



PENT UP

American Defense Innovation in the Age of Constraints

A Lux Riskgaming scenario by Danny Crichton



RISKGAMING

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Running It

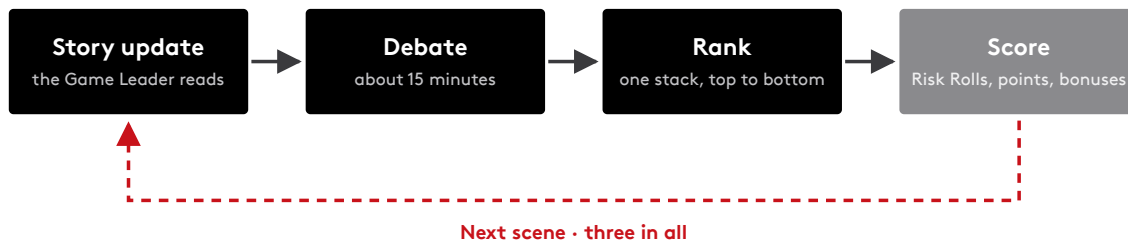
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The Scenario

1 Pent Up at a Glance

A negotiation game for Cabinets of eight about how America decides which defense projects to fund.

In each of three scenes, a new foreign-policy crisis breaks, and President Cormac Sterling's National Security Cabinet receives a proposed set of projects (represented by Project Cards) that it must prioritize and send to Congress as a supplemental budget request. The Cabinet has about 15 minutes to argue the cards into one ranked order, top priority first. Each player scores for the projects their own agency proposed or quietly endorsed, and the whole Cabinet earns a bonus if the projects it funded actually handle the crisis.



Key Decision	Rank every Project Card in the scene, from most to least important. Higher ranks earn more points.
The Challenge	Every player has a Priority List: one project their agency publicly proposes, and others it secretly endorses. Political points flow to whoever backed the projects that ranked high.
The Catch	Political points ignore whether a project works. America's security doesn't. Projects carry odds of success and failure, and only the Cabinet's combined capability averts the crisis.
Players	Eight per Cabinet, one per role. All roles play the same, but they are not equally balanced. The materials support up to 10 Cabinets, or 80 players.
Time	About 90 minutes: a 15-minute briefing, three scenes of about 20 minutes each (15 of them negotiation), then final scoring and a debrief.
Space	A table per Cabinet and a screen the room can see for displaying game results.
Facilitators	A Game Leader, who reads the story, keeps time and enters every Cabinet's ranking. One Game Leader can run all 10 Cabinets if the materials are packed in advance. Extra facilitators help but aren't required.
Key Lessons	Budgets are zero-sum; risk-averse procurement buys too few bets; incentives across agencies don't line up; readiness today competes with preparedness for tomorrow; open and closed systems each have a price.
Materials	Table tents, character cards, Priority Lists and three decks of Project Cards per Cabinet, plus the game's scoring software on a laptop.

2 Story

READ ALOUD

Cormac Sterling is a legendary musician in a near-future America. He's the frenetic frontman for Cormac and the Trio, a band that once played to empty bars and now sells out the country's largest venues. The son of an army officer, his itinerant childhood took him all across America and to multiple overseas posts. He was attracted to music at a young age, and he used his burgeoning guitar and vocal skills to make fast friends and connect with whatever music he found wherever he happened to be living. Critics have dubbed his astonishing range of influences, blending everything from New Orleans cajun and Delta blues to Seattle grunge and Chicago house, as the advent of Amerifusion.

His universal popularity and jocular personality bring hope to a polity that is profoundly jaded with the two-party system. During an electrifying interview on a late-night comedy show one evening, after Cormac and the Trio has played a number of standards, the host jokes Cormac himself should just be made president for life. An outpouring of hollers from the audience spawns memes across social media and within weeks, pollsters are finding that Cormac leads the polls as an independent in a race that he isn't even in. He conducts an ironically named "listening tour" during which he does nothing but play music because "words so often divide us." With both parties struggling to attract voters and a telegenic independent capturing the nation's attention, Cormac eventually becomes the first independent to win a presidential election since George Washington.

