to Freeloader.

As the planet Wall began to shrink on the screen, Jaan couldn't take his eyes off his home planet. His only family gone, he had no strong ties left to hold him, but he still knew he would miss his companions at the spaceport. The *Alisa* called at Wall on infrequent occasions, and it might be a long time before he saw home.

"And what are *you* doing on the bridge?" It was a moment before Jaan realized the skipper was talking to *him*! He stammered, realizing he'd forgotten the white lie he was supposed to tell to explain his presence. But before he or Lockridge could respond, the skipper waved aside any reply. "Never mind," she said quickly. "Get over there and help Mr. Hhervv plot the intersystem course!"

Jaan had absolutely no idea how to plot any sort of course at all, but he hadn't the courage to contradict the skipper! He meekly walked over to the piloting console, where the gruff Tellarite sat behind in the right seat. "Uh, sir...", Jaan began, "I don't know how to—"

"Don't you think I know that?" the pilot interrupted with a snort. "Sit down in the left seat and shut up." He snapped a few switches as Jaan sat down, and the left half of the board lit up as Jaan sat down. The double console where they sat was actually divided into helm and navigation stations. Most common controls, however, were duplicated on both panels, allowing one person to run both functions from either side, as Hhervv had during lift. "You know any vector mathematics?"

Jaan admitted he did. His father had seen to the boy's education, stressing mathematics as the key to all technical professions. He was familiar with calculus and some non-Euclidean geometry, thanks to a former spacer his father had engaged as a tutor.

"We'll see." The center navigational screen lit up, showing a parabolic course plot skimming through the Wall system. "I'll bet you can't read any of that, though," said Mr. Hhervv. Jaan could, however—just a little. Suddenly, he was getting his first elementary lesson in insystem navigation, with the Tellarite riding him and challenging him every centimeter of the way!

IN SPACE

Once out of the system, a course was set for Freeloader, with the *Alisa* quickly brought up to Warp 5 cruising speed. The trip to Freeloader would take only 42 days at that speed, as opposed to more than 80 days at Warp 4. The difference was between making and missing the deadline. Captain Yland, Engineer Janet MacReedy, and Chief Pilot Hhervv had argued that the extra strain of Warp 5 was dangerous, even for such an important trip. The ship had missed its last regular maintenance

check because of the rush to load cargo on Wall. The skipper had decided, reluctantly, to override MacReedy's insistence that the ship wasn't ready for more.

"I'd fain like to gie ye Warp 5 on a sustained basis, Skipper," the Engineer told the captain, "but not with the shape me wee engines are in at this time! Now, if we'd had time for that overhaul I asked for on Wall..."

"Very well, Engineer! I've heard all your complaints before! There simply wasn't time!" Jaan had learned early on that of all the people on the ship, only Janet MacReedy could manage to put Captain Yland on the defensive. Like most natives of New New Aberdeen, the Chief Engineer affected a Gaelic accent that slipped only when she was truly surprised or excited.

"Aye, and no money, either! Ye've pinned all our hopes on this run, and paid far more than ye should—"

"That's enough!" Jaan shrunk back into the doorway as the Skipper snapped at the Engineer. He'd accidentally entered the corridor and overheard this conversation, but it wouldn't do for him to be caught eavesdropping. The Captain would boot him halfway back to Wall for that!

Jaan was sure he was about to hear the riot act read to Chief Engineer MacReedy, and was completely surprised when the Skipper laughed liltily. "Jan, I'll never have to worry as long as I have you as my conscience! I'm headed down to the mess lounge for dinner. Join me?"

The Engineer smiled. "I'll do that, Linn, but only if you'll drop by your cabin first to pick up a wee dram of that Saurian brandy you've been hiding there!"

Now the Skipper was smiling, too. "You're on! And afterward, a quick game of chess?"

"And afterward," emphasized the Engineer, "I've got to do a wee bit of tweaking on those engines — if ye still expect Warp 5 out of this poor dear vessel!"

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Jaan sat at a small desk in the Common Room of the *Alisa* and sighed. A stack of data cartridges was teetering precariously in front of him as he hunched over the desk's computer terminal trying to make sense of an army of numbers marching across the glowing screen like the Klingon hordes. He punched number after number, rearranging the figures and cursing under his breath, never noticing Cargomaster Fev Kinnda coming up behind him as he worked. After yet another calculation came up wrong, he thumped the screen with his hand. "*Combavdam, ama s'igarda vo klivam!*"

"Well, *that's* one I've never heard before," the Cargomaster said, as Jaan jumped from his chair in surprise. "Take it easy," Mr. Kinnda continued, glancing at the screen. "I've heard every kind of snarling curse in the Galaxy, but that's a new one! Vulcan?"



"Uh, no sir," Jaan said with an embarrassed tone. "It's Romulan. Some of the traders around the port speak some of it. I said this terminal is as trustworthy as a Klingon."

"It's not the terminal. It's your figures," the cargomaster explained. "What are you trying to do, exactly?"

Jaan sat down, cleared the screen, and brought up several columns of data. "I was trying to figure the costs for this run, sir. All the data is in the log records, and I thought I'd learn something about trading by examining costs vs. profits, but none of this makes sense."

The cargomaster nodded. "That's because you're trying to digest it all in one lump." He leaned over, cleared the screen again, and called up the financial log data. "Let me show you how it's done..."

"Look here — our monthly loan payment on this tub is 255,000 Credits. The UFP/ITA estimates upkeep costs for a commercial star vessel are about 3 Credits per ton per month. The *Alisa* displaces about 15,000 tons, so that's 90,000 Credits in a standard month of 30 days. With me so far?"

"O.K.," Jaan admitted. "I can see that part, but these excessive speed costs..."

"Those aren't much harder to figure," Kinnda assured Jaan. "We estimate that certain ranges of speed cause more wear and tear on ship systems, requiring additional maintenance. Up to Warp 3 is no problem, but for speeds of Warp 4 through 6 you figure to increase the monthly upkeep about 10 percent. If we were faster — and for this trip I wish we were — we'd have to figure on it costing even more. For Warp 7 to Warp 9 speeds, the ITA figures a 25 percent increase in monthly upkeep, and for Warp 10 and above, a 40 percent boost.

"But we'll figure 10 percent," Kinnda continued, "because we're making the run at Warp 5. That's 10 percent of 90,000 Credits per month, or 9000 Credits additional. Total estimated upkeep, 99,000 Credits per month, which includes ship maintenance, ship consumables, and things like food, water and air.

"Now crew salaries for eighteen — sorry, kid, I mean nineteen people..." Kinnda nodded at Jaan, the new nineteenth crew member. "...is also figured monthly. Rather than pull up the actual figures, which are confidential and which you aren't

cleared by the Captain to see, I'll figure it on an average monthly salary of 300 Credits."

Jaan nodded again. That was a lot more than he was making, but he was starting at the bottom of the pay scales! "That comes to 5700 Credits," he said, helpfully.

"Right," agreed the cargomaster. "More than most of these apes are worth, myself and the Skipper excepted, of course! Anyway, add the monthly ship payment, the upkeep, the excessive speed costs, and the crew wages and you get 359,700 Credits, the estimated cost of running this ship for a month. Now, if this weren't just an exercise, you'd have to consider several other factors. Insurance, for example. When shipping for hire, the shipper normally carries the insurance, but on speculative cargo, if we want the protection we pay for it ourselves. Normally, we'd carry 10 MegaCredits of coverage on cargo with a ship this size, with a premium of about 2 MCr a year."

"Two million Credits!" Jaan was astounded.

"It's just numbers, Jaan. Never let big numbers scare you. That premium's based on 2 percent of the total amount of coverage. In a safer area than the Triangle, we might only pay about 1 percent. In monthly installments, that would be over 166,000 Credits additional cost per month, or more than 5500 Credits a day. That's why many ships — like this one — carry their own risk and don't purchase insurance. For these calculations, we won't worry about insurance."

Jaan whistled under his breath. Even without the cost of insuring the cargo, how could anyone *ever* afford to ship anything across interstellar distances at that price?

"Sounds like a lot, doesn't it, boy? It isn't though — not when you look at it properly. It'll take us about 42 days to make this trip, and I'll add 8 days for onloading and offloading just to be sure. That's 50 days total that the ship will be occupied with this cargo."

"But it only took two days to onload at Wall," Jaan interrupted.

"Boy, you *always* estimate high! You have to allow a finagle factor for unexpected problems." Jaan remembered the near-disaster with the loading at Wall and nodded meekly. "We divide the monthly cost by 30 to get a daily figure of 11,990 Credits," Kinnda continued. "Multiplied by 50, that's 599,500 Credits. Let's





say 600,000 just to make it even — if that's all right with you, Mr. Truthful!" Jaan blushed at the remark, but decided to ignore it. *

The cargomaster ran Jaan through the calculation process until he was sure the young would-be trader understood it. "Now, do you know how that relates to profits, or to hauling fees when shipping something for someone else?"

Jaan thought about it. "Well, " he said after a bit, "I suppose you have to be sure the profit from the sale of the cargo is greater than the cost of the trip."

"That's a pretty simple way of looking at it, but that's essentially correct for speculative cargoes like this one," Kinnda agreed. "In the case of this run, the *Oregon Trail* will be sharing the profits from the ore when it's sold at its final destination, and our cut will be far more than enough to make the trip worthwhile. But suppose we were being hired to ship the ore instead of taking a share of the profit. How would you figure that?"

"That's easy. Just charge a comfortable amount above what it costs to ship!"

"O.K.," said the cargomaster, "that's easy when you have a full cargo hold and are shipping only one cargo. If shipping more than one, however, you have to be able to quote a cost per cargo unit. We figure cargoes in Standard Cargo Units. This ship carries about 7200 SCUs of cargo, so divide the total cost by 7200 and you get 83.33 Credits per SCU of cost. Let's call it 85 Credits just to give us some extra margin.

