

SPECIAL DIFFERENT WORLDS MODULE

A MORROW PROJECT Scenario For Post-Holocaust Earth

Operation Link-Up

Illustrated by Steve Purcell
Map renderings by Tadashi Ehara

By Barron Barnett and William A. Barton

"Operation Link-Up" concerns the efforts of a Morrow Project Recon team to link up with a Science team in the town of Washington, Indiana, and to save the town from a marauding band of Bikers and Gypsy Truckers and the ravages of a mutated disease. The scenario may be played one of three ways: As a mission for a 6-8 man Recon team, for an 8-man Science team, or as a two-team game, with two groups of players and two project directors (gamemasters). If the latter method is utilized, the project directors should take special care to coordinate the relative times and movements of the teams, allowing them contact only by radio until they actually manage to link up in Washington. Until such time as that, the two teams should be kept in separate rooms, with radio communications carried on by message or intercom. The teams should only be allowed face-to-face contact once both are safely in town.

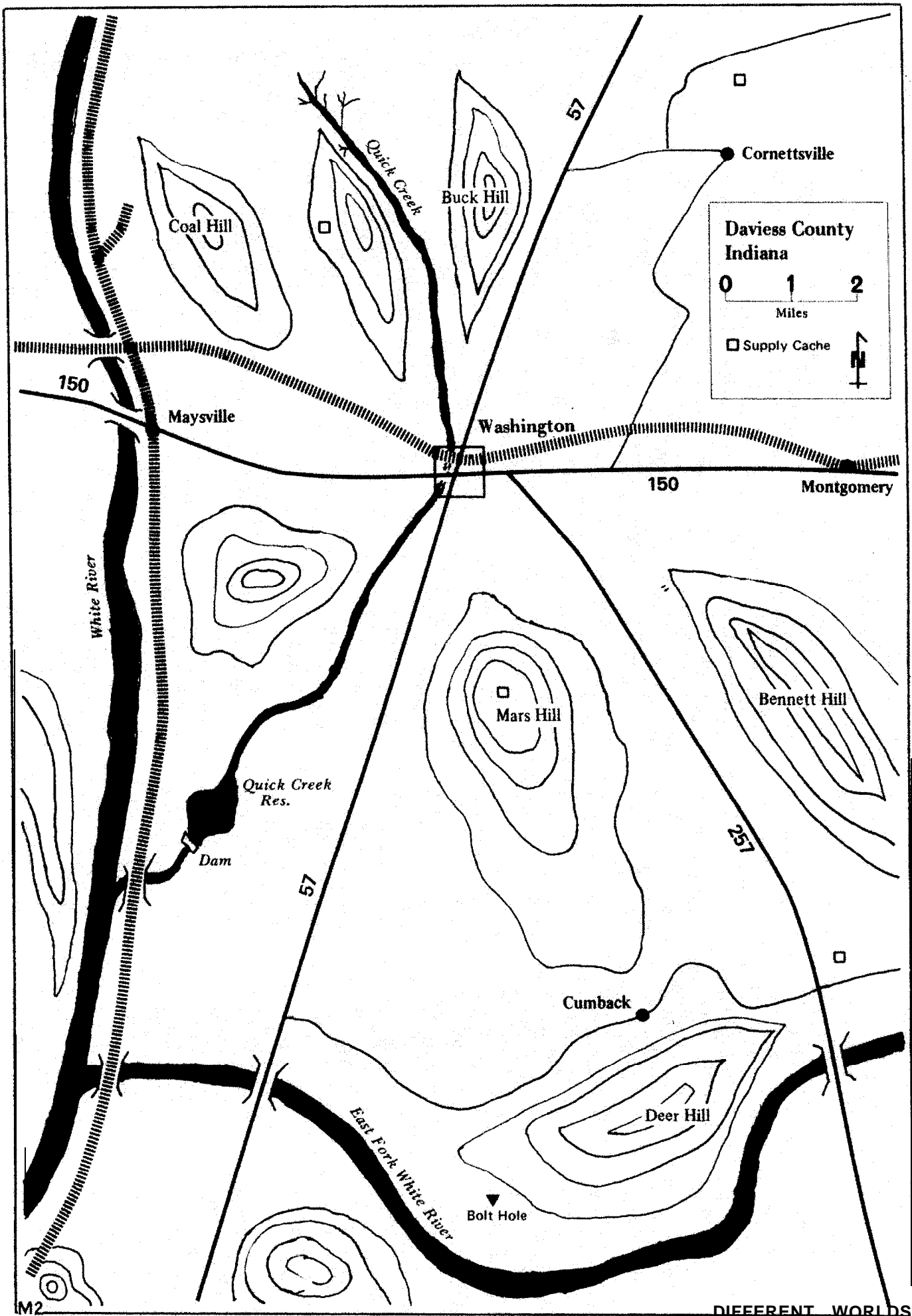
If running only one team of players, the other MP team, Recon or Science, should be played by the project director as non-player characters, drawing the team of players into Washington and the scenario. The non-player character team and their vehicle(s) and equipment should only be of minimal aid to the players, requiring them to successfully complete the scenario using their own resources rather than relying on outside help. Please note that a successful conclusion to this scenario can only be reached through thorough investigation and deductive reasoning on the part of the players, rather than through force of arms, though a less-satisfying conclusion can be reached through firepower alone. A team of players more inclined to thinking then hooting their way out of situations would best be cast in the role of the Science team; those who prefer combat solutions would fare better as the Recon team.