For many, it feels like the re-founding of America. He enjoys a honeymoon as he enters office. His empathy for the American everyman nets him commanding performance on domestic issues. Yet, on foreign policy and defense, he struggles. Despite his army father — or maybe because of it — Cormac is entirely ignorant of international relations, a situation made even more challenging by the tectonic change of technology and tactics underway globally. He has assembled a group of relative newcomers to the defense world to lead critical departments in the hope of transforming a sclerotic bureaucracy and preparing it for the rest of the twenty-first century. America's debt clock is ticking up though — just as the country's adversaries prepare for midnight.

3 Gameplay

In *Pent Up*, President Sterling, his secretary of defense and his national security advisor assemble a National Security Cabinet of 8 players to organize supplemental budget requests to Congress. Players will take on the roles of:

- Secretary of the Army
- Secretary of the Navy
- Secretary of the Air Force
- Secretary of Homeland Security
- Director of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
- Director of National Security Agency (NSA)
- Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- Secretary of Commerce

All roles are considered equal and play the same. Unlike typical *Riskgaming* scenarios, these characters are unnamed and have no biography.

The game is conducted over three scenes representing the foreign policy crises striking the first year of the Sterling administration. In each roughly 15-minute scene, the Game Leader will read a story update, and then the National Security Cabinet will debate how to prioritize a predetermined set of projects for funding from Congress. When the Game Leader calls time, the Cabinet will hand in their final ranking, which will determine points for each player and also the overall ability of the United States to counter that scene's threat.

Like many *Riskgaming* scenarios, *Pent Up* is best when multiple Cabinets play in parallel as a multiverse. Ideally, each Cabinet competes and cooperates within its own world, allowing the relative scores of players taking on the same role to be compared, highlighting the outcomes of different decisions. While all roles play the same, they are *not* equally balanced in this game. The game materials are designed for up to 10 Cabinets of 8 players each, for a maximum player count of 80. If there are not equal divisions of 8 players, all projects should still be used in the game, but certain roles should be left empty — just as if a leader didn't show at a meeting.

How It Plays

4 Rules

Project Cards

During a scene, each National Security Cabinet will be given an identical set of **Project Cards** that can be funded by the government. There are 8 Project Cards in Scene 1, and 12 each in Scenes 2 and 3. Each Project Card has a title and description, as well a series of metrics that determine its impact on Scoring:

- **Probability of Success:** The percentage likelihood that the project will succeed with Congressional funding.
- **Success Capability:** How good the technology is at solving that scene's crisis if it succeeds.
- **Probability of Failure:** The percentage likelihood that the project will fail with Congressional funding.
- **Failed Capability:** How good the technology is at solving that scene's crisis if it fails.
- **Defense Jobs** (Scenes 2 and 3 Only): The number of defense jobs the project creates, in thousands.
- **Open/Closed** (Scene 3 Only): Whether a project is closed-source, open-source or neither.



A Scene 3 Project Card.

Project Cards may also list a **Proposer**, identified by the seal of the agency that is pushing for the project as its highest priority. In Scene 1, every project has exactly one Proposer. In Scenes 2 and 3, four of the projects will have no Proposer, indicating good ideas that don't have incumbent political support.

Priority List

In addition to the Cabinet's shared set of Project Cards, each player will be given their own **Priority List**. Assembled by their agency's staff, this Priority List identifies which projects the player should push for in their negotiations. The top project on the list — listed first and in bold — will always be the one in which the player's agency is the public Proposer. Additional projects that are **Endorsed** by the agency will be listed afterward.



An example Scene 1 Priority List.

Both the Proposer project and the Endorsed projects affect the scoring for the player as described later in the rules.

All players know who is proposing each project. However, a player's project endorsements are secret and are known only to that player. Players can decide whether to keep their endorsements secret or to reveal them strategically in their negotiations. The number of endorsements per project ranges from 1 to 5.

Negotiations

Players are free to use whatever methods they want to rank the Project Cards within the time limit set by the Game Leader (generally 15 minutes). They must turn in a complete set of Project Cards at the end of the scene stacked with the highest priority project at the top and the lowest priority project on the bottom. The Game Leader will then input the ranking for scoring.