"That's just cost, you understand! That's not allowing for any profit, nor for times when your cargo hold won't be full during a run. A part-empty hold costs money, so it's best to take a full load whenever you can. It costs no more to ship a full hold than one that's empty! Anyway, the amount you tack on to figure a shipping fee varies according to how much you need to allow for unforeseen problems. On really safe runs, like between Terra and Alpha Centauri II, it might be as little as 5 percent. Out here in the Triangle, however, most traders figure around 25 percent."

"Let me see if I've got this," Jaan said, taking back the keyboard. "Twenty-five percent profit on an 85 Credit shipping cost per SCU gives a standard fee of 106.25 Credits per SCU for the Wall to Freeloader run! I guess you'd round that up to 107 Credits, right?"

Kinnda chuckled. "I'd round it up to 110 Credits per SCU myself, Jaan! But you're learning!"

"Mr. Kinnda? What if we carried passengers instead of cargo? How would you figure the costs then?"

Kinnda smirked. "Geese — that's passengers — are just another kind of cargo. If we had staterooms instead of a cargo hold, they'd take up about 25 to 30 SCUs of cargo capacity each,

counting the extra service facilities passengers need. Let's see, a conversion to passenger facilities would give us about 225 staterooms, if we figure in leaving some cargo space for luggage and creating more crew staterooms for stewards and such." Kinnda's fingers flew across the keyboard. Divide the costs you've already figured by 225, and add on 20 or so Credits each for first-class meals. Second-class passengers would be doubling up in those staterooms, so they cost a bit more than half as much to transport. No geese on this ship, though. The Skipper hates crowds!"

"There's a lot more to it than I realized," said Jaan thoughtfully.

"Don't kid yourself, boy," Mr. Kinnda replied. "There's a lot more to it than what I've just given you! But if you haul cargo about this galaxy for as long as I have, you might learn enough about it to keep you in pocket money. What possessed you to tackle such a subject on your own time, anyway?"

Jaan shrugged. "Not much else to do on these long voyages, is there?"

"No, Jaan, there's not. Oh, we all do busy work, and help out the engineers with minor maintenance, but I spend most of these trips doing just what you've been doing, planning how to squeeze a Credit at our next port. That's how a trader lives — Credit to Credit and day to day."

HANDING OUT THE SQUEEZE

By the time the *Alisa* reached Freeloader, Jaan had picked up enough of the ship's procedures that he needed no help to wrangle an assignment on the bridge during planetary approach. Officially, he was there to assist the cargomaster by delivering details of the cargo manifest to the Captain when she talked to the master of the *Oregon Trail*. In reality, the skipper and everyone else on board knew all there was to know about the cargo of ore anyway, so all Jaan had to do was stand there with an electronic clipboard and look alert.

When the *Alisa* broke warp and entered the Freeloader system, Comm Officer Lockridge used a prearranged coded subspace channel to call the *Oregon Trail*. The big transport should have been in port earlier that day, if she was on schedule, but there was no response on coded channels, or on clear. A discreet inquiry to the Freeloader portmaster's office revealed that the *Oregon Trail* had suffered minor maintenance problems of her own and would not be in port for three days.

The skipper sighed. "Jan MacReedy'll fuss like an Andorian chittermouse when she finds out we could have spent an extra day on Wall after all! Well, maybe shore leave will get me off the hook."

The young comm officer turned, the light in his eyes dancing. "Did you say shore leave, skipper? I thought we were meeting *Oregon Trail* in orbit to avoid fussing with the cargo on the ground?"

"That was the plan, Mr. Lockridge," the skipper replied, "but if you think I'm going to spend three days aboard this tub when I could be dancing my feet off in some Freeloader hot spot, you are sadly mistaken! After your last escapade in port, I'm tempted to leave *you* tied to the warp nacelle for safekeeping, but I am going dancing!"

"Aw, skipper," Lockridge said sheepishly. "I didn't know those two redheads were the portmaster's daughters! Show some charity!"

Captain Linn Yland stared with mock harshness at her eager young officer. "Very well, Mr. Lockridge — if you will show some restraint! Get us clearance to land at the port directly, if you can."

"Fat chance," muttered Lockridge as he turned back to the panel and hailed Freeloader Ground Control.

Jaan soon discovered what the Communications Officer had meant. Direct landing clearance was denied by Ground Control, and the *Alisa* was instructed to enter a holding orbit and await an orbital inspection party. When he asked Lockridge about the orders, Lockridge told him to "sit tight while the locals dip their fingers in the Captain's pockets".

A small shuttle soon came alongside, dispatched by an orbital inspection facility, and two Orion inspectors were beamed aboard. The skipper and her top officers met them in a lounge near the cargo deck access port, with Jaan brought along to "help watch the skipper's blood pressure", as Lockridge put it.

"Gentlebeings," the skipper said in her best gracious-hostess tones, "Welcome aboard our vessel! We can help you better if we know just what you are looking for!"

The taller of the two Orions spoke in a sarcastic, oily, voice. "Oh, you never can tell what you'll find aboard these old relics." His short, pudgy companion simply smirked. "Depends on your willingness to cooperate, I suppose. It might not take long, or you might be stuck here in quarantine for awhile."

The skipper kept her smile, barely, but the temperature of her voice dropped to absolute zero. "I see. Very well, then. Suppose we have a cup of tea and talk it over. Mr. Lockridge, I believe you have other duties to perform. Mr. Holona, please fetch these two — gentlebeings — whatever refreshments they desire. Herbal tea for me, please." Jaan punched up the orders on a food delivery unit, noticing Lockridge wink at him as he left in a big hurry. He wasn't sure just what was going on. Neither man seemed at all interested in any inspection, and it was obvious even to a greenhorn like Jaan that they were shaking down the skipper for a bribe. It was common practice in Orion ports. But why was the skipper stalling?

Jaan had the answers in a very few minutes when Lockridge returned and handed the skipper a strip of computer printout. When the skipper smiled, Jaan knew the tables had somehow been turned on the two crooked officials.

"Well, gentlebeings," Captain Yland said sweetly, "It's been very nice, but now that the inspection is over, I suppose you'll want to be getting back."

"Over?" The tall Orion was quite surprised. "Madam, we've not yet begun!"

"Oh, I think you are mistaken," the skipper replied, handing the Orion the printout. "Your boss, Lieutenant Inspector Ovrull, seems to be quite satisfied that the inspection is completed. That's his approval notification right there. You two can read, can't you?"

The pudgy one sputtered something unintelligible in Orion trade talk, but the tall one hushed him when he read the printout. His eyes were cold and angry, but he became quiet and very polite almost instantly. "Yes, we'll just be running along, then. Thank you for your courtesy, Captain."

"Not at all," the Captain replied with a charming nod. "Mr. Lockridge, will you and Mr. Holona show these gentlemen to the transporter room and see them on their way? Right now."

Lockridge couldn't resist a smile as they left. "Party's over, gents. Your boss is putting you back on a short leash."

After the two sulking Orions were beamed away, Jaan stopped Lockridge before he could return to the bridge. "What happened, Mr. Lockridge? I know you called somebody, but who?"

Lockridge grinned. "When the skipper sent me off on other duties, that was my cue to call some friends of hers dirtside. A little money changed hands between the skipper's accounts and the Lieutenant Inspector, and he called off the dogs. You always have to pay, but sometimes you have a choice of *who* you pay."

Jaan thought he understood. "I get it. It cost her less to pay off the senior official, right?"

"Oh, no," Lockridge replied. "Getting the attention of the higher-ups costs credits. It cost her somewhat more than she'd have had to give those two losers to get them to give us a favorable inspection."

Now Jaan was really confused. "More? But why —"

"You have to understand traders, Jaan," Lockridge replied with a friendly pat on the shoulder. "The skipper's an old hand at paying bribes, but she just can't abide a crook who's not polite about it!" With that, he was off toward the bridge once more.

FIRST PAYCHECK

Once the *Alisa* hit dirt, Cargomaster Kinnda had plenty of work for Jaan. The young trader had thought he'd get early shore leave, and he was anxious to prowl the famous streets of Freeloader. But Mr. Kinnda had other ideas!

"This is our busiest time, Holona! You check in with Mr. Lockridge before he leaves the ship, give him my compliments and be sure he ties in my desk computer with the portside datanet before he goes. Then get back down here and we'll start rigging the cargo for transfer and handling all the paperwork."

"Paperwork, Mr. Kinnda? What sort of paperwork?" asked Jaan.



"Not as much as there would be some other places, fortunately," replied Kinnda. "Freeloder's a tradeworld with a sort of loose reputation. There're no taxes to pay here, nor tariffs on any sort of goods. On Wall, we'd have to pay UFP taxes, plus on some cargoes we'd have to pay an import tariff. You know what those are?"

"Yes, sir," Jaan said. "It's something a planetary government charges for certain imports to protect local producers against unfair competition from outsystem sources of supply."

"That's the dirtside view of it, I suppose," Kinnda said with a mild growl. "To a trader, a tariff is an extra charge the government sticks on to keep a trader from making an honest living! Anyway, we don't have that nonsense here, and we don't have to pay to store the cargo since it's not going to be offloaded until the *Oregon Trail* gets here. We may have to pay cargo handlers to move it then, at up to 15 Credits per 1000 SCUs. The skipper may decide instead to take the *Alisa* back up and transfer it in orbit as originally planned. It's up to us to figure both ways and decide which is cheaper and easier. We also need to pay the berthing fees for the ship, not to mention locating another cargo to haul out of here to our next port of call!"

The cargomaster easily read Jaan's look of dismay as he started up to the bridge to find Lockridge. "Don't worry, Holona," Kinnda added. "The spaceport will still be there when we get done. You'll hit dirt tomorrow at the latest!"

