

F. A. S. NEWSLETTER

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NEW INTERNATIONAL PROPOSALS DISCUSSED

RUSSIA OFFERS DISARMAMENT PLAN

A stir has been created in the long-stagnant disarmament atmosphere by recent indications of possible basic changes in the Soviet Union's inflexible stand of the past several years. These indications arrive on the international scene when, on the one hand, recent agreements to rearm West Germany mark increased attention to the defense of Western Europe and, on the other hand, the US plan for the pooling of atomic energy for peaceful purposes progresses without Russian participation thus far (see adjacent article).

As expressed by Russia's delegate Vishinski in his speeches of September 30 and October 1 to the UN General Assembly and Political Committees, respectively, the new Soviet position proposes: (1) a 50% reduction in conventional armaments and appropriations for them in the first 6 months to 1 year; this initial disarmament to be supervised by a proposed temporary commission under the Security Council. (2) The cessation of nuclear weapons production and the elimination of stockpiles of such weapons to proceed concurrently with the reduction of the remaining 50% of conventional armaments and appropriations for them in the second 6 months to 1 year; this final disarmament of all weapons to be supervised by a permanent commission to be established under the Security Council.

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CONCESSIONS According to US delegate James J. Wadsworth, the Russians have made only one clear concession -- to accede for the first time to a reduction of conventional armaments before the prohibition of nuclear weapons. However, additional evidence of a conciliatory attitude on the part of the Russians can be seen (a) in their agreement with the concept of a progressive disarmament not predicated on the initial and immediate abolition of nuclear weapons; (b) in their failure to include pork-barrel issues such as the admission of Red China to the UN as a requirement of the disarmament discussions; and (c) in their apparent interest in the British-French proposal that nuclear weapons be used for defensive purposes only. The relevancy of this latter point is questionable in view of the Soviet desires for total disarmament. Still, in the affairs of nations, East-West accord is a phenomenon whose rarity warrants observance.

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RESERVATIONS Several reservations to Russia's proposals have been expressed by Western nations. First, the acceptability of the levels of armaments as of Dec. 31, 1953 (proposed by Vishinski) as a reference point for percentage reduction is questioned in view of the Russian preponderance of conventional arms on that date. The West favors disarmament reductions which would maintain a balance of power. Secondly, the Russian's disarmament timetable does not assure that the disarmament commissions will be effective in inspection and control organizations. Thirdly, since the disarmament commissions will be under the UN Security Council, their decisions will be subject to Russia's veto powers.

As matters currently stand, the Soviets have expressed a willingness to join the US, Britain and France in accepting a Canadian resolution for secret negotiations on overall disarmament. Vishinski, in his UN Disarmament speech of Sept. 30, emphasized Russian belief in "the possibility of peaceful coexistence of states irrespective of differences in their social structures." Time will tell whether this will help the world to reach a workable disarmament agreement.

ATOMIC POOL PLAN PROGRESSES

In spite of the enthusiastic world-wide reception given to President Eisenhower's proposal for an international atomic energy pool for peaceful purposes, events to date have been shaped by Russia's reluctance to support the plan. Soviet fence-sitting makes it appear now that the plan will be put into effect without their participation.

First announced by the President at the UN General Assembly meeting in New York on December 8, 1953, the plan was aimed at bringing the peaceful benefits of atomic energy to the whole world "under the aegis of the UN." It was also hoped that Soviet-US cooperation on the humanitarian aspects of nuclear technology might, in time, lead to cooperation for the international abolition of nuclear weapons.

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CHRONOLOGY Developments since the President's proposal were concerned first with procedural and substantive talks between Secretary Dulles and Soviet Ambassador Zaroubin and Foreign Minister Molotov in Washington and at the Berlin and Geneva conferences. Reports from Geneva revealed that Russia would not join the plan unless a prior agreement were reached on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, a condition which had been shown previously to be unacceptable to a majority of the UN members including the US. After Dulles announced the receipt of a "99% negative" reply from the Russians, President Eisenhower announced on Sept. 6 that the US had agreed with "a number of other nations to go ahead now with the formation of an international agency which will foster the growth and spread of the new atomic technology for peaceful use." The President's remarks were part of a Labor Day speech which marked, appropriately, the start of construction of a commercial-size atomic power plant at Shippingport, Pa.

