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CONFEDERATION OF AMERICAN STATES

>>>> BEGIN FACTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC BOX

Pronunciation Guide: Alabama (Al-a-bam-ah), Arkansas (Ark-an-saw), Florida (Floor-id-a), Georgia (Jorj-ah), Louisiana (Lewz-ee-an-ah), Mississippi (Miss-iss-ip-pee), Carolina (Care-ole-eye-nah), Oklahoma (Oak-la-home-ah), Missouri (Mis-sur-ah), Tennessee (Ten-ness-ee), Texas (Tex-us), Virginia (Virj-in-yah)

Population: 105,903,000

Prominent Languages: American English, Aztlaner Spanish

List of States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Missouri, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia

Government Type: Democratic Confederal Republic

Bordering Countries: Aztlan, Caribbean League, Pueblo Corporate Council, United Canadian-American States

Geography: From the Atlantic ocean stretches up a coastal plain to the Piedmont plateau region and the Appalachian Mountains; on the other side of the mountains is the Ozark Plateau. Along the Gulf of Aztlan and Florida, the climate is subtropical and deciduous forests give rise to swamps and bayou, particularly along the Mississippi River. Texas and Oklahoma have a more arid climate.

Notable Features: Appalachian Mountains, Mississippi River, Okefenokee Swamp, Ozark Plateau

>>>> END FACTS AND DEMOGRAPHICS BOX

GEOPOLITICAL OVERVIEW

In 2029, the economy of the southern United States of America was dominated by Matrix-based corporations. When the Crash Virus hit the server farms around urban cores like Atlanta and Mobile, millions of middle-class Americans became unemployed overnight, with many of them unable to even access their bank accounts. Federal legislative relief efforts were co-opted by emerging megacorps like Ares and JRJ International (which would later become NeoNET). Without concerted federal support, restoration of the southern economy was slow, and conservative politicians from the Southern Democratic Party gained a groundswell of support from those disaffected from the Crash or the response of the federal government.

The Act of Union which joined Canada and the United States was passed against the wishes of the conservative southern voting block, who objected to the adoption of the Canadian welfare system and the further dilution of their voting power in Congress. In 2034, representatives of fourteen southern states met in the Atlanta Secession Convention, which began initial preparations for seceding from the United Canadian-American States as part of a plan to demand reforms in Congress. As the secession movement gained momentum and negotiations with Congress failed to bring about any serious changes, the southern states made good their threat.

November 10 is Secession Day on CAS calendars, marking the day in 2034 when secessionists seized the majority of government and military facilities and used them to secure their borders, making a continent-wide announcement declaring a new government—except for a splinter group in South Florida that seceded from the CAS and joined the Caribbean League. Unwilling to engage in a new civil war, the UCAS began negotiations for recognition of the CAS, and an amicable split of territory, government, and national assets, with the best intentions of American citizens at heart. The Treaty of Richmond was passed by the UCAS and CAS Congresses on 19 December 2034.

The Confederal government liquidated the majority of government and military assets and divided them among the member states to use in rebuilding their Matrix infrastructures and economies. Unfortunately, the sudden reduction made the CAS vulnerable, and in 2035 Aztlan invaded Texas, only barely being stopped from retaking the entire state by reserve units mobilized from the surrounding states. Still in the process of economic recovery, the CAS Congress was unwilling to engage in a land war to regain the lost territory and Texas briefly seceded from the Confederation; they re-applied for admission in 2036 after a failed campaign against Aztlan that was both ineffective and nearly bankrupted the state.

The CAS has been redefining itself as a country and a world power, and its people see themselves as the true inheritors of American traditions and institutions—from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island and the CIA headquarters at Langley, Virginia to jazz and the blues. Some feel this outpouring of pro-American feeling will result in an eventual reconciliation and reunification with the UCAS; others believe the CAS will attempt to reclaim what is theirs in time, beginning with Aztlan.