OUT OF THE BOLT HOLE

If playing the Recon team, or two teams are in action, MP Recon team F-18 will awaken in their bolt hole south of Washington, Indiana (see Area Map). They will soon realize that all is not as was planned and that rather than awakening a few years after WW III, a lot more time has passed. To give them somewhat more of a shock than the usual team wake-up process, the project directors may impose an immediate encounter while the team is still in the bolt hole in the form of a minimoose (*TM Handbook*, p. 59) butting their periscope, requiring them to emerge blind. Of course, all radio bands will be silent beyond background static until immediately after the team emerges. At that point, team F-18 will receive a radio message from Morrow Science team S-4. The Science team, which has been out of their bolt hole several days, is currently in Washington, Indiana. They are requesting assistance from any MP teams in radio range; their science vehicle has been disabled and they are under siege by a particularly aggressive group of Bikers (*TM Handbook*, p. 50). Furthermore, several members of the team, along with a number of the local townspeople, seem to have been stricken with a strange disease. Weakening, the team is having a hard time holding off the Bikers. Can F-18 come to their assistance?

Recon team F-18 should be equipped as the project director sees fit in terms of basic personal toads, etc. If six players, the team will have a Commando V-150 (see *TM Handbook*, p. 31, or MP scenario *Liberation At Riverton* for more information on this vehicle). If more than six players, an additional vehicle, either a Commando Scout or an XR311 (*TM Handbook*, pp. 30-31), may be added.

If playing the Science team, or two teams, MP Science team S-4 will emerge from their bolt hole some distance west of Washington, exact location and distance at project director's discretion, though no more than two days travel away (road maps or atlases of southwestern Indiana and



southern Illinois would be useful in this case). The team may be lured to Washington by several means—they could receive a radio message from Recon team F-18, already in Washington, under siege, sick, and requesting assistance, or perhaps a fleeting message from Washington radio station WXTG, repaired and held together long enough to get off one fleeting message for assistance against the ravaging Bikers.

The Science team will have a Scientific-One vehicle, though once they reach Washington, it will be immobilized for the remainder of the scenario, as a fully mobile Scientific-One mounts more than enough weaponry to easily deal with the Bikers and their allies. The team will have to rely on their secondary vehicles or the Recon team's vehicle(s) once they link up.

If playing two teams, the project directors may alter the sequence or times of the two groups' emergence from their bolt holes however they wish, though generally it should be the Science team who reaches Washington first, with P-18 attempting to run a Biker/Trucker "blockade" to reach them.

If the project director owns *MP* scenario *Project Damocles* and following scenarios, he may wish to have the teams awakened by Damocles for a specific mission, this scenario being an obstacle that must be overcome in order to proceed with that assignment. Information on the MP bolt holes may be found in the *TM Handbook, Liberation At Riverton*, and following scenarios published by Timeline.

FIRST ENCOUNTER

F-18: While the project directors should continually roll for encounters to keep the team busy, especially if attempting to delay them long enough for the Science team to reach Washington first, the first planned encounter should go as follows: Somewhere along the way to the town, the team will encounter a group of Bikers who have just attacked an outlying farm. The team could be attracted by a column of smoke arising from the burned-down farm buildings. When they arrive on the scene, they will find several Bikers raping a farm girl. If they open fire or attack the Bikers, they will find themselves under fire by other Bikers hidden in the trees around the farm. These Bikers will be armed with what seem to be rather sophisticated weapons—autorifles, SMGs, and perhaps a rocket launcher or two. The team should still manage to route the Bikers without too much difficulty, killing most of them and rescuing the farm girl. At least one Biker should manage to escape, however, to alert the rest of the gangs to the team's presence in the area. The girl will be alive but badly injured and frightened into incoherency. The rest of her family will be dead. Upon examining the bodies of the dead Bikers, the team will discover them to be in possession of MP issue weapons, some with the stamp of Recon team F-1 1, and some with those of team F-18!