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U.S. PROGRAM At the recent opening of the 9th UN General Assembly session in New York, the US position was outlined by Secretary Dulles in his speech of Sept. 23 as follows: (1) The creation of an international agency whose initial membership will include members from all regions of the world. (2) The calling of an international scientific conference in the spring of 1955 to consider the technical problems involved. This conference would be held under the auspices of the UN. (3) The opening of a reactor training school in the US for students from abroad. (4) The invitation of a substantial number of medical persons from abroad to participate in the work of cancer hospitals in this country where so-called atomic energy techniques are used to advantage.

In commenting on the Soviet's view with regard to the atomic energy pool, Dulles pointed out to the Assembly that the day before -- when it became known he would speak on this subject -- the Russians broke a 5-month silence by affirming their willingness to talk further. Dulles replied indirectly to the Russians by assuring the Assembly that US plans did not exclude any nation from participating in the program.

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SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE Although President Eisenhower's original pronouncement of the plan last December indicated a dominant role for the UN, present US policy suggests UN participation only with regard to the convening of the scientific conference. In fact, there has been discussion of establishing a specialized agency to direct the program, which

(Continued on Page 4, Column 2)

H-BOMB TESTS and EFFECTS

With the death on Sept. 23 of one of the Japanese fishermen sprinkled with radioactive dust on the fishing boat "Lucky Dragon," the world took solemn note of what the N. Y. Times called "the first known victim of the hydrogen bomb." Radio operator Aikichi Kuboyama's death, ascribed by Japanese physicians to jaundice resulting from "radiation sickness," occurred almost 7 months after exposure to "fall-out" from the US H-bomb test in the Pacific last March 1. While Japanese resentment found expression in demonstrations and public protests, the US government sent the widow a check with a note saying, "while no sum of money can compensate for your loss, it is the desire of the Government of the US that something be done to make life easier for you and your children." Commented the Times, "the lesson to be learned is that even greater precautions must be taken if there are to be more bomb tests."

RADIATION EFFECTS Meanwhile, renewed attention has been given to possible effects on the human race from exploded nuclear weapons. A. H. Sturtevant of Calif. Inst. of Tech., long-time collaborator of Nobel Prize winner T. H. Morgan and a world-famous geneticist in his own right, said in an article (Science, Sept. 10): "There is no possible escape from the conclusion that the bombs already exploded will ultimately result in the production of numerous defective individuals... And every new bomb exploded, since its radioactive products are widely dispersed over the earth, will result in an increase in this ultimate harvest of defective individuals."

He therefore expressed his disturbance with AEC Chairman Strauss' assurance, at a White House press conference on March 31, that the "small increase in natural 'background' radiation in some localities within the continental US [is] far below the levels which could be harmful in any way to human beings..." This presumably "is intended to refer only to immediate effects on exposed individuals," Sturtevant commented, "but... there are important other effects, less immediately apparent. Every geneticist familiar with the facts knows that any level whatever is certain to be at least genetically harmful to human beings when it is applied to most or all the inhabitants of the earth."

Another ominous note came in a speech at Oxford Sept. 1 by E. D. Adrian, Nobel Prize-winning physiologist and British Royal Society president. "We must face the possibility," he said, "that repeated atomic explosions will lead to a degree of radioactivity which no one can tolerate or escape." (N. Y. Times, Sept. 2.)

In an open letter addressed to geneticists and evolutionists in the US and presumably in other countries, Ichiro Haya-saka, president of the Japanese Society for the Study of Organic Evolution, appealed for "abeyance of attempts of such tremendous destruction" (Science, Oct. 8). Describing the threatened effects of widespread dispersion of radioactivity in the upper atmosphere, the letter called on "Western evolutionists to take the leadership of this appeal, because you are the men most conscious of the destructive influence due to the radiation upon the life on the earth."