Carib Pirates, the threat of Aztlaner invasion, UCAS spying, and NAN belligerence over historical sites are all major security concerns, and state governments invest heavily in the Confederal military-industrial complex to protect their respective states and major sprawls, and to boost the local economies. Most of the major sprawls contain

some military assets, with all coastal ports of any size protected by CAS naval forces. Firearm and personal armor ownership are highly prevalent in the CAS, more so than in all other North American countries.

MAJOR CITIES

Southern American cities have developed substantially since the split, with the total urban area nearly doubling since 2034. However, the population density of CAS cities is nowhere near that of traditional North American metroplexes, leading to far less crowded conditions and longer commutes. The distinctive architecture of the Old South is preserved in cities in every state, and many new buildings attempt to mimic aspects of these designs with modern materials that are less susceptible to termites, hurricanes from the Atlantic or the Gulf of Aztlan, or the omnipresent kudzu or Spanish moss. Local geography also generally discourages subterranean rail lines and other structures, with a few notable exceptions.

Racial tensions have also left their mark on Southern cities. Cultural guilt over the Native American internment camps, particularly the deportation of mixed-race groups like the Melungeons, has led to increased awareness of Native American cultural legacies, particularly in the former reservations in Oklahoma and Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. African-American and Creole culture also remains distinct in many Southern sprawls across metahuman racial lines, particularly in Georgia, Florida, South Missouri, and Louisiana; where a higher than average expression of African metavariants has been recorded.

Atlanta, Georgia is the capital of the CAS, and the state capital of Georgia. The densest urban sprawl in the CAS, Atlanta is recognized both for its many new and postmodern skyscrapers in the north and west sections of the city, and its rampant street crime and urban blight in the south and west. In particular, Southtown is notorious for the Dome, a former sports stadium inhabited by violent squatters that has experienced small but recurrent insect spirit activity since 2055. Atlanta is the home city of Coca-Cola, DocWagon, the Atlantean Foundation, and Hisato-Turner Broadcasting. Ares, Wuxing, Bacardi, Federated Boeing, and other megacorporations vital to the Southern economy also keep regional headquarters here, near the halls of power.

Austin, Texas is where the Aztlaner invasion was stalled, and under the current truce the city is split between Aztlan and the CAS at the Colorado River. The bulk of the city lies north of the river in the CAS section, while the area south of the river is mostly guerrilla-ridden, low-end residential districts and Aztlaner military emplacements; the only crossing of the Colorado River in city limits was the I-35 bridge before it was blown up by the Sons of the Alamo. Lone Star Security is headquartered in Austin and oversees the security of the CAS portion. Austin is very much a company town, with the bulk of the population is employed directly by Lone Star or the companies that support it.

Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex is the provisional state capital of Texas, and its economic center. With the influx of refugees from Aztlan-occupied parts of the state, the two cityscapes eventually merged into a single sprawl, which was recognized by a political re-organization in 2069. As an industrial center and airport hub, the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex provides most of the industrial and electrical components used in the CAS. Major local corporations include Texas Instruments, Tandy Corporation, and Sikorsky-Bell. Notable places of interest include the NAN and Aztlan embassies, and the Eight Flags Over Texas political park.

Nashville, Tennessee is the state capital of Tennessee. Often referred to as Music City, Nashville is the music, trideo, and simsense recording center of the CAS comparable to Los Angeles and Toronto, particularly in the Music Row district but including the numerous Country and Christian music-themed tourist spots around downtown. The negative impact of the recording facilities is the highest percentage of Better-Than-Life addictions and illegal skillssofts in the CAS, and Nashville is generally seen as the source for all cheap BTL programs and chips in the nation. Local politics are currently divided between various Christian Moralistic groups who are opposed to Nashville's legalized prostitution.

New Orleans, Louisiana is the major port between the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Aztlan. Because of its carefully-preserved and hyped historical district, New Orleans is the tourist capital of the CAS, and is often seen as its magical hub as well. The city has seen a resurgence in Voudoun and other syncretistic religions since the Awakening. The city's location and reputation also attracts negative elements, particularly smugglers, Zobop krewes from the Caribbean League, criminal magicians who reanimate the dead, dangerous paracritters from the surrounding bayous, and the Infected. Major employers include United Oil and Exxoco.

