History of Physics Newsletter

VOLUME VI, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 1995

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election ballot is on the inside of the back page of this Newsletter. Members of the Forum on the History of Physics are urged to vote and to return their ballots immediately. This year we need to elect a Vice-Chair, who will serve in that position for one year. The subsequent year, that person becomes the Chair-Elect, and the following year the Chair of the Forum for a one year term. This year we also need to elect a Secretary-Treasurer and two Executive Committee Members, all to serve for three years.

FROM THE EDITOR

At its April 1994 meeting, the Forum's Executive Committee confirmed that the History of Physics Newsletter should be issued twice each year, with a substantial October issue to include the customary "Reports" and "Summaries" features, in addition to news items, announcements, and reports; and a more modest February issue devoted to the Forum's annual election, and to include other items deemed to be of The Executive Committee may interest to readers. decided at a later date that the February issue should be similar in length and content to the October issue, if a sufficient number of Forum members so desires. That will also depend, in part, on the volume of contributions received from readers: e.g., announcements, notices of meetings, and contributions to the "Summaries" feature prepared by Elizabeth Garber (please refer to the October 1994 issue of the Newsletter, page 11, for examples and instructions). Additionally, as a new departure I invite readers to volunteer to prepare brief essays on topics related to their interests for possible publication. To start the ball rolling and provide one possible model, I have included some comments on the 50th anniversary of Science - the Endless Frontier in the "Reports" section of this edition. Anyone tempted to write for a subsequent edition should contact me; my coordinates appear in the box on the next page.

The Editorial Board and I would welcome any comments, ideas, and criticisms regarding the Newsletter

that you may have -- either in writing, or in person at the April business meeting of the Forum in Washington.

FORUM NEWS

APS 1995 Meetings

NB: At press time, the dates and times of these sessions had not been determined. Check the respective APS Meeting Bulletins for that information.

The Forum is involved in three sessions of historical interest at APS metings this spring. The first, at the March 20-24 meeting in San Jose, California, is being organized by Michael Nauenberg, University of California, Santa Cruz on Isaac Newton. Speakers will be: Alan Shapiro, University of Minnesota, on "Newton's Optics," about which he has recently published; S. Chandrasekhar, University of Chicago, who is completing a study of Newton's mechanics and mathematics on, "Some Propositions of Newton's Principia;" and Michael Nauenberg, who has published on Newton's mathematics, on, "Newton's Early Computational Method for Dynamics."

The Forum is co-organizing two sessions at the joint APS-AAPT in Washington, DC, April 18-21. The first,, to commemorate the centennial of the discovery of x-rays, is co-sponsored with the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. It is being organized by Elizabeth Garber, who will also chair the session. The speakers will be: Spencer Weart, Director of AIP's Center for the History of Physics, on "Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen;" Albert Wattenberg, University of Illinois, on "Physical Experiments with X-rays, 1895--1913;" Nahum Kipnis, Bakken Museum, on "Early Theories of X-rays;" and John S. Laughlin, Memorial Hospital, New York, on "The Development of X-rays for Diagnosis and Treatment."

The second April session, on Radioactivity and Health: The Cold War Legacy, is being organized by Mark Goodman, of the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, and co-sponsored with the Forum on Physics and Society. Peter Johnson, of the Office of Technology Assessment, will chair the session.

The History of Physics Newsletter is published by the Forum on the History of Physics of the American Physical Society. It is distributed free to all members of the Forum. Others who wish to receive it should make a donation to the Forum on the History of Physics of \$10 per volume (\$5 additional for airmail) Each volume consists of five Editor: William Blanpied, Division of issnes National International Programs. Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230. (Internet: wblanpie@nsf.gov). Associate Editors: Stephen G. Brush, Department of History and Institute for Physical Sciences and Technology. University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 (Internet brush@ipst.umd.edu), and Elizabeth Garber, History Department, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794.

Speakers will be Mark Goodman, on "Uncovering the History of Human Radiation Experiments;" Marvin Goldman, President, Health Physics Society, on "The Legacy of Russian Nuclear Production;" and Barton Hacker, Livermore National Laboratory, on "Setting Radiation Standards: Science, Politics, and Public Attitudes."