5 Scoring

1. Risk Rolls

First, independently for each Cabinet and for each funded project, the Game Leader determines which projects succeed and fail by computing a **Risk Roll** through the game's software. The Risk Roll is determined by each project's **Probability of Success** and **Probability of Failure**. Once the roll is conducted, it is fixed for the rest of the game for that Cabinet and project.

2. Political Scoring

Each player will score their own individual points based on their ability to advocate for projects in which they are the Proposer and for projects they have Endorsed.

Successful and Failed Capability plays no role in Political Scoring, because the credit an official receives for securing Congressional funding is often divorced from the outcome of that particular appropriation.

Each Project Card is assigned a **Rank** based on how the Cabinet has stacked the cards. That Rank will determine the pool of points available to that Project Card. The higher the Rank, the more points a project will earn. Since Scene 1 only has 8 cards compared to Scenes 2 and 3, which both have 12 cards, the points offered are as follows:

PROJECT RANK	SCENE 1 POINTS	SCENE 2 & 3 POINTS
1st	16	20
2nd	10	13
3rd	7	9
4th	5	7
5th	4	6
6th	3	5
7th	2	4
8th	1	3
9th	n/a	2
10th	n/a	1
11th	n/a	0 (Unfunded)
12th	n/a	0 (Unfunded)

In Scenes 2 and 3, Projects ranked as 11th or 12th receive no points, since they weren't funded by Congress. They will also not be included in calculating bonuses as described later.

Once the pool of points for each project is determined, each player will receive an equal fraction of the pool based on the number of players who have that project on their Priority List. For instance, if a project during Scene 1 was ranked first and was on the Priority Lists for 4 players, then the project would have 16 points in its pool, and that would be divided four ways such that each player receives 4 points.

Critically, the Proposer of a project receives double points. Continuing our previous example, whoever was the Proposer of the project would gain 8 points instead of just the 4 points they received from the pool. Note that while the Proposer gets double points, this doesn't affect the equal split of points between players.

The sum of received points from all projects becomes the **Political Score** for that player.

3. Mission Success Bonus

For Mission Success, we calculate a Mission Success index. First, we determine the capability produced by each project by conducting the Risk Roll and selecting the Success Capability and Failed Capability based on its outcome. Then that capability is multiplied by the points from the project's Rank from Political Scoring.

For instance, in Scene 1, the top project would be worth 16 points. If it had 5 for Success Capability and 3 for Failed Capability, then depending on the Risk Roll, it would contribute 80 or 48 respectively to the Mission Success index.

We then aggregate all of these values to determine the scene's Mission Success index. *Pent Up* has pre-determined thresholds that the index must surpass in order for America to avert that scene's crisis. The threshold is roughly three-quarters of the scene's maximum value. If the Cabinet exceeds that threshold, then everyone's score is increased by 20% as a bonus. Failure has no penalty, and there is no linear scale: it's all or nothing. This bonus is additive to all others.

4. Defense Jobs Bonus (Scenes 2 & 3 Only)

Scenes 2 and 3 introduce the Defense Jobs metric to Project Cards. Depending on how the players prioritize Defense Jobs in assigning Ranks to Project Cards, they can expect to gain an additional scoring bonus of up to 20%, allowing them to compete against other Cabinets for victory.

Importantly, Risk Rolls have no effect on Defense Jobs; even a failed government project creates jobs! Projects placed in ranks 11 and 12, though, are considered unfunded and create no Defense Jobs.

We calculate the Defense Jobs index just as we did the Mission Success index before.

The Defense Jobs bonus is up to 20%. Unlike Mission Success, it's not all or nothing. Instead, it scales up as players do better or worse on the index. This bonus is additive to all others.

5. Open/Closed Bonus (Scene 3 Only)

Scene 3 introduces an Open/Closed metric, where each Project Card is defined as Open, Closed or Neither.

Players can score up to a 20% bonus for choosing to maximize open-source projects or closed-source projects, with the bonus declining as the projects are more neutral or more mixed. We calculate an index just as we did with Mission Success and Defense Jobs. The players themselves can choose which direction they want America to go, and the game doesn't determine which is better. This bonus is also additive to all others.