Norfolk, Virginia is a small city by CAS standards but is crucial to the country's defense because of Naval Station Norfolk. While the CAS is primarily a "brown water" navy devoted to defense of local waters and operates out of the major naval installations in Mobile and Pensacola, Norfolk and the associated shipyards build and maintain the navy's submarine fleet—the largest such fleet in the world—and the Mechanized Marine Forward Deployment Vehicles (FDVs). In addition to the naval base, Norfolk is a vital rail hub and port, particularly for goods from the UCAS.

Tampa, Florida was formed from the consolidation of Tampa, St. Petersburg, and neighboring cities. It serves as Florida's major port on the Gulf of Aztlan now that Miami is part of the Caribbean League. Often described as the dark side of Orlando, Tampa has a reputation for sex tourism and organized crime that jars with the local populace's moral beliefs but is supported by a large number of "snowbirds;" individuals from the UCAS that emigrate to Tampa during the cold winter months, then head back up when their vacations end and before hurricane season starts.

SPECIAL LOCATIONS

The **Mississippi River** is a major geographical feature and commercial waterway in North America, connecting the Gulf of Aztlan to the Great Lakes and all of the cities located along it and its tributaries. The Mississippi is critical for the North American ecology, although pollution and overfarming along its shores has led to a large dead zone where the Mississippi dumps its nutrient-heavy load into the Gulf of Aztlan, due to the use of nitrogen-fixing fertilizers by agribusiness.

Hellbender Valley in eastern Tennessee is a small Appalachian Mountains river valley with an unusually dense and diverse paranormal ecology. Most notable of its residents are a sub-species of giant hellbender salamanders; some individuals of which have been measured over three meters long and which appear to have the innate ability to purify water of contaminants. Parabiologists who have examined the site agree that the Valley is a natural, unsuspected power site of considerable potency, which may account for the density of paranormal species and diversity of expression. Concerns over poachers and talisleggers despoiling Hellbender habitat has led to the area being declared the CAS's first Awakened Wildlife Refuge.

The Mississippian Ideological Interaction Sphere (M.I.I.S) demarks a period of Native American cultural exchange marked by certain artifacts, iconography, and social organizations pervasive throughout North America from about 1200 CE to 1650 CE. This culture is best known for the large mounds it built as part of ceremonial sites, many of which are still extant in the CAS. Arcanoarcheological inspection of these sites reveal that many of them coincide with a network of manalines and power sites, and interest in the M.I.I.S. sites rose when alchera of several previously unknown and destroyed sites began manifesting in the 2060s. The CAS military is particularly interested in this network because it developed independently of Mesoamerican culture and, if harnessed could help offset Aztlan's magical superiority. However, a large part of the network, including the most important site near Cahokia, Illinois, lies in UCAS territory.

It is widely accepted that the CAS military has embraced the M.I.I.S. manaline network as the cornerstone of its country's magical defense, with the center of operations being a complex popularly known as **Hidden Mound**, believed to be located near Ocumulgee in Georgia or Moundville, Alabama.

When Ares purchased NASA from the United States, it was with an agreement that several key NASA facilities would be returned to the United States in 2055. As the United States did not exist as at that point, Ares was not legally obliged to turn over these facilities, but as a gesture of good will the megacorp cooperated with the UCAS and CAS governments to form **Space City**; an international astronaut training and space technology research center in Mobile, Alabama. AresSpace subsidiary NASA Consulting, Inc. provides logistical support for UCAS and CAS launches using the AresSpace facilities at Cape Canaveral, Florida, and communications and control centers in Houston, Texas. Space City also houses an AR museum and theme park with real-time interactive exhibits devoted to American space travel and US-era space vehicles, with free admission to CAS and UCAS residents.

> The word is politics, boys and girls. The two primary parties are the **Southern Democrats**, who are politically and economically conservative in their policies (basically: if it ain't broke, don't fix it), and the **True American Coalition** who have a more liberal approach (if it's broke, why waste the cred to fix it when we can buy something new?). On the fringe are vocal and popular policlubs like the **Sons of the Alamo**, who want war with Aztlan, the **Aztlan Liberation Front** that runs medical supplies one way and refugees the other, and the **American Tricentennial Committee** who want a reunification with the UCAS—and as much of the rest of the continent they can grab. On top of the black-and-white/ork-and-elf politics we've got four flavors of national intrigue: UCAS ops run by the CIA, Aztlaner infiltrators, Carib League pirates, and the NAN that are homesick for the reservation and want Oklahoma back.

