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**CHINA**  
and the  
**WASHINGTON CONFERENCE**

Series No. 3

**Problems Involved in the  
Washington Conference**

BY  
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Edited by the English Editorial Committee for the  
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## PREFACE

The Chinese Students' Alliance plans to publish a series of pamphlets before the convocation of the Washington Conference on various pertinent subjects bearing on China and the Washington Conference. The first of the series is an introduction to the general subject, China and the Washington Conference, written by T. L. Wang, prize-winner of the Wah Chang Trading Corporation Essay Contest. The second of the series is on the Shantung Question, written by M. Joshua Bau, which analyses the problem from the point of view of history and international law. The subject is brought up to date, and includes the recent exchanges of communications between the Chinese and Japanese Governments regarding the terms of settlement. Pamphlets on Tariff Autonomy and Extraterritoriality will soon be ready for publication and distribution. Another pamphlet entitled "Problems Involved in the Washington Conference", has been prepared by C. P. Cheng, which will soon appear in the series. Other pamphlets are in preparation, and as soon as ready, they will be distributed upon request.

MINGCHIEN JOSHUA BAU.



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## **PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE**

THE FAILURE TO PRODUCE A MORE SATISFACTORY WORLD SETTLEMENT IN 1919-20 WAS A SYMPTON OF AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL LASSITUDE RESULTING FROM THE OVERSTRAIN OF THE GREAT WAR. A LACK OF FRESH INITIATIVE IS CHARACTERISTIC OF A FATIGUE PHASE; EVERY ONE, FROM SHEER INABILITY TO CHANGE DRIFTS ON FOR A TIME ALONG THE LINE OF MENTAL HABIT AND PRECEDENT.

These are the words of H. G. Wells to characterize the situation existing at the time after the war and to count for the incapability to arrive at a sounder basis of peace. The Washington Conference, whatever be its virtue and prospect, is therefore a welcome step to all the nations, because it calls the world to a new state of consciousness and fresh mood of mind.

### **Background of The Conference**

It must be remembered, however, that the Conference was not grown out of sudden psychological impulses, but of numerous circumstances and issues that inevitably lead the interested nations to acquiesce to this step. A keen understanding of the background of these circumstances culminating in the calling of the Conference will aid better to appreciate the Conference itself.

### **U. S. as a Pacific Power**

For over sixty years events have been preparing the Pacific as a great theater of human action. The issue now lies there and not in the Atlantic. As late as 1868, the United States began to step out beyond its western

continental frontier into the Pacific. In 1898, Hawaii was formally annexed to the United States and in the same year, the war with Spain gave America the control of the Philippine Islands and the Island of Guam. All these acquisitions immediately made America an essential

Pacific Power.

### **Expansion of Japan**

In 1895, Japan began to expand. The war with China over the control of Korea had been fought and Japan acquired Formosa, thus bringing Japan's interest closer to the Philippine Islands. The Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 gave Japan the southern part of the island of Sakhalin, the whole of which was acquired by Japan during the military occupation of Siberia, despite the American protest. In 1910 it also formally eliminated Korean sovereignty and coerced the ruler to renounce his crown and country. In the treaty signed at Versailles, to which China as well as America have never attached their signatures, Japan was unlawfully given the occupation of Shaungtung and was also rewarded the mandates over the German islands north of the equator in the Pacific. By possessing these islands, Japan is in a position to encircle some of America's possessions, and particularly the island of Guam, the most potential American naval base in the Pacific water.

The nature of these advances and the direction of them, in a way quite unconscious to both powers, have been of extreme significance. It resembles the moves of the players checking each other. And the tension of advance and check, and check and advance is most significant.

### **Naval Expansion of Powers**

When the great war broke out, the United States was in alarm over her military as well as naval strength. By

1916 she seriously entered upon the naval building program which, little as she herself realized it, has upset the world. Great Britain now regards her sea supremacy as highly questionable. Japan, checking the American moves, has laid down a program which will give a fleet of four battleships of greater tonnage and of gun power equal to, if not greater, than the heaviest American ships. The United States and Japan have thus been in a tense conflict for the mastery of the Pacific.