This encounter serves two purposes—to alert the team to the threat of the Bikers and establish them as villains in the eyes of the MP personnel, and to inflict the team with a deadly, highly virulent disease carried by the Bikers and passed on to their victim and, through her, to the player-characters. Thus the team's efforts will become a race with time to find a cure for the disease before they succumb to its effects, meanwhile having to deal with the menace of the Bikers and their Trucker allies.

MARCH/APR | L 1984

If playing the Science team, the team will first encounter the disease in the burned-out ruins of Maysville, west of Washington. Here they will find several survivors, mostly older women and young children, who will tell of the town being attacked by "raiders on small metal animals." They will be asked by the survivors to take them to Washington for refuge. The team will contract the disease through contact with these survivors. As the team travels the remaining distance to Washington, they will be spotted by Biker lookouts or, if using their radio to talk to F-18, will be overheard (see below). The Bikers will take no offensive action against the Scientific-One until it is stationary inside the city, making it an easier, more vulnerable target. They will wait until the crew is leaving the vehicle and launch an almost suicidal, blitzkrieg-like attack. While the MP team should manage to beat them back at this time, one Biker will manage to get close enough to catch the team by surprise and toss a crude pipe bomb into the vehicle. The resulting explosion will damage the interior of the vehicle enough to immobilize it. Most of the scientific and research equipment should remain intact, so that the team will have a chance to analyze the disease that is attacking them and attempt a cure. However, the vehicle will not be going anywhere for at least three weeks, the minimum amount of time it will take the team to repair it, provided the disease does not get them first.

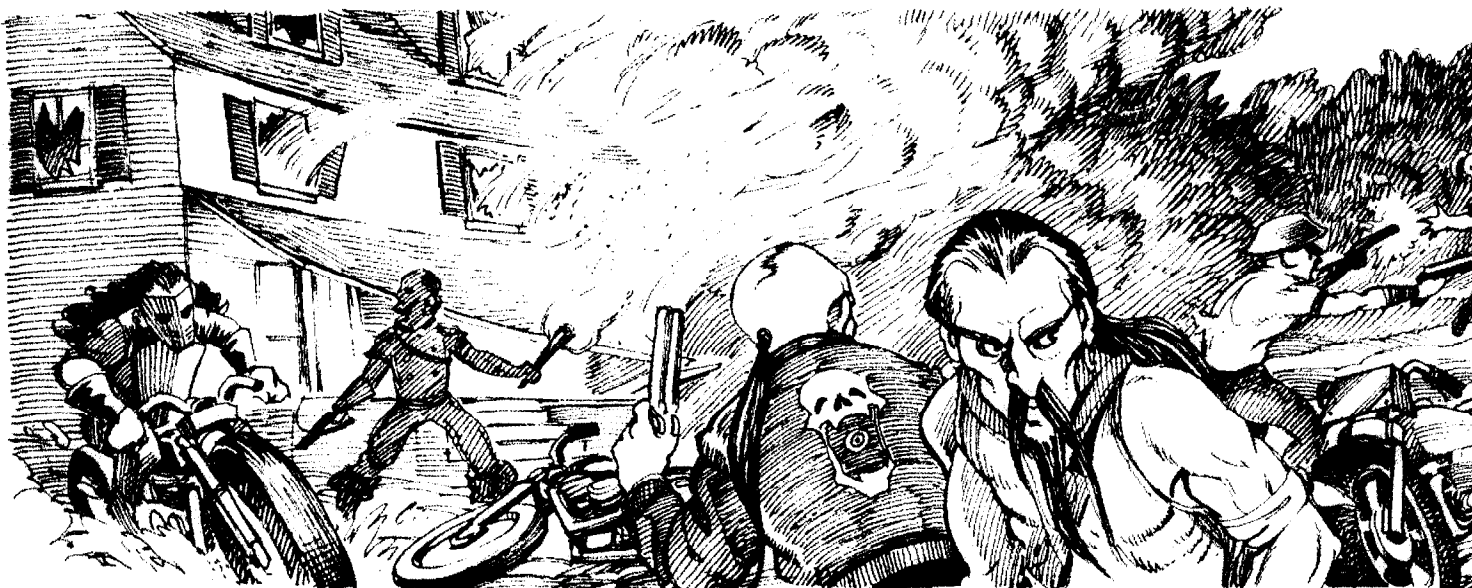
While the Science team's problems will be minimal until they actually reach Washington, the Recon team will find themselves hounded by raiding teams of Bikers all the way to Washington. Should they attempt travel along a road, they may also encounter several Gypsy Trucker semis, which may mount a mortar or two. They will also pick up snatches of radio talk from nearby, giving short, terse orders and directions. This will be the Bikers trailing them, calling in other raiding teams in the vicinity over capture MP radios. It should not take the team long to realize this, though preventing it may be more difficult once the Bikers are on to them. The exact extent of the opposition dogging the team should depend on how long the project director wishes to delay their arrival in Washington and the team's capabilities.