TESTS CONTINUE All the furor seemed to have little noticeable effect, either on nuclear test explosions conducted by the USSR or by the US. On Sept. 17, the Russian news agency Tass announced that "trials of one of a type of atomic weapons were carried out in the Soviet Union during recent days." The Japanese newspaper Asahi stated that Japanese scientists detected the Russian explosion and estimated that it took place on Wrangel Island in the Arctic Circle due west of Point Barrow.

In his first press conference since he became Chairman of the AEC in July, 1953, Adm. Strauss said Sept. 9 that the US "will be continuing tests as weapon development proceeds" but that "there would be no distinction" made publicly between the kind of weapons tested. The AEC announced on Sept. 25 that "it is preparing its Nevada Proving Ground for a series of atomic tests commencing early in 1955, probably about mid-February."

Noting that "our first imperative task... is to use the atom to assist in the elimination of want," AEC Commissioner Murray proposed in a speech Sept. 21 that a nuclear power reactor be built in Japan with American funds. And Sen. Kefauver suggested on Sept. 20 that we build "a series of atomic plants for peaceful purposes and the development of cheap atomic power in Asia and some of the backward parts of the world."

CAVEAT LECTOR

Since the first knowledge of a successful US explosion of an H-bomb, scientists and the informed, or would-be-informed, public have missed an authoritative report chronicling the conception and development of this weapon -- as did H. D. Smyth's Atomic Energy for Military Purposes in the case of the atomic bomb. The Hydrogen Bomb: The Men, The Menace, The Mechanism, by James Shepley and Clay Blair, Jr. (David McKay Co., New York, \$3), purports to give some of this information in the case of the H-bomb. Shepley and Blair are professional writers, being head and Pentagon reporter, respectively, of the Washington bureau of Time magazine. It is widely agreed that their book displays well their professional skill. Said Charles Poore, reviewing the book in the September 30 N. Y. Times, "it is as readable as a thriller."

There is equally wide disagreement about the accuracy of the book's statements, conclusions, and imputations. Said Joint Atomic Energy Committee Chairman Cole (R, N.Y.) in a press release of Oct. 6, the book "has provoked controversy to the point where it threatens to create division within our scientific community at a time when team work based on understanding and mutual respect is urgently needed."

SINISTER REASONS According to the Washington Post of Sept. 30, the book's "thesis is that a handful of men, led by scientist Edward Teller, had to fight against overwhelming odds to force through a decision and program to make the hydrogen bomb. Opposing the project, for what the book suggests were improper if not sinister reasons, were the majority of the AEC and the Commission's General Advisory Committee. No. 1 villain in the book is J. Robert Oppenheimer, then chairman of the GAC. The book also heavily criticizes the Los Alamos atomic weapons laboratory and its director, Norris E. Bradbury. It charges that he and the laboratory were hostile to the H-bomb idea, dragged their feet on the project, blocked it for years, and that the organization was 'loaded with Communists.'"

On Sept. 24, Bradbury called the first press conference at Los Alamos in 8 years to challenge the book's accuracy, saying, according to Elie Abel (N. Y. Times, Oct. 3), that in the face of "such extraordinary and fantastic comments, imputations, speculations... we could not rely on our traditional 'no comment.'" Hans Bethe is quoted as saying: "Listing all the untruths in this book would make another book." Gordon Dean is reported by Abel to have "culled from the text 60 to 70 misstatements."

No one except the authors and publisher -- not even the book's "heroes," including AEC Chairman Strauss and William Borden (whose letter to the FBI labeling Oppenheimer as a Russian agent came to light in the recent hearings on that case) -- has risen to defend the accuracy of the book's statements. In fact, Strauss attempted to prevent publication at this time by offering to buy the manuscript and seal it for 25 years, the United Press reported Sept. 26. However, the book's general viewpoint receives support in some quarters. Raymond Moley praises it in his column in the Oct. 11 issue of Newsweek, concluding: "The expert should be 'on tap, not on top.'"