Business Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Forum will be held immediately following the session on x-rays in the same room, with reports from the officers. All members are welcome to attend and participate.

APS NEWS

APS Council Meeting

At the November 6, 1994, meeting of the APS Council, it was announced that the April 1996 general meeting of the APS will not be held in Washington, DC. Negotiations with hotels in Indianapolis are in process. Explorations are also underway about the feasibility of holding the April 1997 meeting in Canada or Mexico as a continuation of a series of joint meetings between the APS and its counterpart societies in those countries initiated at Cancún in September 1994 (see below). For 1999, the March and April general meetings may be combined for a week-long centennial commemorative meeting in March in Atlanta (see October 1994 Newsletter, page 2), with March 22 and 23 devoted to

commemorative sessions, and the five subsequent days to technical sessions.

Councillors of all four APS fora objected to APS treasurer Harry Lustig's proposal to restructure and, in effect, limit the funds they are allotted (see October 1994 Newsletter, page 2). As one result, an eight-member Task Force was subsequently appointed by APS President Burton Richter charged with reviewing, "the role of the Forums within the context of APS' overall structure and operations and to examine and make recommendations on the respective programmatic roles of Forums and Committees"... and "on the scheme of financial subvention of the Forums from the central treasury."

The Task Force has been asked to submit its report and recommendations to the APS Council in April 1995.

Electronic Member Services

The APS is instituting expanded electronic member services. All members of the Forum who have not done so should therefore send their e-mail address to APS to permit both APS and the Forum Executive Committee to communicate more promptly with members. Members who have already provided this information should have received APS's occasional NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY notes via e-mail.

North American Physics Meetings

The APS and the Canadian Association of Physicists (CAP) joined the Sociedad Mexicana de Física (SMF) to organize a meeting of the three societies in Cancún, Mexico, September 26-30, 1994. The meeting, held in conjunction with the SMF's regular annual meeting and labeled "CAM 94," [for Canadian/ American/Mexican], featured invited plenary talks, parallel invited technical sessions, and two days of poster sessions. Although a series of invited sessions on "Physics and Society" was featured, there were no talks on the history of physics. Representatives from physical societies in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba and several other Latin American countries who attended the meeting discussed with their APS, CAP and SMF counterparts the feasibility of a hemisphere-wide meeting. While that possibility was dismissed as being premature, a decision was made to continue the CAM series with the CAP hosting the next meeting in June 1995, in conjunction with its regular annual meeting at Laval University, Quebec City from June 11-16. The APS has agreed, tentatively, to organize the third such meeting, probably in 1997.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Biography of James E. Webb

NASA's Quarterly NASA History: News and Notes has announced that, early this year the Johns Hopkins University Press will publish an administrative biography of James E. Webb, NASA Administrator during the Apollo era. Written by W. Henry Lambright of Syracuse University, Powering Apollo: James E. Webb of NASA emphasizes the leadership style and management that Webb (who had previously held high level policy positions in the Bureau of the Budget and the Department of State) brought to complex organizational issues.

National Endowment for the Humanities **Programs**

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grants support research that brings the knowledge, methods, and perspectives of the humanities to bear on the subjects of science, technology, and medicine. Both historical research and research dealing with current issues in which the humanities play a critical role are eligible. Research may focus on the form, content, and purpose of scientific knowledge; the processes through which scientific knowledge is developed; the invention, innovation, and transfer of technology; the social, ethical, and legal implications of scientific and technological innovations; the interactions among science and technology and other elements of culture; and the methods and concepts used by scholars in the humanities to study science, technology, and medicine.

The NEH also supports approximately 10 conferences each year intended to advance the state of research in a particular field or topic of major importance. These conferences bring together scholars working on related topics in one or more disciplines at a time when an exchange of ideas will most benefit ongoing research. Proposed projects should have a specific set of research objectives that can best be achieved by a conference. Presenters and discussants usually number 10 to 30 and should include those scholars, junior and senior, American and foreign, whose current work and interests make them best suited to contribute to the discussion.