Mr. Kinnda's reassurances cheered up Jaan enormously, and he felt even better after finding the young Communications Officer. Lockridge assured Jaan that he'd return to the ship the next day and take him dirtside. "A trader should have a guide on his first excursion on Freeloder, and I'm just the expert you need to show you the ropes! Make sure to collect your pay from Mr. Kinnda before we go! You'll need every credit!"

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"Here's your pay voucher, Holona!" The cargomaster handed Jaan a short printout. "It's all been transferred to your account and registered on your card. Don't spend it all in the first place you hit!"

Jaan was still tired. He'd put in a long night helping the ship's cargohandlers get the ore ready for transfer in orbit, the skipper having decided to forego unloading on the ground. Before that, he spent most of the afternoon fetching coffee and sandwiches for the Cargomaster and his assistant as they went over the spaceport procedures and balanced the ship's accounts. Despite only a few hours of sleep, Jaan was anxious to hit dirt on Freeloder as soon as Mr. Lockridge returned for him. He glanced over his pay voucher, then stopped and examined it closely. He noticed that his UFP/ITA dues had been automatically deducted, as he'd expected. But the amount was larger than he'd expected.

"Sir, excuse me," he said to Mr. Kinnda as the Cargomaster shut down his computer terminal in preparation for leaving the ship. "This credits me with a share on the cargo? I'm just a hired crewman, not a shareholder. I don't rate that."

Kinnda nodded. "You do now. The skipper makes it a practice to cut in every new crewman for a little piece of the pie once she's decided how he's going to work out. Looks like the Captain's made up her mind about you. It's only a few tenths of a percent, but if you stay with us, it'll grow. That's the Captain's way. She says a person works harder when they have a stake in the ship's success."

Jaan was pleased beyond expression. "But...but that means I'm part owner of the *Alisa*?"

"A very, very small part, just like every other permanent member of the crew! If you choose, part of your salary can be reinvested in the ship for you, and your part ownership will grow. Among us, the Captain, First Officer Krause, Chief Engineer MacReedy, and I hold over half the shares. The rest is divided among the crew, all of whom have invested in her. You hold the smallest piece, so don't go giving orders yet, Mr. Holona!"

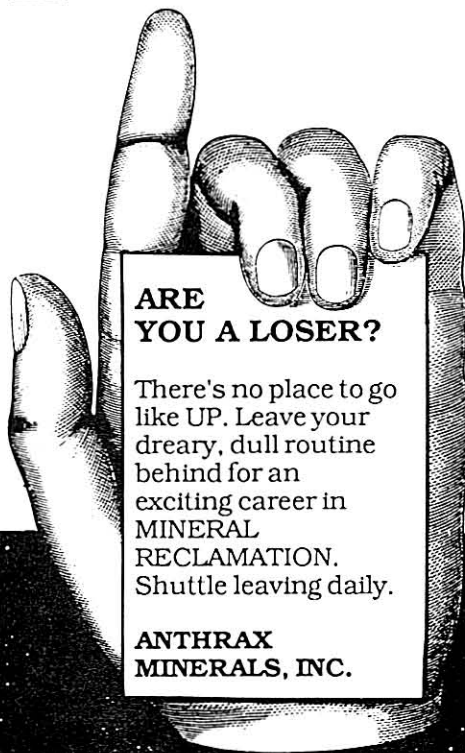
"But that's wonderful! I never figured on anything better than just being hired on!"

"That's not the Captain's way," Kinnda said. "If you work hard, maybe you can pass your tests to get into a real apprenticeship. If so, the skipper will keep you on here and you can train aboard the *Alisa* if you want. The *Alisa* isn't the biggest or most important ship in space, but we take care of our own. And now you are one of us."

The Cargomaster held out one beefy hand and shook Jaan's heartily. "Welcome, brother trader!"



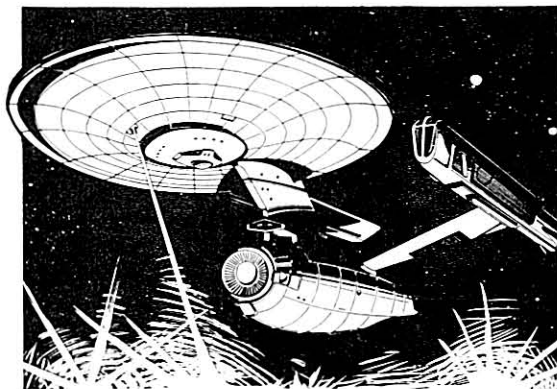
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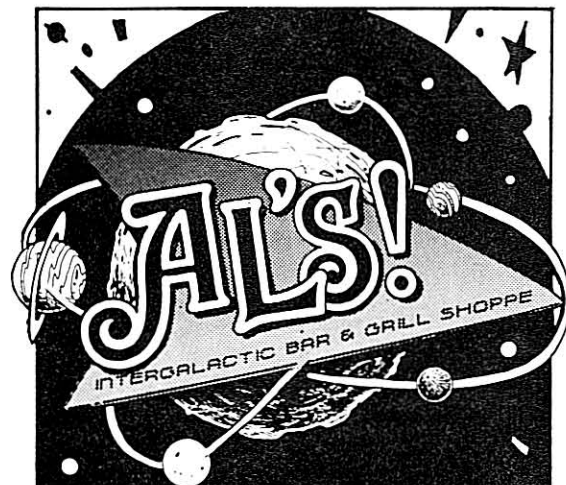


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THE LAW AND THE PROFITS

This pair of articles is another in one of the most popular series ever run by this holozine, judging from reader response. The topics are bribes and squeeze, piracy and hijacking, and smuggling and trade restrictions. Once again, the voice of Leonard Lawrence Llewellyn, retired Senior Counsel to the UFP/ITA Legal Affairs Department, speaks out on points of law that affect traders. Responding is Captain "Rigel" Rita Martinez, author of the popular handbook, *The Martinez Method*, whose pithy comments balance the conservative viewpoint expressed by "Law" Llewellyn. The reader is left to choose his own path.

THE TRADER AND THE LAW

By Leonard Lawrence Llewellyn

From time to time, the honest trader will be faced with those who participate in extra-legal activities. Though local laws differ greatly, even in the Federation, certain illegal acts are universal, and the honest trader must beware of situations that might lead to being a victim of such criminals, or even worse, being caught up in such activity.

Across the Federation and in most allied ports of call, there are strict laws against such activities as bribery, piracy, hijacking, and smuggling. This article will discuss the nature of such activities, methods to avoid being victimized by criminals, and penalties assessed for such activities.

SQUEEZE

When there is a conflict between the duty of a planetary official and the interests of an individual trader, the honest trader will resolve them through the established channels of arbitration and appeal. The dishonest trader, however, will often try to resolve such problems with a bribe.

Minor bribes, called squeeze or grease by those traders who engage in such practices, are not given to cover up illegal activity. Instead, they are offered to minor officials and functionaries such as ship inspectors, cargohandlers, and maintenance workers to assure that such persons will do their assigned tasks promptly and efficiently. This low practice assumes that the way to assure cooperation is by paying the people one may encounter simply to do their jobs properly. It is utter nonsense.

In a well-run bureaucracy, civil servants will perform their duties efficiently without the additional incentive of bribes.

In a well-run bureaucracy, civil servants will perform their duties efficiently without the additional incentive of bribes. Where this does not work, the trader may look to flaws in the structure of checks and balances in government, not to himself, for the problem. A trader paying squeeze is akin to a shopkeeper paying protection to avoid having a gang of hooligans break his windows.

There are few enforceable penalties against the trader who offers squeeze, as long as illegal acts are not involved. The official who asks for squeeze payments, however, is in a totally different legal situation. Any trader who is asked for squeeze should make a full report to the local UFP/ITA office and to planetary officials. Filling out complaint forms, arranging for charges to be pressed, gathering evidence, and testifying against an official who accepts squeeze will take time, to be sure, but the next trader may not have to contend with the problem. In the long run, is one trader's time more important than the correction of a problem brought about when someone does his clear duty?

(Continued on page 71)

THE TRADER'S LAW

By Captain Rita Martinez

After twenty years of acquaintance, "Law" Llewellyn is well aware that he and I have differences on certain matters regarding trade operations. In the paragraphs that follow, I will pull no punches in giving advice based on my 22 years as an active trader in The Triangle and the Organian Treaty Zone.

SQUEEZE

It is essential that the trader operating along the frontier know the difference between out-and-out bribery and greasing the wheels of commerce. In frontier ports, particularly Orion ports or those not under the watchful eye of a large government, certain payments to minor officials are not only advisable, they are almost mandatory for an efficient trade operation. This isn't in keeping with the clean, righteous view of trading held by "Law" Llewellyn, but it's a fact of life.

"Pay the two credits"

It is true that refusing to cross a few palms here and there can be handled through channels, but this takes time, and time is the one commodity a trader cannot afford to waste. Time is money, quite literally, when dealing with time-critical cargoes and mounting costs for ship berthing and crew salaries.

When either a cargohandling crew or an inspector is simply trying to pick up a bit of extra money on the side, standing on your rights isn't worth your time. The ancient advice of the earliest traders still holds: "Pay the two credits." On the other hand, there are times to make an example of someone who is getting too greedy.

Make it your business to know what squeeze is expected on each world you visit by talking to other traders and making use of your sources. If you are asked for substantially more without a good reason, let the greedy so-and-so know in no uncertain terms that you are not a trader to be trifled with. Sometimes, it's cheaper to buy off the clod's boss or the local enforcers than it is to keep paying a greedy man more than he is due. Cultivate a reputation as a fair but wary trader and you will do well.

Orion ports are a special case. Too many hands are in your pocket, and too little can be done about it. In Orion ports, it is essential to know the difference between those you *must* pay and those who just want a slice of the pie. Generously pay the ones with real power to give you trouble, but insist that they keep the little scavengers off your back to get their money.