PRESIDENTIAL CITATION In commenting on the book, both Strauss and Smyth emphasized the unanimous AEC recommendation of the unique Presidential Citation awarded to the Los Alamos Laboratory last July for its work on nuclear weapons. Smyth is quoted by Walter Kerr (N. Y. Herald-Tribune, Oct. 4) as saying, "We hoped the wording of the citation would clarify in the public mind the role played by many scientists working together in our weapons laboratories to develop the hydrogen bomb. We hoped it would counteract a growing tendency to sensationalize the contributions of a few."

Rep. Cole leaves the warning: "While the book reads well -- as might be expected from the authors who are both Washington correspondents -- I would caution any buyer in the marketplace with a paraphrase of an old Roman maxim: 'Caveat lector -- let the reader beware.'"

"FEDERAL FUNDS FOR SCIENCE, III," issued by the National Science Foundation on Oct. 5, summarizes data on federal support of research for fiscal years 1953, 1954 and 1955. It is available from the Gov't Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. for 30¢.

REVERBERATIONS • • • •

Under this title, Joseph and Stewart Alsop have written for the October 1954 Harper's Magazine a detailed analysis of the Oppenheimer case. Borrowing their title from Zola's account of the Dreyfus affair, the Alsop brothers "accuse the Atomic Energy Commission in particular, and the American government in general, of a shocking miscarriage of justice in the case of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer. We accuse Oppenheimer's chief judge, the chairman of the AEC, Admiral Lewis Strauss, and certain of Oppenheimer's accusers, of venting the bitterness of old disputes through the security system of this country. And we accuse the security system itself, as being subject to this kind of ugliness, and as inherently repugnant in its present standards and procedures to every high tradition of the American past."

Out of this article emerges a picture of personality conflicts that have been hinted at before but never put down in such unequivocal terms. The authors find evidence in much of the testimony before the Gray Board that strong disagreements about policy have given rise to suspicions of motivation. In a final section entitled "What is Security?" the Alsops express the gravest concern over the security system which was the framework for the Oppenheimer incident and conclude that the AEC ruling "did not disgrace Robert Oppenheimer; it dishonored and disgraced the high traditions of American freedom."

BUREAUCRATIC INFIGHTING Another analysis of the affair Oppenheimer appears in the October Atlantic Monthly, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Harvard history professor. He, too, expresses alarm at the way in which the case was handled and at the indications that more than objective weighing of evidence went into the final decision. "Bureaucratic infighting in the government has always been bitter and acrimonious; it is likely to be, when dedicated men strongly believe that the safety of the republic depends on their policies; and each side characteristically regards the other as deficient in morality. But when the winning side starts trying to outlaw the losers as 'security risks,' as happened in the China service and is now beginning to happen in the scientific-military world, one wonders what sort of people our future governments will attract."

CONFIRMATION BLOCKED Senate confirmation of the appointment of Trevor Gardner as Asst. Secretary of the Air Force, approved by the White House and unanimously by the Armed Services Committee, was blocked August 18 at the instigation of Sen. Hickenlooper (R, Io.). According to the Washington Star of Aug. 20, a Defense Dept. official said it "was probably because of Mr. Gardner's interest in the defense of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer." Gardner was reported to have spoken well of Oppenheimer to Thomas A. Morgan, a member of the Gray Board, before the hearings that led to suspension of Oppenheimer's security clearance. Sen. Hickenlooper said he asked for delay because "there were several points I wanted to clear up." Gardner, who is Air Force special assistant for research and development, worked on rocket research at Calif. Inst. of Technology and later at Los Alamos on the atomic bomb.

OPPENHEIMER RE-ELECTED On October 1, Oppenheimer was unanimously re-elected to the directorship of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, a post he has held since 1947. Adm. Strauss, president and trustee of the Institute, was present at the trustees' meeting where Oppenheimer's appointment was renewed. In his Sept. 9 press conference, Strauss had told reporters, "The possession of a 'Q' clearance is not a criterion for the position as head of the Institutes."