### **Difference Between U. S. and Japanese Diplomacies**

A Japanese strategic advantage is that the Japanese consciousness is involved and the governmental direction is wholly considerate, while the American people in general, until only recently, is never conscious of the fact and the administrative direction of American moves is not considerate of consequence. If two destinies are to crowd each other, without a thought of consequence on one side and with the keenest consideration on the other, the consequence will mean the uncertainty of policy on both sides which makes the situation altogether tense. The Washington Conference has therefore this general background: If the Conference can get agreements which will loosen this extreme tension, eliminate rivalry, and hence curtail the preparation for war, peace will be preserved. Otherwise the causes which make wars are making them in the Pacific.

### **Difference Between Paris and Washington Conference**

Fundamentally speaking, the motive that prompted President Wilson to set up a League of Nations to settle international questions is exactly the same as that that prompted the efforts to create the Washington Conference. But the difference between them is just as fundamental. The idea at Paris was to erect "to order a per-

mament machinery to produce permanent peace, while the idea at Washington will be to find, by conscious practice upon the problems of the present, a method of negotiation, so satisfactory to all nations that it will come in time to be used on all occasions and that out of its operation will grow whatever machinery is needful to facilitate its use." It is now an open secret that the League of Nations is entirely ineffective. The Council of the League is no more than a debating society to which the powers send well known men, thus keeping alive the fiction that the world has a new authority, but they know that the League is only a "Parrot cage." The fact that the powers do not want as yet to abandon the League idea can be found in the reason that they find it useful, in the words of Henry Wales, in keeping the smaller nations occupied. It keeps their minds off important matters, gives them a satisfactory sense of being busy in minor world affairs and does not interfere with any really serious business.

### **Initial Difficulties**

But immediately following the proposal for the Conference, there are several difficulties rising out from three different directions that should call our attention, because they bear fundamental influence upon the Conference and in a definite sense concerns the status of China particularly. Failing to understand these will lead to disaster of the whole undertaking.

### **Preliminary Parley**

The first difficulty came from Great Britain. At the suggestion of Premier Hughes of Australia and highly endorsed by the heads of other dominions of the British Empire, the British government proposed a preliminary parley in advance of the Conference proper. This view



was strongly supported by Japan who was peculiarly anxious to have the scope of the Conference well defined before the Conference convenes. But this was opposed by the United States for several reasons. First, the preliminary conference was not intended to include all the nations invited to attend the major conference. A preliminary parley would probably and in fact inevitably cause suspicion in the mind of those uninvited nations that may seriously impede the advancement of the real object of the Conference. Secondly, if in a preliminary conference of a few powers, it would be possible to reach an agreement on fundamental points of difference, on great issues, it would be just as possible and just as easy for all the participating powers to reach such agreement in November. There can be no advantage but serious disadvantage in a possible preliminary deadlock. In view of these objections, the preliminary parley was not developed.

## Conference Agenda

The second difficulty came from the side of Japan who insisted on a preparation of an agenda of the Conference, particularly the Far Eastern issues. At the time, the United States was not ready to meet the situation, saying only that "it is not the purpose of this (American) government to attempt to define the scope of the discussion in relation to the Far Eastern and Pacific problems, but rather to leave this to be the subject of the suggestions of the Conference . . ." But in a recent proposed outline of the agenda for the Conference, Secretary of State Hughes would evidently have the Conference discuss the mandates, preservation of territorial integrity of China, spheres of influence, and concessions in China, and several other questions which Japan does not wish to discuss. It is opined that none of the European powers will suggest any elimination of these subjects but rather some addi-

tions may be urged. The attitude of Japan on this outline is of unknown quality. What she really desires is to exclude from the outline the subjects which she considers as already "settled," or as affecting no more than two powers. Mr. Hughes will not evidently limit his proposal to the scope desired by Japan. Wherefore it is to be a foregone conclusion that stern arguments, if nothing more, with Japan are sure to come.

### **Open Session**

The third difficulty in connection with the prospective Conference is on the principle of "open covenant openly arrived at." From the beginning, attempts were made in the American Congress to bind the Harding administration to an open conference policy. But such attempts literally broke down when Senator Lodge, the Republican leader, who was recently appointed a member of the American delegation, opposed sternly. To some, the secret or rather private conference is necessary. The decision must be enacted in open session. Open session is to give confidence in the mind of the public in the sincerity of the Conference. But whether or not the final decision will be made in open session, and how far the session will be made open depend entirely upon how great pressure the public opinion will bear on the conferees.