Final Scoring

Once all three scenes are complete, the Game Leader will announce **Final Scoring**.

First, for each of the eight roles in the game, the Game Leader will identify the player with the highest score across all of the Cabinets. Then, the Cabinet with the highest overall Mission Success capability in the game will be crowned the winner. Any ties are considered equal.

6 Scene Stories

Scene 1: Dr. Strangelove Out of Africa

A military junta has led Niger since the coup d'état in July 2023. The junta has rapidly degraded democratic institutions, suspended the country's constitution and kicked out French armed forces. However, its ability to provide critical services — including power and water — has seriously declined, and large-scale protests have broken out across the capital Niamey and into the countryside.

In the chaos, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), widely believed to be backed by the remnants of the Wagner Group following the death of founder Yevgeny Prigozhin, seizes key infrastructure sites and topples the junta. It declares the dawn of a new caliphate.

It's also the dawn of the Sterling administration, which just entered its fourth week. Senate confirmation hearings for senior national security appointments have just finished, and staff are still getting caught up on the global situation. Meanwhile, other Western nations, including France, are distracted by the war in Ukraine and conflict in the Middle East. Stretched thin, they can do little to intervene.

ISGS quickly seizes full control of French company Orano's uranium mine, which supplies the bulk of uranium to France. Fear spreads about the prospect of uranium making its way to hostile nations including Iran and North Korea. In addition, facing the prospect of ISGS quickly expanding, millions start fleeing the Western Sahel region. The Wagner Group accepts trafficking money and shuttles migrants to Libya, where they attempt dangerous crossings over the Mediterranean.

The Sterling administration is facing its first major foreign policy crisis. Politics throughout the Western world are becoming more polarized, and there are heightened concerns of global terrorism. To many, another so-called forever war appears to be in the offing.

Notes

In this introductory scene, there are exactly 8 Project Cards for 8 players. Defense Jobs is not a consideration in this scene.

Scene 2: Global Nervous Breakdown

As the Sterling administration handles the crisis in the Sahel, America's adversaries see an opportunity to wreak havoc on the superpower's economy. In particular, they see a target in SpaceX, which has highlighted the planet's interconnectivity with its ever-expanding network of Starlink satellites. Thanks to the rapid rise of AI models built on compute and data, the networks that underpin human civilization have never been more important. They've empowered staggering growth, but have also increased America's dependency on vulnerable systems ripe for hostile disruption.

And so, a constellation of countries, including China, Russia, Iran and North Korea (the so-called CRINK), launch a hybrid war targeting connectivity. They are aided by their proxies from the far left, the far right, political extremists and religious terrorists, all of whom have interests in undermining the new AI economy.

Satellites have been hacked and deactivated, dangerously degrading their orbits as they plunge back to Earth. Critical subsea cable lines have been sabotaged, slowing data flows and forcing them to reroute. Meanwhile, Russian and Chinese activity in the Arctic has brought more attention to the lack of

connectivity near the North Pole, as EM interference is high and America's polar icebreaker fleet remains critically underfunded.

The attacks on the nervous system of the economy have led to a massive recession in America. With President Sterling's poll numbers losing their honeymoon luster, the administration is focused on both mitigating these threats while also increasing the number of Defense Jobs Congress funds.

Notes

This scene introduces Defense Jobs as a metric for Project Cards. The number of Project Cards increases from 8 to 12, which means 4 Project Cards have no Proposer.

Scene 3: Do Androids Dream of Electric Warfare?

China has strengthened its dominance in the South China Sea, pushing back nations such as the Philippines and Vietnam from their legally-recognized exclusive economic zones. While past Chinese tactics have included launching aggressive fishing fleets and building artificial islands near its mainland, China recently undertook a new initiative that would radically reduce Vietnam's access to these critical waters. During a small standoff, shots were fired, and what started as a minor skirmish soon expanded into a full-blown proxy war.

Rather than amassing hundreds of thousands of troops on the border like Russia in Ukraine, China positioned millions of drones, repurposed from preparations for an invasion of Taiwan. In a historic turnaround, Vietnam is now fully backed by the United States and Europe, which see protecting the country as critical to thwarting President Xi Jinping's ambitions. The new proxy war requires a complete change in the nature of fighting; autonomous offense demands top-notch intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies capable of being rapidly deployed in the field.