Prospective applicants are advised to consult in advance with a program officer. Contact: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Research Programs. Phone: (202) 606-8210; FAX: (202) 606-8204; Internet: NEHRES@GWUVM.GWU.EDU.

National Science Foundation Grants

During Fiscal Year 1994, the National Science Foundation's Program in Science and Technology Studies awarded the following grants pertinent to the history of physics: Diana Barkan, California Institute of Technology, "The Problem of Radiation Reaction in Physics;" Gravitational Ian Bartksy, American University, "Nineteenth Century Timekeeping;" Stanley Goldberg, Smithsonian Institution, "A Biography of Leslie R. Groves;" David Hounshell, Carnegie-Mellon University, "Technological Diversity and Technological Advice in the American Semiconductor Industry, 1952-65;" Karen Johnson, Saint Lawrence University, "Maria Goeppert Mayer: a Scientific Biography;" Sharon Kingsland, American "History of Earthquake Seismology;" Martin Klein, Renn Jurgen, and Robert J. Schulmann, Princeton University Press, Collected Papers of Albert Einstein;" Carolyn Merchant, University of California, Berkeley, "The Emergence of General Systems Theory: the Society for General Systems Research, 1954-78;" Naomi Oreskes, Dartmouth College, "The Rejection of Continental Drift;" Joseph Needham and Anne Shillinglaw, East Asian History Society, "Science and Civilization in China;" Martin Rudwick, University of California, San Diego, "The Reconstruction of Recent Earth History;" John Stachel, Boston University, "History of Relativity;" Joan Warnow and Spencer Weart, American Institute of Physics, "Study of Multi-instituional Collaborations;" and M. Norton Wise, Princeton University, "Laboratory Cultures and Research Networks: Women Scientists and Community Building in Nuclear Physics Twentieth Century Early Radiochemistry."

International Directory of Historians of Physics

A preliminary edition of this directory was issued in 1994. It aims to include all historians, physicists and others who are actively working in history of physics (including astrophysics, geophysics, biophysics, mathematical physics, etc.), even if only on a part-time basis, and have one or more publications on this subject. Those who has not yet received a copy or the relevant questionnaire, should contact Stephen Brush, Committee on History and Philosophy of Science, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; e-mail address: brush@ipst.umd.edu. Please include your mailing address and also your e-mail address, if you have one.

MEETINGS

The History of X-Rays, Radiology Radiotherapy and Medical Imaging: This conference will be held at the International Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, UK, June 13-14, 1995. Two days of historical papers by European and U.S. historians will be featured. For further information contact David Cantor or John Pickstone, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, UK.

The Visual Culture of Art and Science: from the Renaissance to the Present: The conference will be held at the Royal Society, London, July 12-14, 1995. Its purpose is to promote greater understanding of the changing boundaries and interactions between what contemporaries called art (or craft) and natural philosophy/science in the period from about 1400 to the present day. Speakers will include distinguished art historians, historians of science, artists, and scientists. For further information contact the British Society for the History of Science, 31 High Street, Stanford in the Vale, Farington, Oxon SN7 8LH, UK.

The Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S Society) will hold is 1995 meeting from October 19-22 in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The History of Science Society will hold is 1995 meeting from November 2-5 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

REPORTS

Goals 2000 in the UK?

The June 1994 edition of the Newsletter of the British Society of the History of Science reports that at a Friday Evening Discourse at the Royal Institution, a few weeks earlier, the Minister of Public Service and Science, the Right Honorable William Waldegrave, MP, had emphasized that:

. he wanted to put a stop to the "Balkanization of culture." One way he thought of doing this was to "seek to give all scientists and engineers a wider grounding in history, philosophy or aesthetics."

The minister stated that he wants:

. . arts students to be taught History of Science to show them that science is an integral part of culture and not to be looked down on a la Appleyard whom, interestingly, Waldegrave detests. Second if science and engineering students should be taught arts subjects, it is inconceivable that these would not include history of science and technology.