### **Problems of the Conference**

Having those foregoing paragraphs as the background, it will be necessary now to know what are some of the main problems that would inevitably become involved in the discussion of the coming Conference. Speaking generally, there are two main lines of problems—the Disarmament problem and the Far Eastern and Pacific problems. Of the former, we can dismiss it with a few words, because of its immense magnitude, and extreme vagueness.

## Disarmament

Disarmament is impossible, we can predict, unless the human nature for power and for expansion is wholly revolutionized. As long as the nations are subject to greed and ambition, all talks on the disarmament, whether limited or total, is futile. To be very specific, the Washington Conference is really one conference on the settlement of the Pacific and Far Eastern questions. Upon their solutions hinges the fate of the problem of disarmament. It is, therefore the second part of the Conference program that concerns us most. To pinch down to the real truth, the crux of the whole Pacific conference lies largely on the solution for agreement on the questions of China. Whatever is important in the Pacific problems looms large on China. China as a Far Eastern power has to study the situation seriously and carefully before she can adequately present her case to the Conference.

Anglo-Japanese Relations:

### Pacific and Far Eastern Problems:

(1) The Anglo-Japanese relation.—The main source of British and Japanese relation is found in the Anglo-Japanese alliance. China and America are deeply concerned with this alliance. China's protest over this alliance is based upon the fact that the alliance "has a great deal to do with China, while China has nothing to do with the alliance." China has suffered repeatedly at the hands of the alliance, but her protest was little heard and cared. Similarly, America, with her ever expanding Pacific trade and increasing importance as a Pacific power, can not tolerate its continuance.

It must be remembered that alliances are not expressions of sentiments but are formed to attain certain objects or to maintain a certain status. Japan's object is territorial

expansion, procurement of resources, control of the Pacific, and the development of the colonies where the Japanese can live and work. On the other hand, Great Britain's object is the control of the seas, maintenance of the Empire, restoration of its industries, the regaining of the world leadership in trade, and the re-establishment of financial leadership. The need of Great Britain is to recover, while that of Japan is to continue expanding. It is only in maintaining this alliance, that the two nations can peacefully work up to their goals one without the molestation of the other. But by maintaining it, they are putting themselves in direct conflict with the interests of China and America. There lies a great deadlock and it has to be solved if the peace of the Far East is to be maintained. But how? Great Britain as well as Japan does not want to arouse the intensely unfavorable attitude of China, nor do they want to hurt the feeling and friendship of the United States. Here is the opportunity to bring the alliance to open discussion. The public sentiment must bring pressure to see the real truth. The Washington Conference will furnish an acid test for the purpose of the alliance. If the purpose of Japan and Great Britain is sincerely peaceful, they will not agree to one thing at Washington and another between themselves. But no matter what changes England and Japan agree to make in the pact to suit the interests of China and America, the mere existence of the agreement is a camouflaged instrument for Japanese aggression. So long as the fundamental idea of the alliance exists, so long will Japan have a good excuse to carry on her policy of penetration into China, and so long will England be an accomplice to Japan's acts. This is the whole gist of the alliance. China as well as America should therefore use every effort to demand not the changes of the agreement but the cancellation of the alliance in totality.

## American-Japanese Relations

(2) The American-Japanese relations.—The American-Japanese relation concerns several problems of varying degree of seriousness. The questions of Yap, of Philippine Islands, of California, are few of the major problems. While it is impossible to discuss here those in detail, but one thing must be made clear. Wherever the American interest goes in the Pacific, it is always in direct conflict with that of Japan. Great Britain has her possessions all by themselves. But Japan and United States, bordering on either sides of the Pacific, have numerous objects of envy in common. By virtue of the possession of Philippines, Guam, and Hawaii, United States only partially controls the Pacific just as Japan only partially controls the Pacific by holding Formosa, Loochoo, Salkhalin, etc. Either of the dominations is insecure with the existence of the other. It is the real conflict between Japan and America. This conflict is intensified by the racial prejudices in California and tremendous expansions of Far Eastern trade of both nations. But that such conflict is not to be solved at the Washington Conference is only slightly doubted. The conflict in the meeting of physical force is to come. It will come not over the Yap question, nor any other individual questions, but over the intense tension in the moves of check and advance territorially, politically and economically. The situation is becoming more and more serious with the awakening and realization of the real truth on the part of the American people in general. The Conference may settle the problems on Yap, on Guam, or others, but as long as the two nations can not arrive at any mutual understanding on the fundamental and definite principles of action in the Pacific, the Conference will utterly fail its purpose of securing permanent peace.