President Sterling's National Security Cabinet has already handled several major crises, but this is the worst one yet, with fears of nuclear war looming ominously on the horizon. It needs to balance legacy and frontier technologies to ensure America's dominance in the century ahead.

Notes

This scene introduces an Open/Closed metric to Project Cards. Players get a sliding bonus of up to 20% based on prioritizing all-closed or all-open projects.

7 Key Lessons

Pent Up highlights the critical tradeoffs made in the Pentagon's budgeting process as it passes the National Defense Authorization Act. It simulates the political fights between different department and agency heads, which can be overlapping or entirely orthogonal to the goals of improving U.S. national security.

The game has many tradeoffs that encapsulate real world tensions. First, the Pentagon's budget is ultimately zero-sum, so there is a daunting challenge balancing established programs of record against new capabilities that are faster, more capable, and more efficient, but often more risky. *Pent Up* highlights how the Pentagon could move more toward a portfolio model where it can have 10 projects, some of which are successful and others are failures. Unfortunately, today's procurement culture attempts to avoid all risk.

Second, incentives are not aligned between major stakeholders. Congress wants more local jobs, while individual service branches want tech that is specialized to them, and the Pentagon wants to avoid risk and thus political scandal. While everyone wants the best national security for America, the incentives of each person in the system widely varies, often leading to sub-optimal outcomes.

One of the most obvious places where this tension holds is the balance between readiness today versus preparedness for the future. Should we be buying technologies to fight the wars that are already underway right now, or should we be investing in new capabilities to fight future wars that haven't even started yet? In a zero-sum budgeting culture built on risk mitigation, it can be extremely hard to balance these objectives.

Finally, we add a metric in Scene 3 that simulates the conflict between open-source and closed-source hardware and software. Proprietary systems are often better integrated and have superior performance, but come at the cost of being siloed from other systems. That situation can degrade overall battle performance, and lead to moments where the total is less than the sum of the parts. Open systems allow for more interoperability and redundancy, but are often less agile given the need to standardize protocols and then customize them for every installation.

Pent Up assumes that a mix of closed- and open-source technologies is actually the worst of all outcomes, since the United States won't get the benefit of high performance from vertical integration nor the combinatorial effects of an open ecosystem. Unlike other tradeoffs in this game, this relationship is highly contested.

Running It

8 Preparing and Running the Game

The Game Kit

You can download the materials for the game at the Lux Riskgaming homepage at riskgaming.com/scenarios/pent-up. The Game Kit includes everything you need to play:

1. This game booklet
2. Table Tents: Print the individual table tents you need for the number of Cabinets playing.
3. Character Cards: Print one set per Cabinet.
4. Priority Lists: Print one set per Cabinet.
5. Project Cards — Scene 1: Includes 10 full sets. Print one set per Cabinet.
6. Project Cards — Scene 2: Includes 10 full sets. Print one set per Cabinet.
7. Project Cards — Scene 3: Includes 10 full sets. Print one set per Cabinet.
8. Presentation Deck: The Game Leader's slides for teaching the rules and introducing each scene. Project it on the big screen; there's no need to print it.

Printing Notes

- Print every file except the Presentation Deck double-sided, flipping on the long edge. Each page of fronts is followed by its page of backs, and the Priority List backs are mirrored so each seal lands behind its own list.
- Each table tent names its Cabinet for a famous U.S. general or admiral and numbers the table, 1 to 10.
- Each Project Card is labelled with its table and project number ("Table 1/Project 1"), and its back shows the scene, project and table number. Give each Cabinet the sets labelled with its table number.
- The Priority Lists file holds a new list for every player in each of the three scenes.

Technology

- **A laptop running the scoring software**, for entering each Cabinet's ranking and running the Risk Rolls. It's on the scenario page, riskgaming.com/scenarios/pent-up, alongside the game kit.
- **A projector or large screen**, for the Presentation Deck, the story updates and the results.
- **The game videos**: an intro, one video for each of the three scenes, and a conclusion. They're linked on the scenario page, riskgaming.com/scenarios/pent-up, and also collected in a YouTube playlist at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLDhF1zZfO6Q>. Play them from the laptop on the big screen, with speakers loud enough for the whole room.