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Under the title, "U.S. SCIENCE -- The Troubled Quest," Theodore H. White, national editor for The Reporter, has written a penetrating analysis of the present status of science and security. His 2 consecutive articles, appearing in the issues of Sept. 14 and 23, point up the profound dependence of science and scientists on federal support, and the effect of the Oppenheimer case in making scientists aware of their vulnerability. To scientists advising the government, it appears that the opinions of today can provide political ammunition for tomorrow. Mr. White discusses in detail many other aspects of the status of science, and elaborates on the scientists' attitude toward the security program.

FAS -- LOCAL ACTIVITY IS KEYNOTE

Concrete evidence of the growing interest in FAS and its healthy membership increase will be presented to the FAS Council at its next meeting November 27 in Chicago. The Council will be asked to give formal recognition to new branches or chapters in at least two, and perhaps three, communities where no local group now exists.

Interim recognition, subject to Council approval, was given to the newly formed BERKELEY BRANCH by the FAS Executive Committee, meeting in New York July 31. * * * * * An organizational meeting of FAS members was held at Cooper Union on Sept. 22 to discuss formation of a NEW YORK CHAPTER. A steering committee was selected to plan further activities, with Hugh C. Wolfe serving as chairman and George Sidney Hill as secretary, until a regular election takes place. * * * * * Following an exploratory meeting of FAS members last July, decision was reached at another meeting Sept. 28 at the Univ. of Southern California to form a LOS ANGELES COUNTY BRANCH.

LOCAL PROGRAMS The "Operation Ivy" film of the 1952 H-bomb tests will be shown at the next meeting of the ROCHESTER BRANCH on October 26. * * * * * A luncheon program July 7, attended by over 100 scientists attending meetings of the Amer. Physical Society, was arranged by a group of FAS members in SEATTLE. Prof. J. H. VanVleck discussed anti-intellectual trends in a talk entitled "Science, the Bête Noir," and Tacoma attorney J. H. Binns spoke on some aspects of the security system. * * * * * The LOS ALAMOS BRANCH recently sponsored the broadcasting of 6 lectures by J. R. Oppenheimer over local radio station KRSN. Entitled "Science and the Common Understanding," these talks were delivered in 1953 in the Reith Lecture series -- an annual event of the British Broadcasting Corp. (Information about this tape-recorded series is available from the Program Dept., BBC, 630 Fifth Ave., New York 20.)

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES A committee of the WASHINGTON CHAPTER has been formed to take over the service formerly provided by the Nat'l Committee on Atomic Information in answering inquiries on atomic energy. Bibliographies of books, periodicals, pamphlets, and films, as well as a study kit may be obtained at nominal cost from the WAS Committee on Atomic Information, 1749 L St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

The ATOMIC SCIENTISTS OF CHICAGO (ASC), an FAS chapter, invested part of its treasury in a printed version of "The Ft. Monmouth Security Investigations, Aug. '53-Apr. '54." Previously available only in mimeographed form, this report was the result of an intensive survey by the FAS Scientists' Committee on Loyalty and Security. (Copies are available from the FAS Washington Office at 75¢ apiece.) ASC also provided reporters an opportunity to quiz Chicago physics professor Enrico Fermi on the Shepley-Blair book (see p. 2) at a press conference Oct. 5.

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The FAS is a national organization of scientists and engineers concerned with the impact of science on national and world affairs. The Newsletter is edited by members of the FAS Washington Chapter.

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VISAS -- PROGRESS and REFLECTION

Two cases of visa troubles for foreign scientists were recently favorably resolved by the State Department, but only after the applicants had rearranged their plans in the face of initial difficulties. Cambridge physics professor P. A. M. Dirac, whose visa refusal was reported in the Aug. 16 FAS Newsletter, was finally granted a visa on Aug. 10. By then, however, he had given up plans to spend the 1954-55 academic year at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study. Current plans call for him to arrive at the Institute next April, according to Science Service. Earlier, in a letter to the N. Y. Times (June 3), Princeton University physics professors Walker Bleakney, John A. Wheeler and Milton G. White had pointed out that Dirac's "exclusion from this country would represent a distinct loss to American science."