## Siberian Questions

(3) Siberian Questions.—In face of other problems, the Siberian question will dwindle to a place of little significance. No nation will postpone its disarmament simply because the Siberian question is not adequately solved. The real status of the question depends upon the future development of Russia.

## Question Related to China

(4) Questions related to China:

## Open Door vs. Spheres of Influence

(a) Open Door against Spheres of Influence—Throughout the recent history of Chinese diplomatic relations which inevitably involve the economical and commercial relations, there we find two lines of policies always at play, namely: the Spheres of Influence and the Open Door policy. Ever since China's defeat in the Chino-Japanese war, the policy of the powers toward China was made clear and definite, and that policy was one of aggressiveness. The demand of Kiaochow by Germany in the year 1898 really marked the beginning of the tendency toward the spheres of influence. This was immediately followed by the demands of England for Wai-Hai-Wei, of Russia for Dairen Gulf, of France for Kwangchow Gulf, etc. As a consequence of all these demands, the different spheres of influence were confirmed and well established. Although the spheres of influence is only a political term, but viewing from the economical side, it involves the commercial, industrial, as well as mining interests.

From the beginning, England perhaps enjoyed the greatest interest, especially along the Yangsze provinces.

But step by step, the position of England began to slacken through the penetrations of Germany, Japan, and America into these provinces. Realizing the weakening situation, England called for the hand of France, and as a consequence, there developed the so-called economical alliance of England, France, and Germany, which was later joined by America. It was this alliance, which advanced several important loans to China for the construction of the trunk railways in the country. There we see a marked change in the policy of the powers as direct application of the Open Door policy, which gave birth only six or seven years ago. Although this consorted action was only a change of policy of capitalization, it was at the same time a shift from strict spheres of influence to a united action, in order that the balance of power may be preserved in the Far East.

In the first year of the Republic of China, Russia and Japan were invited to join the group which was later known as the banking consortium. Immediately the great loan, often known as the Reform Loan, was under way of negotiation. Just at the time when the agreement of the said loan was to be signed, President Wilson raised the protest that the new consortium intended to monopolize the situation and interfere with the domestic affairs of the new Republic, and demanded the conscientious withdrawal of the American group. This consortium began to lose its importance until two years ago when the new efforts were made to organize the new consortium which even now has not advanced any forward step.

At first, the distinction between the economic and the political loans was not clearly made. But late in 1912, England proposed that the loans that are of economical nature should be left to the free action of the individual nations and the right to contract loans which has to do with the political undertakings should be preserved to the consortium exclusively. Following this proposal,



the powers began to grasp the right in the minings, railways, and other industrial undertakings in their respective spheres of influence, in order to strengthen their holds. We see then that the two policies of spheres of influence and equal opportunity worked side by side for the first time and China's international relation witnessed another change.

### **Working of Open Door Policy**

Historically speaking, the Open Door policy was nominally agreed upon long after the powers had each a good hold on China; and when it was accepted, it was never put into effective operation. Moreover, the policy is not to totally or even ultimately liberate China from foreign aggressions, but rather to prevent the further grabbings. Every one is fond of talking the Open Door policy, but in its actual practice, it is no more than a mere policy.

Japan particularly, while favoring the Open Door, has done nothing to live up to it. The Lansing-Ishii note and the Anglo-Japanese alliance, as well as the Twenty-one Demands are deliberate attempts to disregard the principles of Open Door. The real difficulty of these lamentable situations wrought about by Japan as well as other powers, lies in the vagueness of the definition of the term of Open Door. What is Open Door? What is "Equality of treatment?" And what is "Equal opportunity"? These have never been defined. The powers are at will to interpret it as to fit their convenience, and at times disregard it entirely. What we expect then at the Washington Conference is to have the terms WELL DEFINED so as to allow no misunderstandings existing and being well defined, it must be preserved to the letter.