People

ROLE	DOES
Game Leader	Reads the story and each scene's update, keeps time, collects each Cabinet's stack, enters the rankings and announces the results.
Extra facilitators	Optional. They can hand out decks, collect stacks and answer rules questions at the tables. One Game Leader can run a full room of 80 alone if every Cabinet's materials are packed in advance.

Before Game Day

Most of the work is printing and sorting cards into sets.

Print and Pack

1. Print the table tents and Project Card sets for the number of Cabinets playing, as well as one copy of the character cards and Priority Lists per Cabinet.
2. For each Cabinet, make a packet: its table tent and eight character cards, and then prepare each scene's set of Project Cards and Priority Lists.
3. Hand each player only their own Priority List. Endorsements are secret.

Fewer than 80 Players

Seat as many full Cabinets of eight as you can. If the room doesn't divide evenly by eight, use **all** the Project Cards anyway and leave some roles empty, just as if an official didn't show up to the meeting. Which roles go empty is up to chance: assign roles at random and leave the rest unfilled.

The Room

- One table per Cabinet, marked with its table tent, far enough apart that Cabinets can't overhear each other's deals.
- A screen everyone can see.
- Speakers, tested with the intro video before players arrive.

Run of Show

The game runs in three scenes, each with the same rhythm: story update, negotiation, hand in, score.

Each scene takes about 20 minutes: the story update, 15 minutes of negotiation, then collecting and entering the rankings. The game should be finished in about 90 minutes.

CLOCK	LENGTH	WHAT HAPPENS
-0:10	10 min	Doors. Seat players at their Cabinets and hand out character cards
0:00	5 min	Welcome, and the Story (chapter 2)
0:05	10 min	How to play, then questions
0:15	20 min	Scene 1: Dr. Strangelove Out of Africa
0:35	20 min	Scene 2: Global Nervous Breakdown
0:55	20 min	Scene 3: Do Androids Dream of Electric Warfare?
1:15	5 min	Final Scoring
1:20	10 min	Debrief

The Presentation Deck

The Presentation Deck teaches the game one scene at a time: the full rules before Scene 1, then only what changes before Scenes 2 and 3. Between scenes it rests on a title slide, so the screen stays on the deck while Cabinets negotiate and you score.

SLIDES	SECTION	WHAT THEY COVER
1–5	Intro	Title, What Is Pent Up?, the National Security Cabinet, the tables named for generals, and the three scenes.
6–39	Scene 1	The full rules: the Project Card, handing in the stack, Mission Success and its 20% bonus, Project Priority Points, and Political Scoring, including split endorsements. Then questions, the 15-minute clock, and a title slide to hold on while you score.
40–47	Scene 2	What changes: Defense Jobs, points down to 10th, two projects left unfunded, and the 20% Defense Jobs Bonus. Then a title slide for the rest of the scene.
48–52	Scene 3	What changes: Open, Closed or Neither, and the 20% Open/Closed Bonus. Then a title slide for the rest of the scene.
53–54	Scoring and Debrief	Questions, then the closing title slide.

The Briefing

Play the intro video, then read the Story (chapter 2). Teach the rules from the Presentation Deck, slides 1 to 36, which follow Gameplay, Rules and Scoring (chapters 3 to 5), and take questions on slide 37.

SAY THIS

You are President Sterling’s National Security Cabinet. In each scene, rank every Project Card from most to least important and hand me the stack when I call time. You score for the projects on your Priority List, and the Proposer scores double. Your endorsements are secret: reveal them only if it helps you. But remember, Congress doesn’t care whether a project works. America does. If your Cabinet’s funded projects meet the crisis, every one of you gets a bonus.

Scene 1: Dr. Strangelove Out of Africa

Hand out the Scene 1 deck and Priority Lists, play the Scene 1 video, then read the Scene 1 story (chapter 6). Put up slide 38 when you start the clock, and slide 39 while you score.