Once the two teams have managed to reach Washington and link up with each other, the real challenge will begin—that of isolating the disease that is beginning to ravage them and finding a cure while fighting off the Bikers' raids on them and the town. If playing only one team, the players should find several members of the other team already stricken when they reach town. If both teams consist of player-characters, the disease will run its normal course.

THE OPPOSITION

The Bikers and Gypsy Truckers (*TM Handbook*, p. 51) who oppose the MP teams are two separate groups who have formed an uneasy alliance based on the personal charisma of their individual leaders "Duke" and "Wild Bill," and have joined together to "run the area." The Bikers moved into the area from the northeast, the Truckers from the west. Both found the old mining campsite where they have established their base at about the same time, three months earlier. The two groups were about to fight it out for the site when the two leaders decided to meet for a ^{pow-wow}. Both were smart enough to realize that a fight could be disastrous to both sides and that, by working together, they could accomplish a lot more than either

M3



could separately, especially with those left after a deadly battle. Through sheer force of personality, Duke and Wild Bill managed to talk the other clan and gang leaders into going along with the alliance, pointing out the spoils in the area that could be shared by both. Both realize that the alliance can only last so long, but for now, it is more profitable to cooperate with each other than fight. A clever team, however, might be able to exploit the natural enmity between the Bikers and Truckers, held just below the surface by the efforts of the two leaders. to their advantage.

The Bikers consist of three gangs, lead overall by Duke. The individual gang leaders are Harry, Joe, and Slugger. The Truckers consist of four clans lead overall by Wild Bill. The clan spokesmen are Jimmy, Crasher, Bandit, and Black Knight. The Duke's stats are STR/CON 18, DEX/ACC 16, and H&M 11. Wild Bill's stats are STR/CON 17, DEX/ACC 18, and H&M 12. The gang and clan leaders can be considered to average 14 in STR/CON and DEX/ACC, and 10 in H&M, with all other Bikers and Truckers as average non-player characters of their type. The Bikers are armed mostly with knives, crude crossbows (see *MP scenario The Ruins of Chicago* for a sample), chains, and clubs. The Truckers possess a few crude flintlock rifles, tire irons, knives, and axes. Both have a number of modern firearms (project director's choice of what kind and how many) captured from Recon team F-11 and stolen from F-18's Mars Hill cache. Altogether, the Bikers and Truckers number about 150 individuals (70 Bikers, 80 Truckers), about a third of whom are women and children, mostly from the Truckers. The Trucker clans are all close-knit, while the Biker gangs are more individualistic, held together only by Duke. Most of the Bikers' women are those they have captured from raids on town they have passed through and who were tough enough to live through the Bikers initial attentions. The unequal distribution of women is one source of tension between the two groups, with occasional fights breaking out due to this. However, the Duke has promised his men plenty of women from the nearby town soon. Up to now, they have just been raiding the outlying areas, but are beginning to move in on Washington. In the three months since they found the abandoned camp, they have managed to establish a number of vantage points from which to spy on the town and will have regular information on the actions of

the MP teams and the townspeople as a result.

The Bikers and Truckers are already somewhat knowledgeable about the Morrow Project. Soon after establishing their camp, Recon team F-11, recently awakened, entered the area. The Bikers feigned friendship until they were able to catch the team unawares. They killed all but two of the team, finally torturing one of the survivors to death for information on the Project. The other team member, a woman, has been kept by the Bikers as a sex slave and is being held at camp. The team's vehicle was sabotaged by the commander before he was killed. The computer, power system, and 20mm cannon on the V-150 are totally useless and its undercarriage burnt out by a demo charge, though the coaxial machine gun still works. The Truckers have mounted the vehicle on a flatbed trailer, as noted in the section on the camp. Several team weapons and radios were captured and are used by the Bikers and Truckers. Learning from their prisoner of the MP caches concealed under U.S. Benchmarks, the group managed to find and recover one of F-18's caches, giving them more weapons and ammunition.