The editorial concludes with a speculation that may be particularly tantalizing to U.S. historians of physics who despair that science is rarely mentioned in the controversial, though still tentative proposed national *Goals 2000* guidelines for the teaching of history:

If the Office of Science and Technology seeks to put these ideas into practical effect, then the History of Science community could benefit enormously, since the implications of Mr. Waldegrave's position is that all students should do some history of science during their degree course.

Science - the Endless Frontier Plus 50

Institutions as well as those who reflect on them are fond of centennials, as well as simple integral fractions of centennials. To the extent that U.S. science policy can be said to be an institution, let alone even to exist in any coherent form, it was almost inevitable that 1995 would be marked by more than one event to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Vannevar Bush's almost legendary, Science - the Endless Frontier. Like the Bible, Science - the Endless Frontier is more often quoted for the weight of its authority, than read or studied seriously. Yet it is also the case that the many of the ideas and propositions advanced in the 40 pithy pages that comprise the body of that report furnished the building blocks for non-defense science policy. Gerald Holton has aptly characterized the Bush report as a political manifesto, a treatise composed during the final, optimistic months of World War II by a politically savvy engineer who, having organized and focused the talents of academic physicists and others in closely allied fields to fight a war, now sought legitimacy for the novel proposition that the U.S. government should provide financial support for their self-directed, individualized peacetime pursuits!

Serious events making use of the 50th anniversary of Science - the Endless Frontier as a point of departure for exploring the past and current state of U.S. science policy include a series of three full-day sessions organized by Columbia University Provost Jonathan

Cole and collectively entitled, Science the Endless Frontier 1945-1995: Learning from the Past, Designing for the Future. The first session on December 9, 1994, brought together an impressive group of historians and science policy scholars, including Donald Stokes of Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School, and Lewis Branscomb, Harvey Brooks, I. Bernard Cohen, and Gerald Holton of Harvard. Subsequent sessions are scheduled for May and October 1995.

Another 50th anniversary event is being organized by the Society of the Sigma Xi at Research Triangle Park, North Carolina on March 2 and 3. Entitled, Vannevar Bush II: Science for the 21st Century, the Sigma Xi Forum will feature presentations by NSF Director Neal Lane, former National Academy of Sciences President Frank Press, and Sigma Xi (and APS) President, Kumar Patel.

If many of the ideas that characterize US nondefense science policy emerged amid the heady optimism of the immediate post-World War II period, their implementation took place during the first months of the massive defense buildup from which the country may now be emerging. Between May 1950, when the congressional bill to establish a National Science Foundation was enacted into law, and March 1951, when Alan T. Waterman of the Office of Naval Research was nominated as the first NSF Director, appropriations for defense had almost doubled in response to the Korean War - - and the threat of a wider war. By the time the National Science Board held its first meeting in December 1950, the Chinese had intervened massively, UN troops were in full retreat, and General Douglas MacArthur and others were calling for nuclear strikes on China. President James B. Conant of Harvard, elected first National Science Board Chairman that month, observed sadly that he was no longer certain that World War III could be prevented. He and many other prominent scientists agreed that a Scientific Advisory Committee to the President should be created to plan for the mobilization of US science when that inevitable

emergency arose although, it should be noted, Vannevar Bush, dissented from that position for a time.

Perspectives on probable directions for US science policy during the early, critical months of the Korean War on the part of influential scientists and prominent civilian and military officials were faithfully recorded in over 300 pages of typewritten memoranda by William T. Golden, a New York investment banker and, from October 1950 through April 1951, consultant to the Bureau of the Budget. Mr. Golden's memoranda recount the numerous interviews he conducted in conjunction with his commission to prepare a report for President Truman on the mobilization of science for war.

Copies have been deposited in several locales, including the AIP Center for the History of Physics. The collection will also provide a point of departure for an April 13 session at the annual AAAS Science and Technology Policy Colloquium in Washington, DC, entitled, "Science -- the Endless Frontier Plus Five: Impacts of the Early Cold War on US Science Policy," which will feature Golden and several others who were participants in, and witnesses to, the Korean origins of the cold-war science policy paradigm.