Marcus Oliphant, chief of the British scientific team which came here during World War II to work on the A-bomb and now director of the Research School of Physical Sciences at Australia's National University in Canberra, was granted a visa on Aug. 18. Oliphant, who failed to get a visa to attend a conference of nuclear scientists in the US in 1951, was still "inadmissible under the law" but had been granted a waiver by the Attorney General, according to the State Dept. (Warren Unna, Washington Post, Sept. 24). Due to arrive in Honolulu Sept. 3, he had cancelled the trip without giving any reason, the Department said.

ALIENATING FRIENDS In a letter-to-the-editor of the Washington Post of October 7, British physicist and Fellow of the Royal Society Kathleen Lonsdale reported on her experience in applying for a US visa. "I found that I was expected to supply a list, with dates, of all the organizations of any kind to which I had belonged since Dec. 31, 1918," she wrote. She felt that, "no matter how hard I tried, I would not be able to produce an honest and complete list, since, like all people in public affairs, I must have belonged to dozens, if not hundreds, of organizations. . . I therefore altered my itinerary to pass through Canada."

Still finding it necessary to stop over in Honolulu, she commented that "all the US citizens in Honolulu and their friendliness did a little to dispel the general dislike and contempt of US official immaturity that was otherwise being forced upon me. Is it too much to hope that the people of the US will wake up soon to the fact that they are less likely to keep out their enemies by the means they now adopt than to lose their friends?"

Speaking to the American Legion on Aug. 27, Rep. Carl Hinshaw (R, Calif.), chairman of the research and development subcommittee of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, stressed the significant role "our foreign-born friends have played" in research and development. "We would do well to consider carefully whether or not our official attitudes toward foreign-born scientists and engineers and our immigration and visa laws governing their admission to the US are really serving the cause of freedom."

ATOMIC POOL PLAN PROGRESSES (Cont. from Page 1). would be connected to the UN in the same manner as UNESCO. This change of heart on the part of the administration is seen as an attempt to obtain a larger measure of Congressional support for the program than it might have received in its initial form.

US permanent representative to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. revealed that the US would sponsor a General Assembly resolution requesting UN Secretary Hammarskjold to call the scientific conference, although the US would not ask the Assembly's Political Committee to put the item at the top of its agenda, since some delegations had requested delay. On Oct. 1, Hammarskjold appointed a 5-man committee under Ralph Bunche with directions to report "at the earliest possible moment" after examining: "appropriate methods, procedures and organizational arrangements for the calling and conduct of the international scientific conference to meet in the spring of 1955 as well as the secretariat responsibilities in this operation; and possible organizational relationships of the UN with an international agency, organized for the aforementioned purposes under the aegis of the UN."

The **AMERICAN NUCLEAR SOCIETY** held its organizing meeting Oct. 11 at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington. The group describes itself as "the world's first professional society of scientists and engineers representative of all scientific disciplines engaged in research, development and application of nuclear technology." Principal objectives include fostering the advancement of nuclear science and technology in the US and helping promote international cooperation on peacetime applications of atomic energy. "Many of the most prominent people working in the nation's atomic energy program" are among its 200 charter members, the announcement said. * * * * A new **SOCIÉTÉ EUROPEENNE d'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE**, headed by Sir John Cockcroft, director of Britain's Atomic Energy Research Establishment, has been set up "to promote cooperation in nuclear research and development." (Chem. & Eng. News, Aug. 30.)

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The **AMERICAN ASSEMBLY**, in a report issued Oct. 10, asked the President to appoint a commission "to seek the development of new standards and new methods of loyalty-security determination" and "to review the entire problem." Founded by President Eisenhower when he headed Columbia, the Assembly consists of 65 leaders in business, education, labor and government. Their report, issued during the 6th biannual session at Arden House, said in part: "...the national interest requires effective employe security procedures, but basic human values are at stake when an employe is charged with disloyalty. Security charges in today's climate of public opinion cast a stigma on the employe which may quite literally ruin him and his family. . . existing security procedures and . . . widespread public misconception of what the security program is . . . are doing serious damage to recruitment and to the effectiveness and morale of the government service."

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