PIRACY

The only good pirate is a dead one, because he is the only pirate you can trust. If "Law" Llewellyn had ever been aboard a hijacked vessel found drifting in space, he'd know better than to advocate passive compliance with their demands. It is true that

(Continued on page 73)

THE TRADER AND THE LAW (Continued)

BRIBES

The true bribe is paid by a trader to avoid the enforcement of some law, or to induce some official into performing an illegal act, or at least ignoring one that the trader is performing. Such activities as smuggling contraband, forging papers to cover up piracy or hijacking, non-compliance with local health laws, etc., are often covered up by the payment of bribes to enforcement officials or bureaucrats.

The payment of such bribes is illegal and extremely dangerous, and penalties range from large fines to confiscation of a trader's ship or even long terms in rehabilitation colonies, for both those who offer bribes and those who accept them.

A trader who is offered a bribe to cover up illegality, or who is solicited for one by an official, should immediately report the offender to the local law enforcement officials and also to the nearest Federation trade office or UFP/ITA office.

PIRACY AND HIJACKING

These two illegal acts are closely related, the distinction between them being a small one. Strictly speaking, piracy refers to the theft of an entire vessel in space, whereas hijacking usually refers to theft of the cargo only, but the terms are popularly used almost interchangeably. Such practices have been severely suppressed by the actions of Star Fleet within the UFP, but ships traveling outside the Federation must be ever vigilant against such violent attacks by thieves and marauders.

Ships traveling outside the Federation must be ever vigilant against violent attacks by thieves and marauders.

Classic piracy or hijacking, performed through an attack from another vessel, is rare, due to the nature of warp travel. It is difficult to pursue, overtake, and engage a vessel in warp drive. Any ship capable of matching warp speeds with a trade vessel can join their warp envelopes, allowing them to maneuver in respect to each other at nearly any speed. But a ship that wishes to escape need only change warp speed to be out of the attacker's reach. It is no accident, then that most classic piracy is performed at sublight speeds when a trade vessel enters a planetary system. The use of high warp speeds while in a planetary system is too risky for most trade vessels, allowing pirates to engage them.



The classic hijacker will attempt to disable the victim's vessel so that the cargo can be taken while the ship is helpless. To do this, the victim's ability to maneuver and fight must be crushed. In such a hijacking, the attack is likely to be quite ruthless, since there is no desire to keep the ship itself spaceworthy. Only the cargo (and perhaps the passengers, if they can be ransomed) is valuable.

The pirate who wishes to take ship and all must perform a successful boarding action to gain the prize. This cannot be done while a victim is surrounded by combat-strength shielding, as shields tend to scramble transporter signals, and a pirate captain beaming a boarding party through a shield would not get much use out of his men thereafter. At least one shield generator must therefore be disabled, with a line-of-sight established between the pirate vessel and the unshielded side of the victim's ship. At this point, a boarding party may be beamed over to secure the prize.

stripped of cargo and abandoned, interception by pirate vessels to carry that cargo may come before the inside party makes its move, or only after they are summoned by the insiders.

Regardless of the preferences of individual captains, statistics show that the best procedure for dealing with a hijacking is *do not resist*. Hijackers and pirates are merciless and will often kill anyone who gets in the way. Comparisons between the numbers of ships whose captains and crews have behaved in this manner and those who have resisted, show this clearly. Give the pirates or hijackers what they want, and you are more likely to survive and continue your career as a trader. Observe all you can, and report to the local authorities and to Star Fleet as soon as you can.

Penalties for hijacking or piracy are quite severe in the UFP. Such actions are always handled by the UFP court system, not the local authorities, when the action takes place outside a planetary system or involves vessels originating outside the planet system where the incident took place. Sentencing to a rehabilitation colony is mandatory in such cases.

Outside the UFP, penalties are usually as strict or stricter. In the Klingon Empire, the penalty for piracy or hijacking of Imperial property is death, and there is no appeal. Gorn law is similar, and it is suspected that Romulan law is no less harsh. Andorian law once required the death penalty for piracy when lives were lost, but the UFP law now takes precedence. For such criminal actions within their own planetary system between Andorian vessels, however, the old penalties still apply, though there has been no such incident in over 75 years. The death penalty still is applied among more non-Federation governments for space piracy than for any other offense, including murder.

(Continued on page 72)

A more common form of in-space theft avoids these problems by putting a party of thieves aboard the target vessel from the beginning. Hijacking, or piracy from the inside, requires that passengers or temporary crew members in the employ of the pirates either capture the ship themselves with weapons they have smuggled aboard or secretly disable the ship's ability to defend itself by sabotaging weapons, shielding, subspace radio, or the like.

A hijacking performed in this manner may have outside support from pirate vessels that intercept the ship. If the inside party of criminals is strong enough, they might be able to take a ship alone, taking command and removing the ship to a hidden pirate base. If the ship is to be

THE TRADER AND THE LAW (Continued)

SMUGGLING

There are no local tariffs assessed on goods moved from one Federation planet to another, but local ports are free to make their own laws on what can and cannot be imported in certain locations. Also, protective tariffs are not prohibited in non-Federation ports, or when non-Federation goods are transported to Federation worlds. Of course, certain items such as heavy weapons, harmful drugs, or other illegal substances are prohibited for transport or sale across the UFP. Dishonest traders may attempt to avoid tariffs, trade restrictions, or prohibitions by smuggling items into port illegally.

The most common form of smuggling takes place when a trader transports and sells a legal cargo without presenting it to planetary customs for inspection or assessment of tariffs or taxes. The trader may be motivated by the simple chance to save a few credits by avoiding tariffs and taxes.

It is also possible that a trader may be concerned because the cargo is not properly documented, such as with a shipment of textiles, drugs, or foodstuffs that had not been properly inspected or

Sometimes items are smuggled concealed among legal cargo in false-bottom containers or scattered in with other goods. Other times, the ship itself has concealed bins or cargo carriers. Once the cargo is transported out of the starport, it is unlikely that the smuggler will be detected. The cargo can be sold on the black market or even the open market, if it is otherwise a legal cargo.

when being pursued by local officials on Baker's World, Hoot, or a Federation-controlled border world. They were then transported to places like Freeloader, there to disappear into the infamous back alleys of such crime-ridden ports. This smuggler's career came to a very bad end, however. One of his "passengers" attempted to hijack the ship in space, hoping to sell it to make a new start

Penalties for smuggling within the UFP vary according to the type of smuggling being done.

One ingenious Andorian trader operated for seven years carrying uninspected grain into Marsport by fitting a second hollow, non-functional warp nacelle to his one-nacelle ship. Arrangements were made with a maintenance firm to unfasten the nacelle (filled with grain) in orbit and replace it with another hollow one. The grain was then transported down to Marsport by the maintenance firm disguised in bottled gas containers. The trader collected the grain, paid off the maintenance workers, and sold the grain on the Black Market. Runs every three months continued until an alert traffic controller noticed that the trader's ship did not perform properly for a two-nacelle vessel. A surprise inspection of the ship revealed the hollow nacelle and ended the smuggler's career.

elsewhere in the Triangle. The resulting combat damaged the ship severely and resulted in the death of the captain and three of his crewmen, but not before the piracy attempt could be reported by subspace radio! While attempting to repair the ship and escape, the inexperienced criminal overloaded the ship's drive and it was utterly destroyed in the matter-antimatter explosion that followed.

Penalties for smuggling within the UFP vary according to the type of smuggling being done. If only local laws are violated (trade restrictions and locally prohibited items), the matter is handled by the local courts. If UFP taxes are evaded, however, the matter is one for UFP courts, and the penalties are usually fairly severe. Confiscation of the smuggled cargo and heavy fines (twice or even three times the cargo's value) are common for smuggling non-harmful items. Smuggling harmful items can bring confiscation of the ship and all cargo, plus terms in rehabilitation colonies. In some non-UFP locales, certain types of smuggling are punishable by death. For example, attempting to import the illegal drug known as Hercules to the planet Maze in the Affiliation of Outer Free Worlds brings a mandatory death sentence.

Smugglers are perhaps the most ingenious of criminals, having developed a thousand-and-one ways to accomplish their illegal concealment and transport of goods.

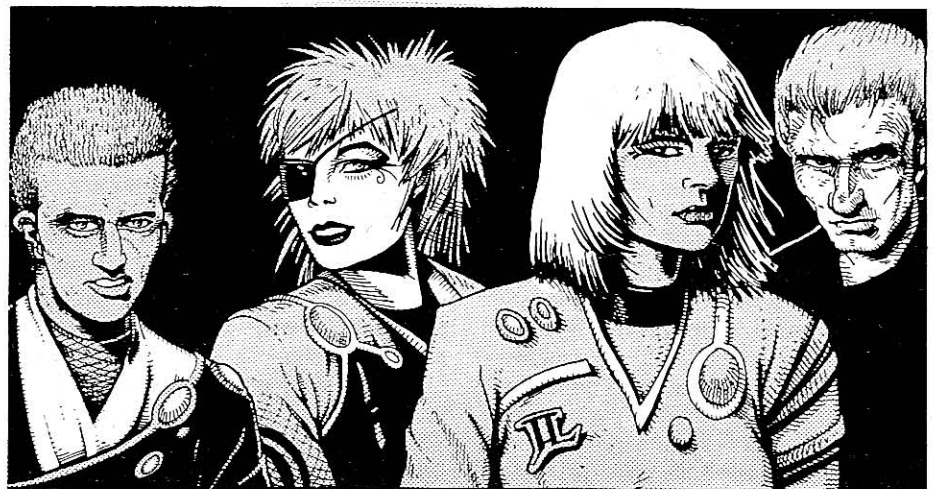
prepared. Many ports will not admit such shipments, fearing to import alien pests or diseases. A more sinister reason a shipment may lack proper documentation is if it has been stolen, either at its port of origin or as part of a piracy or hijacking effort. Either way, customs inspection must be avoided illegally to get the shipment into port to sell it.