William A. Blanpied

FORUM ELECTION

The ballot is on the last page. Please vote for: a Vice-Chair, a Secretary-Treasurer, and to new members of the Executive Committee.

Nominees For Vice-Chair

Stanley Goldberg

I am a historian of science (BS, Physics, Antioch College; AMT, Physics, Harvard University; Ph.D. Harvard University). In my professional career I have written numerous articles on the history of late nineteenth and early twentieth century physics and its relationship to changing cultural fashions and values. I have also specialized in using the history of science as a tool in teaching science to non-scientists in a manner that emphasizes the close relationship between scientific and humanistic social institutions. I am convinced that one can present any substantive issue in science to lay people without throwing the baby out with the bath water, i.e. without oversimplifying the problem to the point of non existence. I combined these interests in writing Understanding Relativity: Origins and Impact of a Scientific Revolution (Birkhaeuser, 1984). I am currently a consultant to the Smithsonian Institution and I am also completing a biography of General Leslie Groves, the military head of the Manhattan Project, Fighting to Build the Bomb: The Private Wars of Leslie Groves, which will be published by Steerforth Press. I have been publishing articles on particular aspects of this work. Much of the work on the Groves biography has been made possible by a series of NSF-grants.

work. Much of the work on the Groves biography has been made possible by a series of NSF grants.

Over and above encouraging studies which examine the social niche occupied by physics, I see the Forum as providing a bridge between physicists and historians of physics and as helping to forge a link between the American Physical Society and the larger community.

Lincoln Wolfenstein

I am a University Professor of Physics, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. My research has been in the theory of weak interactions, in particular the problem of CP violation and neutrino physics. I received the J. J. Sakurai Prize of the American Physical Society in 1992. I edited a book on CP Violation with reprints of basic papers on the subject. Memberships: NAS, APS, AAAS, FAS.

I have had a long-standing interest in the history of

I have had a long-standing interest in the history of nuclear weapons and associated policies and have published some articles on this subject. A major part of my teaching over the last 10 years has been a course on the Nuclear Age given jointly with professors from history, philosophy, and political science. I also give a course on introductory physics for non-science students with considerable emphasis on the historical development of physics in the spirit of Holton's texts from the fifties.

Nominees For Secretary-Treasurer

David C. Cassidy

David C. Cassidy is Associate Professor at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY, where he teaches and coordinates a program of courses on physical science for non-science students. He is the author of *Uncertainty: The Life and Science of Werner Heisenberg* (NY: Freeman, 1992), which won the AIP Science Writing Award and the Pfizer Prize of the History of Science Society. He has also authored a number of articles and reference works on the history of modern physics especially in Germany. His latest book, *Einstein and Our World*, will appear in early 1995 in the Control of Nature Series published by Humanities Press (Atlantic Highlands, NJ). He is currently interim Secretary-Treasurer of the Forum.

Bertram Schwarzschild

Bertram Schwarzschild was born in Vienna and grew up in New York City. He was an undergraduate at Cornell and received his Ph.D. in high-energy physics at After postdoctoral positions at Berkelev in 1967. Imperial College (London), the University of Chicago, the Max Planck Institute for Physics and Astrophysics (Munich) and the University of Toronto, he became an associate editor at *Physics Today*, where he's been for the last 15 years. There his primary activity has been covering research news for the magazine's "Search and Discovery" section. But he has also served as editor for contributed articles of historical interest by authors such as Gerald Holton (writing about Einstein's love letters), Al Wattenberg, Emilio Segre, Alexander Akhiezer (writing about Landau) and Iosef Khriplovich (writing about Fritz Houtermans). His translation of Boltzmann's humorous account of the summer (1905) he spent at Berkeley and Stanford appeared in the January 1992 issue.

Nominees For Executive Committee

Henry H. Barschall

Henry H. Barschall received his Ph.D. from Princeton and an honorary degree from Marburg He spent most of his career at the (Germany). University of Wisconsin-Madison where he is an emeritus professor in the College of Letters and Science, in the Medical School, and in the College of Engineering. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences where he chaired the physics section in 1980-83. He has had numerous assignments in APS including Editor of Physical Review C, Councillorat-Large, Chair of the Division of Nuclear Physics, Secretary-Treasurer of the Forum on Physics and Society, and currently member of the Publications Oversight Committee. He is a recipient of the APS Bonner Prize and of two awards by library associations. He has published a couple of historical papers: on the early days of fission and on the nuclear spin-orbit interaction.