**Other Questions,  
as 21 Demands,  
Shantung, etc.**

(b) Other Questions.—The Open Door policy is the keynote to the proper solution and normal development of all international relations in the Far East. In its general form, it is only a matter of policy. There are, however, several other questions of particular nature against which China has the real grievance.\* The Shantung question, the twenty-one demands, extraterritoriality, the self tariff regulation, are but few of the many. They are questions of vital importance to China and to the Far East and consequently call for a just and speedy settlement. Perhaps the most outstanding in nature are the Shantung and the Twenty-one Demands. The attitude of the Chinese people toward these problems are clear. They demand the unconditional return of the Province of Shantung, and the unqualified cancellation of the Twenty-one Demands. They can not engage in a private negotiation with Japan, because a private negotiation is to their disadvantage. They must be settled before the international tribunal, in order that China and Japan may be put on equal foot and that the world justice may be effected. Another question of importance, as many have raised, will be the future management of China's finance. Undoubtedly, it is a question of singular importance. But given China chance to develop a good government, China's finance will take care of itself.

These briefly are the outstanding questions which will engage the mind of the conferees in the coming Conference for adequate settlement. Numerous new questions

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\*Several of these problems will be treated separately under different pamphlets.

will necessarily be brought out. But these are deep rooted, and all others, new and old, hinge upon them.

## **Japanese Attitude**

The Japanese attach grave importance to the Conference. They fear, as they have reason to, that the Conference is really directed against the Japanese interests. Japan, growing as she does so rapidly in the recent years, has aroused intense suspicion of not only the United States, but also of the whole world. It can readily be seen that Japan in order to maintain her position and prestige, must take a strong stand, even though she may be compelled to play the game single-handedly. Her national interest is at stake, and can not be handled carelessly. Undoubtedly, she will find a strong challenger in the United States in the Conference, but she will stand by her claims firmly. And if it is imperative, she may be willing to break off and resort to arms. By a war, it literally means a war with the United States. Never can Japan have a better chance before or after for a war with America as now. For the next two years, Japan will be in a far better off position than the United States, in matters of naval preparation. She will in the course of the next two years enjoy a relative strength that she can never again hope to reach. With her boats faster than the United States, able to choose her time, and to draw the American ships across the Pacific far from their base by attacking Philippines and Guam simultaneously, Japan would have her own way in the fight. It may be thought this is a mere illusion, but to many Japanese, this has been their calculation.

But on the other hand, Japan can not be too assertive for fear of being isolated. She has to grope the attitude of other nations. Her attitude at present is necessarily one of vagueness. It is only by being vague that she could

feel her way through safely. What Japan hopes now is to hurry through, before the Conference convenes, the solutions of all the outstanding questions, which when brought up to the Conference, would greatly embarrass her and endanger her position by being thrown into an isolated game. But whether or not other interested nations will acquiesce to her desire is a question of grave doubt.

### **Attitude of China**

The attitude of China is clear. She welcomes the Washington Conference as she welcomed the Paris Conference. While she was disappointed in the latter, she nevertheless attaches different spirit of confidence in the former. Both China and America fell foul at the conference in Paris, but the world was given an object-lesson on Japanese diplomacy. Again, China is to have an opportunity of presenting her claims before the world tribune. Even if she gains nothing, the aligning of the public eye on her problems would make for the eventual triumph of her case. The people of the country are eagerly awaiting the outcome of the Conference. They are eager to see a set of fundamental principles based strictly on international square deal and justice will be formulated, by which all the international relationships will be guided. Not a few have seriously entertained the idea that no nation will gain more in the end of the Conference than China. The laurels of the Conference will have been won by all members alike, but China will gain more. Indeed China is to have another chance to throw off the yoke of foreign aggression impeding her progress. But whether or not this opinion will be substantiated depends on the prevailing spirit and sincerity of the conference itself.