Goods that are outright illegal must also be smuggled to get them into port. The motivation here is not as simple as avoiding an extra payment. If detected, the goods would be seized and the trader subject to severe penalties for trafficking in illegal substances.

Smugglers are perhaps the most ingenious of criminals, having developed a thousand-and-one ways to accomplish their illegal concealment and transport of goods. By far, the simplest method of smuggling is to bribe the responsible inspectors to miss seeing the illegal cargo. This is risky, however, especially for cargoes that are out-and-out prohibited.

Many forms of concealed compartment have been created by smugglers.

One Human trader made a nice living for many years smuggling a most unusual cargo indeed—criminals! Operating in the Triangle, this unique smuggler exchanged members of his own five-man crew for criminals who paid many of their ill-gotten credits to gain safe passage off planet



THE TRADER'S LAW (CONTINUED)

many organized pirates and hijackers believe it is best to leave their victims alive, to avoid the inevitable crackdown by the authorities when deaths result from piracy. But as a captain of a space vessel, you simply can't count on the pursuing pirate knowing the rules of the game!

If you can escape by any means, do it. If not, fight as long as you can make any reasonable amount of resistance. Any pirate will expect nothing less, and he has to be more careful in his attack than you do. He doesn't want you destroyed, since your ship and cargo are worth nothing as an expanding ball of incandescent gas. You, on the other hand, are under no such restrictions. Blow the scum out of space if you can!

An unarmed ship that cannot run, maneuver, or send for help must surrender, but that doesn't mean you have to submit meekly. Sooner or later, pirates or hijackers must board. Be ready. Watch for any opportunity to improve the odds in your favor. Maybe the pirate means to release you and your crew unharmed, but you *can't take that chance*. If the pirates make a mistake (and they all do, eventually) be ready to take advantage of it. Until then, be patient and be prepared.

SMUGGLING

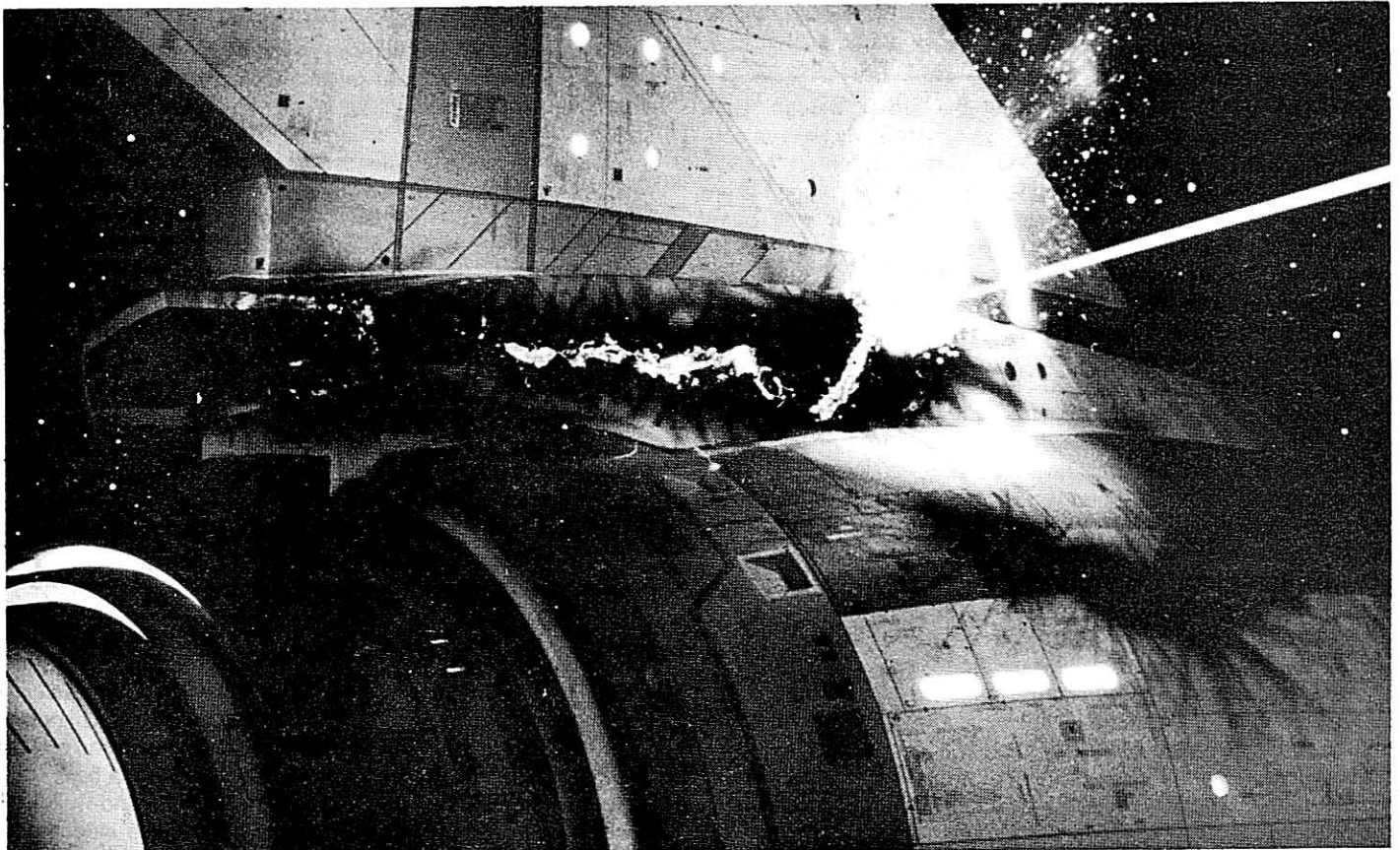
The line between smuggling and creative trade operations is a fine one. Certainly I do not advocate evasion of lawful taxes or tariffs, nor transport of harmful substances. But what a trader may consider moral and what a planetary government may consider legal can differ greatly. When was the last time *you* had a bottle of Romulan Ale, brother trader? I saw one in "Law" Llewellyn's desk drawer last week.

I think that's enough said on *that* subject!



THE REAL WORLD VS. THE IDEAL ONE

When it gets down to the facts, you have to deal with the reality of your individual situation when you are a trader captain. The trader captain that never pays squeeze may have a feeling of moral superiority, but he will pay a lot of penalty clauses for delays! The merchant vessel that submits meekly to pirates may end up with a live crew—or may never come home or be heard from again. The individual that never examines the options before declaring a cargo at customs will never make any trouble—or money. The skipper that doesn't back her crewmen against planetary police when they've raised the roof of one too many starport dives will have no bad marks on her record, but also have no crew. Deal with the reality first.



THE BLACK MARKET

The black market is a fact of life, much as many would like to abolish it. Wherever things are considered contraband, there will be those who contrive to sell those things to the people the law attempts to "protect". In the following pair of articles, we present the black market as seen from both sides of the fence.

Shadow Alley is written by "Roger Blacke", a self-confessed smuggler, pirate, and black marketeer. In turning state's evidence, "Blacke" gave information leading to Star Fleet's capture of the notorious Dark Wave pirate gang at their hidden base near Orion space. Written under a pseudonym, his best-selling account of his years in the underworld, *Confessions Of A Star Pirate*, is excerpted here, giving details of his pre-pirate days as a contact man for a black market ring.

The other side is ably presented by Jessup van der Heeurn, the articulate and charismatic First Assistant Prosecutor from the Federation Office of Justice, recently catapulted to galactic prominence because of his fiery courtroom oratory while prosecuting the Dark Wave Gang. His brief article gives an accurate summary of the statutes dealing with black marketeering and the penalties for those caught.

SHADOW ALLEY

By Roger Blacke

Kavaport is one of those towns that just grew around a relatively small spaceport on Tellarite colony world Galish IV. It isn't nearly as big as Galish Central Starfield on Beta Continent, but it was the place to be if what you had to sell or buy was something you didn't want to talk about. You see, it had Shadow Alley.

Lack of preplanning, plus the Tellarite tendency to build close to the ground, created a maze of back alleys and dark streets the local traders call Shadow Alley. It is said that a man could stand in the center of the widest street in the Alley at noon and still be in shadow. Thanks to the planet's eccentric orbit and the narrow lanes, that was pretty close to being true.

Dark doorways and quiet taverns were more my style.

I never went to the center of the street, though. Dark doorways and quiet taverns were more my style. My favorite contact spot was the Ggravvisht Tavern, named for an ancient Tellarite hero who supposedly defeated a huge dragon-lizard creature by eating his foe. I liked it because it was quiet, secluded, and, above all, safe. The bouncer was in my employ, and Faj Fajjistrab was big and mean enough to emulate the tavern's namesake and chew up anyone I decided I didn't like.

Some found it surprising that I was able to be so successful as a Human contact man on a predominantly Tellarite planet, but starports don't work that way. Aliens (which is what I was) are the rule rather than the exception in a trade port.

My success came mostly from the fact that I never, never, never did business with anyone who was not a known client or a referral from someone I knew well. Some contact men work more openly, and even the tenderfoot can find some sort of contact with black marketeers in any trade port, unless the greenhorn is unlucky enough to meet a fake who will kill and rob him instead. I was careful, and that is why I am alive and writing instead of dead and unknown.

Referrals mostly came from satisfied customers. I had many, as I made it a practice never to cheat a client whom I expected to have to see again. It wasn't a matter of ethics, but of survival: traders have long memories. The usual contact was made when some trader showed up at the bar with one of my cards. I left a card or two with everyone I did business with in those days. Officially, I was a financial consultant, despite the

(Continued on page 75, Column 1)

WHAT IS THE BLACK MARKET?

by Jessup van der Heeurn

The blackness of the black market comes only partly from its clandestine nature. The darkness also lies in the hearts of the people who truly run it.