THE DISEASE

The disease inflicting the MP teams and townspeople of Washington is a mutated viral infection. It developed from a normally harmless variety subjected to radiation from the Soviet missile targetted on Crane Naval Depot to the northeast. It lay harmless for decades until picked up by the Bikers, who contracted it when drinking from a small pool about 25 miles to the north-northeast of Washington. Fortunately for the Bikers, they found the old mining camp and began drinking from the water of Coal Creek. As often happens, nature quite accidentally developed its own counterbalance to the new disease in the form of a fungus growing in the waters of Coal Creek. It is especially concentrated in the water lilies that grow in a pond near the source of the Creek. The water lilies, themselves mutated, released a weak toxic substance into the systems of those who eat them. In conjunction with the fungus, this toxin completely arrests the development of the virus. The fungus itself will only stave off the symptoms for several days. While arrested in those who partake of this natural "serum," the virus remains highly virulent and may be contracted by any sort of close contact with those who



carry it-by touch, by breathing the same air, etc. Thus the Bikers gave the disease to the Trickers, who were also protected by the waters of their campsite, and to anyone else they contacted. Protected by the arresting agent, the Bikers and Trickers are unaware they have the disease at all. The Science team picked it up from the survivors of Maysville, infected by close contact with the raiders and each other. The Recon team picked it up from the rape victim they saved from the Bikers. The townspeople caught it from the MP teams entering town, a fact the teams may wish to conceal once they discover it.

Once infected with the disease, a victim will develop a fever within 24 hours, followed shortly by a nosebleed and severe coughing. Within 48 hours, the victim will be reduced to at best 50% effectiveness. By the third day, he will be bedridden and completely incoherent. By the fourth day, he will be dead. (Alternately, if he wishes to express the deterioration in game terms, the project director may roll D100 each day and subtract that amount from the characters' total of structure points plus blood points. When both reach zero, the character is dead. The combination of fungus and lily toxin will stop the loss of points but not restore them. To do this, the disease must be cured completely.)

To discover the arresting agent, it will be necessary for the team to autopsy the body of a Biker or Tricker (or, if they wait too long, a team member-provided anyone is capable of such action at that point). However, finding the source of the agent will require capturing one of the marauders and forcing him to reveal the location of the camp (a difficult task at best). Such a course may also reveal the presence of this captured MP member at the camp, making a rescue necessary (and requiring the team to proceed with more caution than they might otherwise in any assault on the Biker/Tricker camp). Once they have the arresting agent, the disease will be checked, though not cured. If the arresting agent is not constantly consumed, the disease will reassert itself within 24 hours. The only way to cure the disease is to isolate the virus, grow it in culture plates, kill it (intense radiation will do the job), and inject the dead virus into the victim along with the arresting agent. This will effect a complete cure. To last long enough to do so, the team may need to secure enough of the arresting agent to keep going. The lab equipment on the Scientific-One will enable them to

develop the vaccine if they manage to stay alive long enough. In any event, they will eventually have to assault the Biker/Tricker camp to secure the agent so they can develop the cure for themselves and the townspeople. (Note: MP Universal Antibody, if tried, will prove ineffective against the disease; the virus will only mutate again and reappear within 24 hours of each injection.)

THE AREA

The Area Map centers on Washington and shows the location of Recon F-18's bolt hole and supply caches (the Mars Hill cache has been looted by the Bikers). The shaded area to the northeast is an area of desolation with some residual radiation from the bombing of Crane Naval Depot. The other towns marked around Washington are nothing but ruins, Maysville being recently burned out by the Bikers on one of their raids. The area immediately surrounding Washington is farmed, with most of the rest of the surroundings being forested. The roads are rubble with foot and cart paths next to them. The railroads are mostly overgrown, though they could be used if one had a locomotive. The small spur off Coal Hill is not known to the townspeople and will not appear on any crude map of the area (though it might on MP maps). There is occasional contact with towns to the east, west, and south, and traders pass through the area periodically, though news of the outside world is limited at best.