## **Attitude of Other Powers**

While there are many—indeed, a majority of people—who are holding the optimistic view about the Conference, but on the other hand, we can not be too optimistic, we can not hope what is due to us, if we do not understand the real intrinsic nature of the whole matter and if we are not ready to meet the attitudes of other powers.

Despite that China is to have her voice heard in one way or another, but the weight of her voice is a matter of doubt. In reality, the Conference, as it exists, is one battleground between American and Japanese ideals. It is to see whether the American ideals—the ideals of international harmony and peace, which is however advocated not without selfish purposes—will win, or the Japanese ideal—the ideals of aggression and of national expansion—will prevail. With the two ideals at stake, the pendulum force is invested again in the hands of Great Britain. Just as she acted at the Paris Conference in which she was always ready to cast the deciding vote between France and America, so is she going to act the same way between Japan and America. And by being put into this important position, Great Britain has nothing to lose but everything to gain.

It is at this junction that China's interest is in serious danger. Unless China can stand on her claims firmly with definite program in her mind, little will she be profited by the Conference. What then should be China's program? Without going into profound details, we may lay down the following as fundamental principles in solving the Far Eastern questions, now and hereafter.

## **China's Fundamental Demands**

First. The Conference must be based upon the practical principles of justice and equality. There should not be

any unjust treaties, treatment, and positions, among the Far Eastern powers. This inevitably leads to:

Secondly. The territorial integrity of China must be definitely guaranteed, and the Open Door policy must be by all means preserved and better defined. Whatever interferes with the self-development of China must be guarded against, because it is only a self-developed China, unmolested by foreign aggressions, that can keep peace in the Far East.

Thirdly. All the unjust treaties concluded with China by any powers either under the co-ercion of force or under conditions not suited to her recent political development, must be abrogated and prevented.

Fourthly. Any understanding or pact between powers in which China is not a party, but by which China's right is seriously affected, must be dissolved and prevented.

Fifthly. The racial equality, as far as possible, must be recognized.

With these principles well formulated and established, China will be in a better position to deal with the individual cases, such as the Shangtung question, Twenty-one Demands, or the Extraterritoriality, etc. **THEY ARE THE BASIS UPON WHICH NOT ONLY THE SOLUTION OF THE PRESENT IMPENDING PROBLEMS CAN BE MADE, ALSO THE GUARANTEE FOR FUTURE PREVENTION IS INSURED.**

### **A Strong China Needed**

But coming to the real truth, the ultimate hope in establishing these principles and consequently insuring the peace of the Far East, lies in a Chinese government that is strong—a government unified, representative, and capable of maintaining order, enforcing laws, and of protecting her own right through her own force. The Wash-

ington Conference will decide whether China is going to be a China free and untrammelled, or a China muddled for another decade or generation. But this decision is ultimately to be made partly by China herself and partly by the powers.

If the powers are attempting to take the advantage of her youthful years of democracy and of her period of readjustment, to grab what they can to satisfy their own greed, thus curtailing her national development, China is doomed. But if on the other hand, China is given a full chance for self-development, she will constitute an essential factor in the maintenance of peace of the Far East. What China demands is not compassion but justice, not favor but fair play. And this can only be brought about by a strong public opinion. Let the public opinion guide the choice of men to the Conference and let it guide their actions and moves. Whatever may happen, so long as the public is looking toward the right cause, so long will the Conference succeed to advance the real great cause.

### **A Forward Look of the Conference**

It is undoubted that for good or for evil, the Washington Conference will have a permanent effect on the world's politics and international affairs. If it succeeds to a limited extent, it will mean blessings to mankind; but if it fails, it will mean the greatest calamity to the nations and the world. It will take another twenty or thirty years if not more before the nations can be brought together to a similar conference. It will probably take another great war to bring the nations together to a conference table of international significance. But the worst of all, it will mean that the world is again subject to greed and ambition and to arm themselves to the teeth. The nations with arms well prepared can never sit quiet. It will burst and the consequence is comprehensible. The

Conference will not probably be concluded unless the nations are all satisfied. But they can not be satisfied unless they live on the sacrifices of other nations which are weaker. Unless China is awakened to this fact, the Conference, in stead of being a blessing, will turn out to be a hornet's nest.

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