It has been said that there is no trader alive who has not from time to time moved goods while avoiding the duty, or taken on a cargo that was less than purely legitimate. One wonders how many traders know how many of these shipments end up on the black market, and who profits most from their little indiscretions.

The planets and procedures differ, but the black market always exists, for those who are looking to pay a little less, buy without restrictions, or sell that which might be embarrassing in the light of day. Stolen goods are only a bit of what the black market deals in. Some of the goods start clean, but are dirtied when payment of duty or inspection for health is avoided. If you don't care where it came from, you can find it on the black market.

There are many, however, who *do* care where it comes from. Victims of piracy and hijacking, many of whom do not return from space, provide some of it. Much of it is diverted somewhere along the way when cargo is offloaded or sold. Much more comes as a result of planetside theft no more or less legal or moral than the starside variety.

What do people buy from the shady dealers that lurk in the starports? Some are only interested in cheap goods for export, good prices on luxury items, or a quick and easy way to buy new equipment for a trade vessel. But the money from these transactions goes to line the same pockets that provide untraceable weapons to the criminal, drugs to the addict, hardware to the star pirate, and information to the corporate spy.

What almost no one ever sees is the people who really profit. They don't live in back alleys.

In my 30 years in law, I have been involved in over 400 criminal prosecutions dealing with the black market trade. In every case where the chain of command could be traced to its origin, the black market was filling the coffers of organized crime. What the trader sees is a good deal on expensive merchandise or a way to avoid red tape and import duty. What almost no one ever sees is the people who really profit. They don't live in back alleys, or walk in the shadows. They live in fine homes, and walk in the sunlight—sunlight they stole from the honest, the innocent, the dead.

(Continued on page 75, Column 3)

SHADOW ALLEY (Continued)

fact that I couldn't (and can't) figure compound interest without an M-1 computer and a roomful of Vulcans.

The bartender at the tavern never sent anyone directly to me, even if they showed up with a card. Instead, the potential client was sent to a table to wait. It was always the same table, close enough where I could keep an eye on the client but far enough that I wouldn't be spotted watching.

I always dealt one-on-one. If a whole group showed up, I faded and had the word passed that I saw a client alone or not at all. If a contact was alone, he was served the "Special", a drink containing one of several knockout preparations kept for the occasion behind the bar. When the client was sleeping soundly, Faj and the bartender removed him to a back room, and I was waiting when he woke.

We did our best to convince the client that he was many kilometers away from the tavern, when the reality was that the room was less than ten meters from his table. If he carried a chronometer, it was reset to allow for anywhere from one to five hours travel time, and there was a small clock in the room that agreed with the time we set. We also went through the client's possessions, scanning with anti-bugging devices. We were honest crooks. We never stole anything we found.

Some clients resented the drugging, and these left after being put back to sleep in a less comfortable way by Faj. They regained consciousness hours later in some back alley. Others told what they were after, buying or selling, and were given a drop point and time to make contact later. I maintained several drop points, all covered well to make sure they stayed safe. I never went to see the goods if they were selling. It was their job to get them to the rendezvous. Any

traders who couldn't work the transport out for themselves were too clumsy to risk trusting.

Just as I employed Faj, I was in turn employed by the Waggajj Brothers. They weren't really brothers, and I'll lay odds they weren't really named Waggajj, either. They *were* the biggest of the big when it came to moving stolen goods in Kavaport. The Brothers paid the right local people and got rid of the ones who wouldn't take the money. It was their town, much more than it was the mayor's.

The Brothers dealt mostly in untaxed cargoes of untraceable goods like agricultural goods, and in mass-produced technological items whose ownership was in question, such as hand weapons, communications devices, and computer circuits. They also had contacts that allowed them to broker deals in ship's equipment at good prices—if you didn't care where the stuff came from. I didn't know at the time that the ship's equipment came from the victims of the Dark Wave, but my work for the Waggajj Brothers brought me into contact with that group at a later time.

When arrangements were made, the client went sleepy-bye again, this time at the spray end of a hypo. Some objected to that, too, and woke up in a back alley, minus any cash and valuables they carried. (I had to have something to pay me for wasting my time.) Those who went along never lost a credit. I know some phonies who robbed and disposed of people this way, but they didn't last long in the Brothers' territory. We took care of our own. Besides, killing attracted unwanted attention.

I was *never* involved in the second meeting. The Brothers didn't believe in letting a first contact man get too deep. They trusted my judgment based on that first interview. If I gave the go-ahead, other contacts made the rendezvous and the buy (or sale, as the case may be).

WHAT IS THE BLACK MARKET? (Continued)

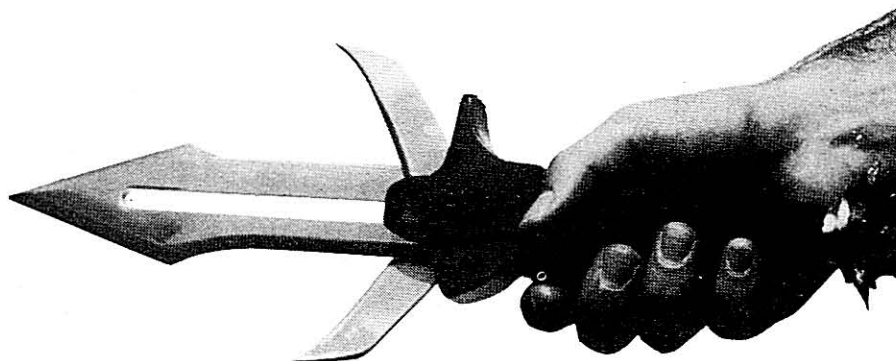
Black marketeering is a blot on the face of honest interstellar trade. Trade opened up the frontier and continues to promote understanding and exchange between alien cultures. The black market feeds on the greed that grows wherever prosperity goes, and gnaws like rats at the storehouses of honest citizens, traders, and merchants.

STATUTES AND PENALTIES

Within the UFP, black marketeering falls under the jurisdiction of Federation authorities if it can be shown that illegal, restricted, or stolen goods were transported through interstellar space for sale on the black market. The landmark case of *UFP vs. Jahhulm, Luggush, et al.* established that the critical point in deciding jurisdiction was not the intent of the interstellar shipper, but rather the final disposition of the items. Thus, the trader who transports legitimate goods, only to later consciously decide to sell them to an illegitimate dealer, can be prosecuted under the same statutes as the trader who carries contraband.

Federation-level penalties for accepting stolen merchandise range from fines to incarceration in a rehabilitation colony. The minimum fine is equal to no less than ten times the value of the goods. The rehabilitation term, considered by most to be a far stiffer penalty, is no less than one year; the exact term depends on the success of rehabilitation techniques. The rehabilitation colony sentence is mandatory if the stolen goods were obtained by interstellar piracy, *whether or not the recipient was aware of the source!* As long as the recipient is shown to have had reason to believe the goods were stolen, whether or not the exact source was known, is not a factor in setting a sentence. Of course, in *all* cases of receipt of stolen goods, the goods themselves are confiscated.

Local penalties on most urbanized worlds in the UFP are similar, but there are some interesting variations. The death penalty, though outlawed in the Federation, is still in force on several non-UFP worlds for knowingly receiving stolen goods obtained by interstellar piracy. On Baker's World in the AOFW, receiving stolen goods knowingly is punishable (as are many such crimes of greed) by banishment from the planet. Where it can be established that a receiver of stolen goods did so as a profession (that is, was a fence), the criminal's *legitimate* assets can be seized to compensate the victims of theft!



INVESTMENTS

by Roberta S. Kaminsky

No businessperson faces greater challenges or a more uncertain financial future than an independent interstellar trader. For this reason, more and more traders are turning to outside investments to provide more stability to their income. Outside investments are a hedge against disastrous business reverses so common in the interstellar trade field.

There are three types of investments that traders should consider. These are stocks, bonds, and inter-trader loans.

STOCKS

One of the most popular investments is stocks, as traded on the UFP Stock Exchange (UFPSE). The workings of the exchange and its Federation-spanning scope allow the investor to maintain a firm control on how the investment is handled, and the clever investor can ride the trends and earn enough to provide a cushion for the slow times in the trade business.

The wise investor will visit one of the many competent investment houses to obtain information about the current state of the market before buying. Though the trader's best friend may be her/his ship, the *second* best friend a trader has these days may well be her/his stock broker! The broker keeps track, not only of the weekly rise and fall of individual stocks, but of the local changes in prices offered mid-week and the overall trends the market takes.

Examine the past history of a stock before buying. When you do buy, don't put all your dilithium crystals in one vault. Buy a diversified group of stocks (called your stock portfolio) so that no one market change will adversely affect all the stocks you buy. If you decide to buy shares in an industrial firm, invest some in agriculture, too. If you buy into a chemical firm, spend some on mining stock as well.

Most important, don't be too hasty in selling or buying a stock. Read the trends, not just the week-to-week fluctuations. Make decisions based on the big picture, and don't be afraid to speculate on what current events and situations in the world of finance will do to companies you have invested in.

BONDS

For the investor who wants a more secure long-term investment, the bond market is a good choice. Most bonds are purchased to be held for a fixed amount of time (often five years). At the end of this time, they may be cashed in for a return of 3 to 18 percent (depending on the amount invested).

If bonds are held past their maturity date, the interest accrued goes up accordingly. Bonds that are cashed in advance of their maturity date, however, do not return the full amount of interest noted when they are purchased. Bonds have the advantages of a fixed interest rate and high safety for your investment. They have the disadvantages of a slow rise to maturity and no chance for quick speculation or rapid profit-taking.

For the investor who wants a more secure long-term investment, the bond market is a good choice.

LOANS

It is possible in the UFP for successful traders to invest in the operations of traders just getting started by becoming limited partners in a trade venture. In effect, one trader loans another money, for which the lender receives a limited lien on the recipient's ship. The recipient makes monthly payments to the lender, just as to a registered lending institution.