THE TOWN

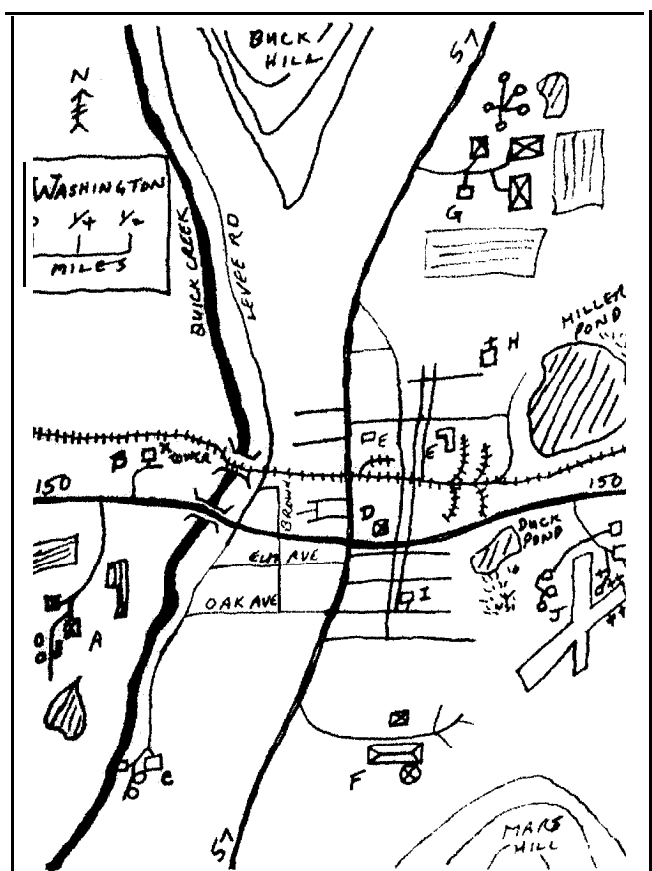
About 75 families live in Washington. Of them, most will be of little interest or help to the MP teams. The exceptions will be the Owens family, Mayor Todd Scott, Sheriff Bernard Taylor, and Old Man Miller. Mayor Scott is the decision-maker of the town, holding the community together in his hereditary office. Sheriff Taylor, with the help of the Owens, keeps the peace. Once these men begin to deteriorate, either from the effects of the disease or Biker attacks, the unity of the town will start to crumble and the teams will find themselves without allies—except Old Man Miller, if they have dealt with him fairly. Miller can be a wild card for the project director to play in any way he sees fit.

A. The Owens Farm: Brad and Martha Owen and their seven sons and daughters are the only family in Washington that can be considered well-to-do. This is from the fact that they have three working .30-06 rifles, one with a scope, and approximately 60 rounds for them, kept intact and passed down in the family since the war. They also own a .38 handgun with five rounds left. The Owens assist the sheriff as deputies, organizing patrols, etc., whenever outsiders come through town—"just in case."

B. Radio Station WXTG: Unless the project director has used it to broadcast a message to lure the Science team to Washington, it will be in ruins. If used, Old Man Miller will have cobbled together enough parts for one last broadcast before burning out the last bits of surviving equipment, leaving it useless.

C. Water Company Pump Station: This area is a worthless dump. It was electrically powered, and when the power went, it was abandoned.

D. City Courthouse: This is where the Mayor keeps his office. It also holds the sheriff's office and jail (Sheriff Taylor lives here as well). The mayor is a gracious, yet



decisive man. He will greet the first team to arrive with the keys to the city. Thus he will be the first in town to contract the disease. The sheriff will be cool and detached, watching the teams warily until convinced they are here to help, not harm the town. Once assured of their good intentions, he will support them in any way he can until he, too, succumbs to the sickness. He carries a .38 handgun, similar to that of the Owens. He has only one round, however, which he keeps in his old uniform pocket until needed. There is a bell tower in the courthouse, which could be used as a lookout post.

E. Abandoned Warehouses: These were formerly for storage of materials coming through town by rail.

F. Power Station: It is in a condition similar to the water station. No one ever goes there (a Maggot currently has taken refuge there, though no one in town knows it).

G. The Browns' Farm: The Browns will be the first victims of the Bikers' initial raid on the town, just as the first MP team has entered Washington and is meeting the townspeople. This will be part of a small raid on the town's north side, to feel out its defenses and to draw out the newcomers and eliminate them as a threat. By the time anyone gets there, Brown and his two sons will be dead and his wife will have been captured by the Bikers. During this raid, the pipe bomb may be thrown into the Scientific-One.

H. The Town Church: It is called just that and is kept intact by the citizens. It is still attended, though not on any regular day or basis—just whenever the people want to. Mayor Scott doubles as a town preacher.