SAY THIS

You have 15 minutes. Hand me all eight cards in one stack, top priority on top.

Scene 2: Global Nervous Breakdown

Score Scene 1, then hand out the Scene 2 deck and Priority Lists, play the Scene 2 video, and read the Scene 2 story (chapter 6). Walk through what changes on slides 40 to 46, then leave slide 47 up for the rest of the scene.

SAY THIS

Two things change. There are now 12 Project Cards, and four of them have no Proposer: good ideas with nobody in this room pushing them. And the cards now show Defense Jobs. Rank them well and your Cabinet earns a bonus of up to 20%. Congress only funds the top 10. Anything you rank 11th or 12th gets nothing.

Scene 3: Do Androids Dream of Electric Warfare?

Score Scene 2, then hand out the Scene 3 deck and Priority Lists, play the Scene 3 video, and read the Scene 3 story (chapter 6). Walk through what changes on slides 48 to 51, then leave slide 52 up for the rest of the scene.

SAY THIS

One last change. Every card is now Open, Closed or Neither. Lean your funded projects all one way, open or closed, and your Cabinet earns a bonus of up to 20%. Which way is up to you. A mix earns the least.

Final Scoring

Score Scene 3, then announce Final Scoring (chapter 5): the best player in each role, then the winning Cabinet. Play the conclusion video before moving to the Debrief.

The Debrief

The Results Deck

The scoring software ends the game with a Results deck on the big screen. In the facilitator's display controls, choose **Results**, then step through it with **Next Slide**. The slides run in this order:

SLIDE	WHAT IT SHOWS
Final Scoring	The game's artwork and title, to put up while you get ready for the reveal.
Who Took the Risks	One bar per Cabinet: each funded project's chance of failing, weighted by the rank it was given, stacked by scene. A dashed line marks the safest game the cards allowed, and the caption gives the boldest and most cautious totals possible. It scores nothing; it shows how each Cabinet played.
Awards	One slide per award, each with up to three runners-up. An award appears only if someone earned it, so a quiet game has fewer.
Best in Role	One slide per role, with its seal: the top score for that role across all Cabinets (ties are shown), then every Cabinet's player in that role, each bar split by scene.
The Winning Cabinet	The Cabinet with the highest overall Mission Success capability, then every other Cabinet in order, with its capability and points.

Final Scoreboard	A card per Cabinet, ranked: its overall capability and points; for each scene, the projects that succeeded out of those rolled, whether it reached Mission Success (✓ or ✗) and the bonus it earned; and each player's scene scores and total.
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The Awards

AWARD	GOES TO
The Pork Barrel Pig	The player whose Priority List projects created the most Defense Jobs in Scenes 2 and 3, weighted by each project's rank and split among the players who listed it.
The Longest Shot	The least likely project (45% or lower) that succeeded in a top-three rank.
The Defense Primest	The safest project (75% or higher) that still failed in a top-three rank.
The Degenerate Gambler	The Cabinet with the most failed projects.
The Hottest Hands	The Cabinet with the longest run of successful Risk Rolls, if it's longer than two.
The Dumpster Diver	The Cabinet that gave the largest share of its rank points to projects with no Proposer.

Who Took the Risks and the Final Scoreboard are the two slides to go back to during the questions below.

Suggested Questions

1. **Politics or mission.** Did your Cabinet rank for points or for security? When did those pull apart?
2. **Risk.** Did you back the long shots with high capability, or the safe bets? Did a portfolio of risky projects pay off?
3. **Proposers and orphans.** What happened to the projects nobody proposed in Scenes 2 and 3? Did good ideas without a sponsor get funded?
4. **Secret endorsements.** Who revealed their list, and did it help?
5. **Jobs.** Once Defense Jobs counted, did your ranking change? Should it have?
6. **Open or closed.** Which way did your Cabinet go in Scene 3, and why? Did anyone end up in the mixed middle?
7. **Across the Cabinets.** Players in the same role had the same cards. Why did their scores differ?
8. **The real Pentagon.** Which dynamics felt realistic, and which didn't?

Final Thoughts

Close by returning to the Key Lessons (chapter 7). Then put the Presentation Deck back up and end on slide 54.



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