Peggy A. Kidwell

Peggy Aldrich Kidwell is an historian of astrophysics and computing. She obtained her undergraduate degree in physics from Grinnell College and her Ph.D. in history of science from Yale University. She has published on early studies of solar radiation, on the Harvard astrophysicist Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin, on scientists and calculating machines, and on American astronomers in World War II. She also has written on a variety of topics in history of computing.

Kidwell is in the Section of Mathematics at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. There she watches over the museum's collection of pre-electronic computing devices, and has participated in exhibits on the metric system in America, on the history of psychological testing, and on the history of mathematics. She presently is contemplating an exhibition on Americans as a numbered people in a numbered world--that is to say, on the way in which we have come to describe the world around us and other people with numbers.

Robert J. Oakes

Robert Oakes was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota and attended the University of Minnesota, receiving a BS

in Electrical Engineering (1957), and MS in Experimental Physics (1959) and a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics (1962). From 1962 to 1964 he was a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University and from 1964 to 1968 he was an Assistant Professor at Stanford. During 1966-67 he was on leave at CERN and at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton in 1967-68. In 1968 he joined the faculty of Northwestern University as an Associate Professor and was promoted to Professor in 1970. Oakes has been an NSF Fellow, a Sloan Fellow, a Fulbright-Hays Distinguished Professor, and recently shared the Natural Science Prize of China. He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Oakes research has been in theoretical high energy physics and has largely concerned issues relating to current experiments in high His past research has emphasized energy physics. symmetries and weak interactions while his current interests are focused on the phenomenology of heavy quark systems.

Kameshwar C. Wali

I earned my doctorate in theoretical physics from the University of Wisconsin in 1959. After two years of postdoctoral research at the Johns Hopkins University, I joined Argonne National Laboratory in 1962, where I was until I joined Syracuse University in 1969. I have been at Syracuse since then other than frequent short periods on research leave at the International Institute of Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy, Institut des Hautes

Etudes Scientifiques, Bures-sur-Yvette, France, and Bengurion University, Beershaiva, Israel.

Throughout my career I have maintained strong interests in science and in its history and culture, and that was the reason for my participation as a founding member of the Forum on the History of Physics. This was also the reason that led to my writing Chandra; a Biography of S. Chandrasekhar (University of Chicago Press, 1990). I have been working on an oral history project with Louis Michel will be presented to the AIP's Center for the History of Physics. I have attended conferences on the history of physics in Barcelona, Paris and at Fermi Lab. My other recent activities related to history of science and physics: 1) participation in Five College Symposium on Science and Culture in honor of Louis Michel at Amherst where I presented a paper entitled, "Split Image of Science; is Science an Endangered Species?" 2) participation in a colloquium in Paris on the origins of modern science and presented an invited paper on the view of the Third World about European Science, 3) invited paper on the contributions of S. Chandrasekhar to General Relativity at the 13th Conference on the History of General Relativity.

I believe the Forum on the History of Physics has an important role to play in these days of a dwindling number of students majoring in physics and a general lack of interest in and misunderstanding about physics in the general public. I would like to explore how our forum can expand its role beyond APS and provide history of physics talks and presentations to the general public, to high school and college students.

1995 ELECTION BALLOT

This Ballot must be returned before March 21, 1995, to: Professor Elizabeth Garber, History Department, SUNY, Stony Brook, NY 11794.

	3
Vice-Chair Vote for ONE	Executive Committee Vote for TWO
Stanley Goldberg 45	Henry H. Barschall
Lincoln Wolfenstein	Peggy A. Kidwell
Secretary-Treasurer Vote for ONE	Robert J. Oakes
David C. Cassidy	Kameshwar C. Wali
Bertram Schwarzschild	

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