Such loans can be made because each member of the UFP/ITA is considered a limited partner in the organization. In effect, the lender loans the money to the UFP/ITA, which loans it to the recipient. (The UFP/ITA operates a number of registered lending institutions.) The UFP/ITA charges no fee to its members who wish to speculate in loans in this manner. Non-members may qualify after paying limited partnership fees amounting to 1000 Credits per year.

Interest rates are variable, at the discretion of the lender, but they generally run slightly less than that charged by banks. Riskier loans may be able to command more interest, at greater risk of default. The UFP/ITA will assist with issuing hold orders and disseminating information in case of default, but the burden of such default lies on the lender in such cases.

If a lender needs quick cash, such loans can be transferred, with the original lender selling the loan paper to another lender or to a financial institution. There will be some loss when doing this, however, so investments of this type are not as easily liquidated as stocks.



CLASSIFIED ADS

Any individual or company may place classified advertisements. Classifieds are only run in a single regional edition. (For multi-edition ads, contact Advertising Director.) Cost is 10 credits/line with a five-line minimum. Boldface lines are 10 credits for the first line, 15 credits per line thereafter. There is a 10 percent discount for ads contracted for three consecutive issues or more without changes. UFP/ITA members and affiliates may place ads for 1/2 the normal fee.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

WANTED — LICENSED MERCHANT CAPTAINS

Experienced merchant captains needed immediately! Top credits paid for seasoned veterans of Triangle-area runs. Fast advancement and excellent benefits in an up-and-coming firm. 1500 cr./mo. and up for Grade 6, if qualifications met. Contact Outbound Personnel Manager, Triangle Shipping, Comstock City, Comstock/Schull.

WANTED — EXPERIENCED SPACEHANDS

Merchant spacehands of all grades and specialties needed for immediate placement on proven, profitable runs. Salaries at UFP/ITA standard levels, plus benefits, bonuses and shares for top-notch applicants. Fast advancement and many opportunities available with an expanding young firm. Special bonuses paid for certain key specialties. Pilots Grade 4 starting at 900+ cr./mo. Technical personnel Grade 4 starting at 600+ cr./mo. Bonuses paid for experienced medical personnel (M.D.s) for assignment to major trading vessels, with starting salaries of 1000 cr./mo. or more plus benefits and profit sharing. Contact Outbound Personnel Manager, Triangle Shipping, Comstock City, Comstock/Schull.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAPTAINS!

Captains wanted for immediate assignment to profitable runs. Shares and salary commensurate with record and ability. All pay offers meet or exceed UFP/ITA guidelines. Grade 6 with clean Master's Tickets bring 1450 cr./mo. and up with benefits, incentive bonuses and advancement possibilities. Transmit resume and UFP/ITA credentials to Fleet Personnel Department, Rantura Shipping Lines, Fantasie, Deneva or contact any Rantura branch office.

PILOTS WANTED

System shuttle pilots needed for Rashile/Ungethiem cargo transfer operations. UFP/ITA rates paid, with benefits, job security and fixed residence. Established firm, excellent working conditions. Salaries starting at 400 cr./mo. Apply Personnel Director, Rashile Gourmet Foods, Portcenter, Rashile/Ungethiem.

SHIP'S ENGINEER WANTED

Seven-man trade vessel needs experienced Ship's Engineer for Triangle runs, based out of Baker's World. Salary 800 cr./mo. with shares possible if experienced with early *Nitron* class vessels. Ship has proven record of profitability. Send resume and UFP/ITA data to Capt. Hansel deVries, owner/master *Endless Prairie*, c/o General Delivery, Bakersport, Baker's World.

NIGHT WATCH PERSONNEL

Wanted: Experienced night security guards for plant security. UFP/ITA standard pay (starting 150 cr./mo.) plus generous benefits. Apply in person only. General Entertainment Concepts, Holocube Systems Division, Silverglow, Archibald II.

DISPATCHER

Immediate need for several dispatchers for spaceport ground vehicle control. Starting salary 200 cr./mo. — more for experienced personnel. Contact Port Personnel, Jav Freetrade Corporation.

ESTABLISHED TRADE ROUTE AVAILABLE

Help supply our industry, and high profits and bonuses can be yours! Mining, industrial and governmental interests require reliable independent traders to transport material. Governmental subsidies available, with no trade restrictions for licensed and approved trade vessels. No UFP/ITA certification required! Immediate profits available for experienced crews and bold captains! We provide your contacts, buyers and sellers on both ends of your route — you just bring the ship and crew! Both armed and unarmed vessels needed. (Some armed escorts available.) Contact Loyal States Industrial Alliance, Independent Trade Board, Alphaport, Mantiev.

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES IN TRADING

Enter the fascinating and profitable world of the free trader! Starting-level cargohands and spacehands (UFP/ITA Grade 0) needed by established trade firm. No experience necessary — just a willingness to start fresh in a lucrative career. On-the-job training available, with much opportunity for advancement. Travel the endless spacelanes and earn BIG MONEY in the process. Salaries start at 125 credits/month plus room, board, uniforms and travel. Apply in person Usar Mining and Industry, Lanroche City Commerce Center, Lanroche VIII.

OPPORTUNITY FOR UFP/ITA RETIREES

Now hiring UFP/ITA member retirees only as information clerks in regional offices. Experienced personnel needed. First preference to medical retirees who meet minimum physical qualifications for computer operation. Continue to serve your ITA, and receive excellent salary and benefits. Salaries up to 950 cr./mo., with retirement pay exemption. Contact nearest UFP/ITA field office for details.

CAMPING/FISHING GUIDES NEEDED

Outdoors work in the Triangle's most beautiful vacation spot! Experienced guides and instructors needed for wilderness camping and fishing sites on Lakeland. Good salaries, excellent benefits, and access to the Triangle's most famous wilderness fun sites! Pay from 900 cr./mo. up. Apply to Lakeland Tourist Bureau, Founders' Lodge, Lakeland.

LAB TECHNICIAN/ANIMAL BREEDER WANTED

Immediate opening for experienced laboratory technician with experience in genetic matching, gene surgery and animal husbandry. Familiarity with equine genetics helpful, but not required. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience. Send resume to Farley Horse Farms, Landok, Zannadu IV.

POSITIONS WANTED

EXPERIENCED CARGOMASTER...

Cargomaster aboard *Liberty* class freighter. Grade 7 UFP/ITA with 3 commendations. Seeking salary 1200 credits/month plus shares, but will negotiate for berth aboard ship with proven profitability record. My experience can make your profit picture bright! Contact J.K. Leland TMS, UFP/ITA reply box 44538, Bakersport, Baker's World.

SEEKING SPACE COMMAND

Experienced command-level merchant officer available for immediate placement on Triangle runs based out of Morning Garden, Baker's World or any AOFW world. Excellent references and letters of recommendation. UFP/ITA Academy graduate with seven years command-level experience. Seeking steady runs, no speculation. Contact Hak Hhallapphisg, c/o UFP/ITA Field Office, Port Serene, Morning Garden.

CARGO WANTED/AVAILABLE

BULK CARGOES AVAILABLE

Speculative cargo loads available for bulk carriers. Petrochemicals, metals and raw Zathium loads for export at low minehead prices. For details and list of suppliers and ports contact Merimee Mining Corporation Trade Assistance Bureau, Deepshaft Spaceport, Merimee.

SUBSIDIZED BULK CARGO RUNS

Now contracting with independent trade vessels for transport of bulk platinite and other materials for atmospheric processing. High-capacity bulk cargo vessels only. Metals and radioactives available for export with local tax exemption for vessels participating in the atmosphere program. Send UFP/ITA credentials and cargo capacity information to Royal Newlin Atmospheric Project, Her Majesty's Ministry of Science, Bethlinsgate, Newlin III.

CARGOES BOUGHT AND SOLD

Best prices in the AOFW paid for salable cargoes! Licensed trade broker specializes in disposing of distressed merchandise, high-technology items, bulk grain, much more! Also, cargoes available from all over the Triangle, at low brokerage fees. See Lurgi Tavrinat, Tavrinat Trade Brokerage, 885 Portside Commerce Plaza, Javlisig, Jav VII.

RADIOACTIVES, GEMSTONES AND METALS

Independent mining interests seeking to contact enterprising traders for mutually-beneficial agreements on transport of raw minerals. All sizes of cargo available at low prices direct from one planetary broker. No costly delays dealing with middlemen! Purchase cargoes direct from the mine, dealing with ONE office for all cargoes and clearances. Jean Carlsion Brokerage, 100 Port Place, Goldport, Jemison.

WANTED — HIGH-TECH CARGOES

Specially-equipped trade vessels available to ship high-technology cargoes anywhere in the Triangle or borderlands areas. Delicate cargoes and equipment requiring sensitive handling is our specialty. Will contract for hire or purchase salable cargoes on speculation. No cargo to big, too small, too delicate or too dangerous. Bonded cargoes welcome. Fully insured. Offices on Baker's World, Freeload, Comstock and Remfry. Paladin Flexible Spacefreight, Inc.

SPACE VESSELS FOR SALE

MISSION CLASS CARGO VESSEL

Fourteen-year-old *Mission* class courier (ex-Star Fleet) has been converted to Mk. IV configuration and used on cargo runs in the Triangle and environs. Good condition, with recent replacement of engine nacelles and warp drive computers. Owner/master retiring and seeks immediate sale. 8 MCr, or best offer within six months. Financing available through local institutions. Captain Lisolette Jessup, c/o UFP/ITA field office, Bakersport, Baker's World.

FLEET SHIPS SACRIFICE

Major trade organization has changed transport strategy, moving to larger vessels. A number of medium-sized vessels of the *Argon* Mk. I class are available for immediate sale at sacrifice prices, direct from the seller. Avoid brokerage fees and obtain star vessels in excellent condition at an unusually low price. Prices start at 11 MCr. Only a few vessels available. Inquire Triangle Shipping, Space Vehicle Maintenance Dept., Comstock City, Comstock/Schull.

ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY...

Lotus Flower class) for sale. Some minor maintenance required, but conversion possibilities for bulk cargo transport are endless. An incredible steal at only 120 MCr (or best offer). Contact Captain Leo Walsh, c/o General Delivery, Lithanport, Freeload.

PERSONALS & MISC.

TREASURE-HUNTERS

Recently-uncovered records contain printed starcharts reputed to contain the location of the lost treasure ship *John Paul Jones*. Copies of this rare document, only now discovered after years of searching, available for enterprising adventurers. Send 100 credits to Box 5543AK, Corbie, Hoot.

TO GENTLEMAN JEFF:

Waiting for you always. Walk the endless shores of Lakeland with me again, beloved. Your own true love, Mariah S.

YOUR FORTUNE TOLD

by ancient, forgotten Vulcan methods. Discover your future, learn what trade routes are likely to be profitable for you, and what areas of space to avoid. Lucky numbers and ship names provided on request. Madam Zali, 661 Starman's Circle, Lithanport, Freelander.

MY DARLING SPACEMAN...

It has been so lonely without you. Will you ever return to Bickett? I remember your promise, Jeffrey, and keep you in my heart always! Yours forever, Kimberly

RARE MEDICINAL HERBS

The secrets of Klingon herbology revealed! What exotic plants, commonly found on many Triangle worlds, are used to produce the fabled Klingon aphrodisiacs, medicines, and herbal preparations for all purposes. Send 10 Cr to Lost Secrets Publishing, Box 5543AK, Corbie, Hoot. Satisfaction guaranteed.

ART EXHIBIT

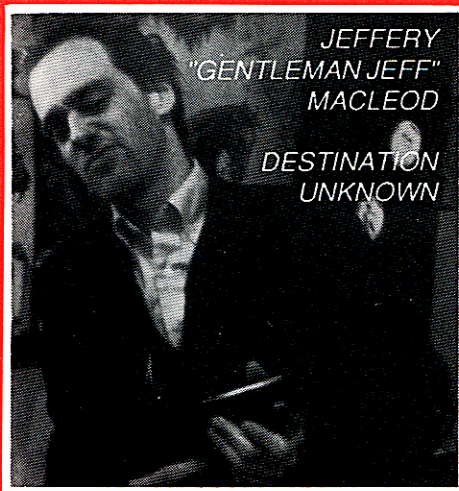
Soliciting the work of new artists for public exhibit and competition on Carwile's World. Send list of credits, descriptions and other pertinent info to Selection Committee, Anniversary Exhibit, Carwile's World Artist Colony, Gallery, Carwile's World.

"ODDITIES" AND ANTIQUITIES DESIRED

Collector interested in purchasing "oddities" and antiques of special rarity from all corners of the known galaxy. Best prices available for items of special worth. Expeditions financed to retrieve rarities of all sorts. Dirk, Remfry Plaza Hotel/Casino, Tradecenter, Remfry.

INFORMATION REQUESTED

Mr. Beauregard C. Lee of Leesburg, Freeman's Port, seeks information on the whereabouts of freetrader *Staroamer* and/or crewman Jeffrey "Gentleman Jeff" MacLeod, betrothed of his daughter, Jasmine Lee. Overdue in port three months. Reward for information on current whereabouts. Contact the law firm of Cohen, T'lvavia and Glag, Leesburg, Freeman's Port.



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Next month, we present a special issue exploring the possibilities for new trade agreements with cultures that have traditionally been rivals or even hostiles. Are there trade possibilities to explore with the Gorn, the Klingons — perhaps even someday the Romulan Star Empire? We'll look at the realities and the blue-sky dreams and everything in between in our next issue.

Feature Articles

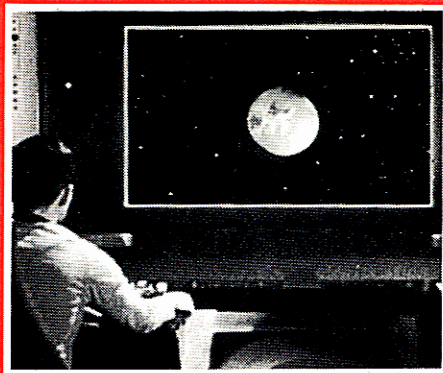
Trade, Diplomacy, and the Klingon Empire: In this article by Master Trader Gallagher Hansen, learn why many traders and several UFP High Councillors think limited open trade might be the way to prevent renewed Klingon/UFP hostilities. The companion article, *The Imperial Way of Trade* by Kalvz tai-Hauvak, is the first in recent memory authored by a Klingon trader about Klingon trade procedures. Don't miss this insider's look at Imperial merchant practices!

The Road Paved with Sharp Stones: An examination by UFP/ITA analyst Quentin Carlyle of the prospects for the long-delayed Gorn/UFP trade conference. Are lucrative new routes about to open at last, or can we expect more delays? Carlyle offers some surprising (and potentially profitable) answers.

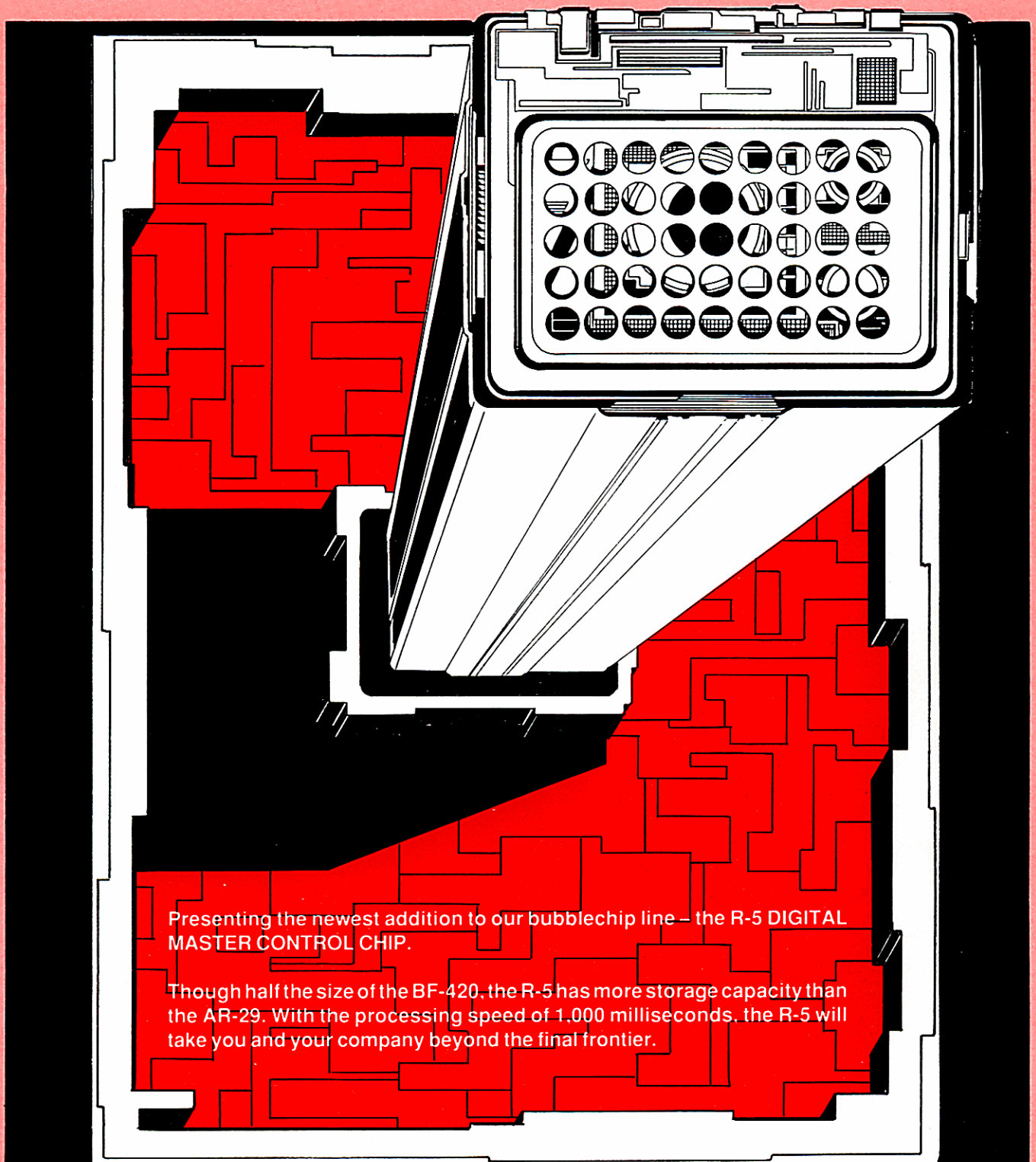
The Riches of Romulan Trade, and Other Lies: Retired Federation Marine Col. Janet Levine shows why trade with the Romulans would increase, not decrease, border tensions — and cost the independent trader more than they are willing to pay.

The Maze: Can a novice trader really cope with the complicated bureaucratic tangle of trading in the Organian Treaty Zone. Veteran trader Chris Faltini and cargomaster T'pan of the famous free trader *Penalty Weight* show how to survive and make fat profits while breezing through the red tape jungle.

Of course, next issue will also contain all of our regular features, some slanted toward our special theme. "Law" Llewellyn and "Rigel Rita" Martinez debate the question of trade with the Independent Klingon States in **The Law and the Profits**. UFP/ITA chairman Bernard Reynolds explains the latest changes in testing procedures for standard pay grades in his continuing series of articles. Finally, our regular investment columnist returns with advice, corporate profiles, and the latest word from the world of finance in *Making Your First Million*.



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