I. The Mayor's Home: When not at the courthouse, Mayor Scott can be found here—usually at night.

J. Owens Airport: Though it shares their name, the airport

has nothing to do with the Owens family. Actually, it is the property, by way of his having lived there since anyone can remember, of Old Man Miller (if he has a first name, no one remembers it, including himself). Most of the buildings are abandoned, though one hanger doubles as Miller's home and as a storage area. Around the runways, which Miller keeps cleared, are the cannibalized remains of several old bi-winged crop dusting planes. None have more than half their parts and would be impossible to get into the air. Inside the hanger, however, is an intact plane, kept together by Miller from the parts of the others. It currently needs a piece of gas line pipe to get into readiness (a piece of copper tubing, etc., would work). Miller has only one such piece left, which is at the moment attached to his still. He will be very grateful to anyone providing a piece of tubing so he can get the plane flying again without having to sacrifice his still (a gift of whiskey would also get him on the team's side). Miller can actually fly the plane (his daddy taught him, he'll recall), and can thus greatly assist the group by providing an aerial recon of the area—if they get on his good side. Flying with Miller could prove a harrowing experience, however, as he is constantly inebriated. On the surface, Miller is a cantankerous old coot, generally left alone by the townspeople except when they need something tinkered back together, but he will fight for the town if it appears threatened. He seems to have a natural immunity to the disease, but this will not help the team. If it appears Miller is assisting the team, the Bikers will carry out a raid on the airport to take him out, requiring the team to go to the old man's aid (Miller will be holding them off with an ancient shotgun in incredibly good working order). The hanger is stocked with dozens of drums of aviation fuel; a good hit from an explosive weapon could set it off.

THE BIKER/TRUKER CAMP

A. Main Bunkhouse: See following description. The tents north of this area represent where the Bikers camp. Several bikes are parked at this location.

B. Several Flatcars: They are rusted. On the southernmost car sits the burned out V-150 captured from Recon F-11. One Biker or Trucker sits inside this at all times manning the machine gun.

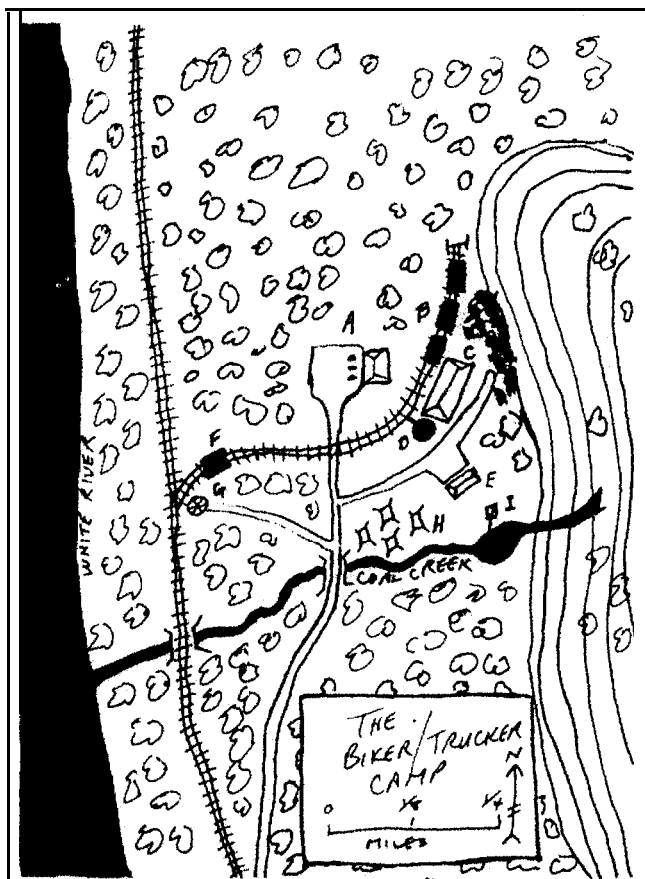
C. A Shed: It is full of rusted digging equipment for the coal mines just east of this location.

D. Water Tower: It is filled by a pump at location I. Most of the Bikers drink from the water stored here.

E. A Pumper Station: Just west of it is an underground 50,000 gallon tank of diesel fuel. It was half full when the Bikers and Trucker found it. Near it is a 55 gallon drum where the Bikers boil down the diesel fuel to get a cheap, but usable, gas for their bikes. Several bikes are parked in front of the pump station.

F. Diesel Engine: Small and working, it was originally used to move the cars of coal to the main line. The Trucker managed to get it back into working order only recently. Plans are to use it to tow the flatcar with the V-150 into the town to shoot up the place and show the townspeople who is really in charge. The plans may be accelerated if the MP teams prove to be much of a threat to the marauders.

G. The Old Switch Tower: It is used as a lookout tower by the camp.



H. Main Camp Area: This is the area where most of the Truckers and their families camp.

I. The Pumper: The pumper over the creek here pumps water to the tower and the main bunk house. Once or twice a day, the Bikers hook up a bike to it to get it working to send water to the two areas. The pond here is where the water lilies grow and where the fungus thrives. The Truckers generally drink from it directly, while the Bikers use the water in the tower.