> Kane

> Then you have the corporate politics. For the last twenty years or so the CAS has been focusing on developing its own national corporations like Texas Instruments and Exxoco, which means there's some medium-level corporate intrigue between the CAS natives and the Japanacorps that wanted to eat them—except for the odd merger like Hisato-Turner. Most of the megacorps that want to operate in the CAS at least put on the act of being an all-American corporation, Aztechnology more than most—you won't see anything as transparent as Pyramid Foods operating in the CAS.

> Kay St. Irregular

> Eight Flags Over Texas is devoted to the political history—and present—of Texas, divvied up into different periods and nations of Texas state history. Great public place for a meet or even an exchange.

> Kane

> 'spose I should mention that the Mississippi is the backbone to most of the best smuggling routes in NorthAm. Don't even need a t-bird; if you run quiet and got a boat you can move damn near anything from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Aztlan—Memphis and Little Egypt, St. Louis, east along the Ohio River, west along the Arkansas River into NAN territory, or if you're in for a hairy ride north through Chicago on the Illinois River and into Lake Michigan-Huron; or drop into the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. Carib rum, Nashville BTLs, telesma and paracritter parts from the Louisiana bayous and Okefenoke, not to mention Azzie silver and bloodsports and all those UCAS import-only consumer goods.

> 2XL

> Speaking of the Azzie border, there's almost always some group or other willing to pay you to hop it, provided you don't mind dodging the CAS and Aztlaner militaries. Since the bridge went down in Austin you've got smugglers of every stripe transporting people, black market goods, and intel back and forth.

> Picador

> Or you could get a letter of marque and hunt pirates. The CAS revived the practice of issuing licenses to civilian commercial ships to attack pirates in order to protect their shipping and oil rigs out in the Gulf—and from privateer it's only a small step to becoming a pirate yourself. I hear if you only prey on Aztlaner ships, the CAS even looks the other way.

> Sounder

> Well, not quite the other way. The taxmen get a cut on any recovered cargo, and anyone who doesn't cough it up is liable to find out how fast those CAS cutters really are.

> Kane

> Anyone have the straight dope on this Hidden Mound?

> Winterhawk

> It is an alchera of a large mound, smaller than Cahokia, located at a nexus on the manaline network and protected by an apparently natural or permanent polarization that hides it from Astral sight unless you are right on top of it, and disrupts ritual links to those within the perimeter. The CAS Department of Strategic Intelligence has established a bunker or facility there in the event the Native American Nations or Aztlan attempt to use Ghost Dance level magic against the CAS.

> Man-of-Many-Names

> Wow. That was...uh...surprisingly explicit.

> Winterhawk

> It was a place of power for the People, safe from the uninitiated who lacked eyes to see it, sacred to the Horned Serpent. I hope the fools heed my warning not to Awaken what sleeps there.

> Man-of-Many-Names

> Sounds like the Wuxing HQ in Hong Kong in reverse. Shiny. Anyone up for a roadtrip?

> Haze

> If anyone wants to sharpen their stilettos, the Corporate Court and the Extraterritoriality Registry and Liaison Agency are about to throw down and I expect some general nastiness and foul play on both sides. See, in the CAS the ERLA keeps track of all extraterritorial corporate domains, acts as a liaison with those corporations, and has final approval over all real estate transactions—except Horizon Group subsidiary HeritageMedia sold a chunk of property to fellow Horizon Group subsidiary Hisato-Turner without getting permission. There's a list of corps longer than my arm that want to see a check on the ERLA's authority and if the Corporate Court rules against them, expect a burst of corporate real estate fury in the Confederacy.

> FastJack

- > Ghost dammit, it's a confederation, not a confederacy! Damn Yankees.
- > Kane