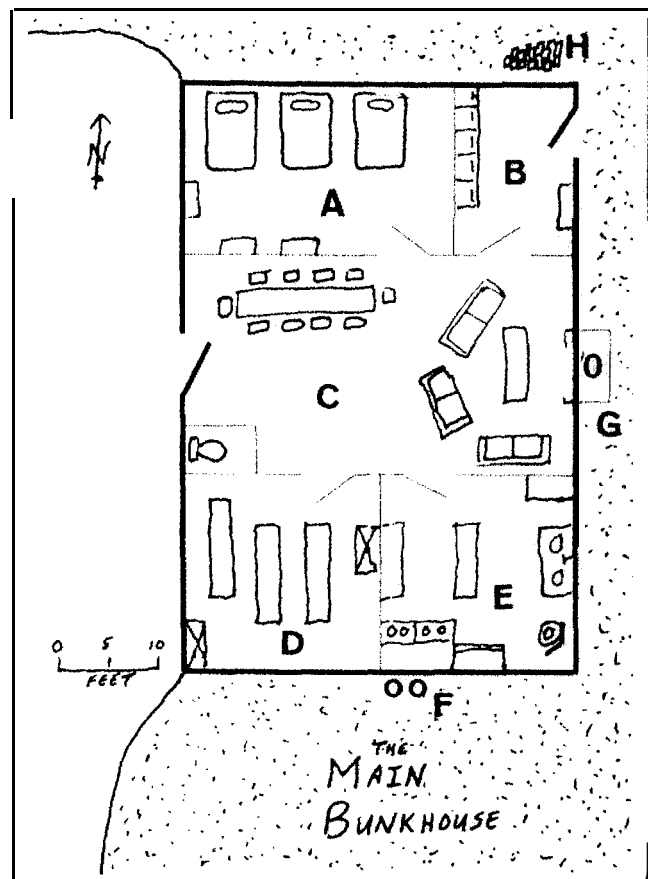
THE MAIN BUNKHOUSE

This is where Duke and Wild Bill live, along with the gang and clan leaders and their women. Usually several bikes and Wild Bill's truck are parked in front of the building.

A. Main Bunkroom: Wild Bill and his wife, and Duke and his current woman sleep here.

B. Storage Room: Currently, the only survivor of MP Recon team F-11 is being held prisoner in this room. Her name is Maura McAhab. She is a pretty, slim redhead in her mid-20's. She has been badly abused by the Bikers, but her strong spirit and hopes for rescue has kept her going. The Bikers have played on her hope cruelly, once dressing in the ragged clothing of the F-11 personnel and staging a fake rescue. Since Maura, who is nearsighted, lost her contact lenses during her capture, she could not see clearly enough to discern the truth until the Bikers led her into something quite different from a rescue. As a result, she will be somewhat suspicious of the team when they do attempt to rescue her.

C. The Main Living Room: The other clan and gang leaders and their women sleep here. All eat here, more or less sociably—as long as Duke and Wild Bill are there. There is a small, working (when the pump is hooked up) bathroom



in the southwest corner of this room. A foul odor drifts from the bathroom wherever the door is opened.

D. Another Storage Room: It has three standing shelves in the middle and two large boxes, one in the southwest corner and one on the east wall. The shelves contain generally useless odds and ends. The boxes contain dynamite used in the mines. There is a 40% chance that a stick will not explode due to old age, despite the fact it was remarkably well-preserved.

E. Kitchen: The cupboards contain 150-year-old cans of food (so far untouched). The sink works when the pump is hooked up. The stove works, too, when it is fueled up. The Bikers and Truckers have made a mess of this area and it smells almost as bad as the bathroom.

F. Propane Gas: There are two large bottles.

G. Fireplace: It has a chimney also.

H. Woodpile: This is for the fireplace.

FINAL NOTES

If attacked at the camp, the Bikers will fight almost suicidally. The Truckers will do everything possible to defend their women and children, but if the opportunity arises, will withdraw rather than die defending the camp (dooming themselves to eventual death from the disease, along with anyone else they contact—a fact the team should not overlook if any escape). To prevent the spread of the disease beyond this area, the team will have to either kill or cure all the Biker/Trucker members, possibly a morale dilemma in itself. Once the disease and the Biker/Trucker menace are dealt with, the team might try using the small engine to link up the city with other communities, furthering the goals of the Project in rebuilding civilization in the area.

a