

# HOW DID CONLEY & MACTAGUE GET THEIR BONANZA FARMS?

## Farmers Feared Roving Convicts—Stockraising, Farming, State Prison Supplies—All In- dustrially Handled by Convicts—Why is Billings Anxious to have Convict Work on Public Road?

### FEUDAL BARONS OF DEER LODGE VALLEY

#### Wax Rich and Powerful while Convicts do the Work and State Pays the Bills. No Bids Called for to Supply Prison Contracts

The records of Powell County show that the firm of Conley & McTague are assessed for thirteen thousand four hundred acres of farm land in the vicinity of Deer Lodge. This does not include all the land farmed by the above firm. A representative of the News in making the investigation was informed from reliable sources that the firm of Conley & McTague owns and controls through lease forty thousand acres in Powell County. Some sources of information give a still greater acreage, but the most reliable data we could get, was the former figure. Most of this land is in the rich Deer Lodge valley within forty miles of Butte and twenty miles from Anaconda, therefore being very close to a market for farm produce which makes the rich agricultural land very valuable. The farm of Conley & McTague joins the boundary lines of the city of Deer Lodge and is within a stone's throw of the prison walls. The firm of Conley & McTague, we were informed, bought out sixteen farmers who were to all appearances, comparatively well to do, until their farms were surrounded by convicts working for Conley & McTague. In fact, it is generally stated in Deer Lodge today that when Conley & McTague wanted to buy a farm they put convicts to work all around the neighborhood of this farm they desired to purchase. The convicts roamed the hills day and night, farmers had articles stolen and they lived in constant dread of depredations being committed by the convicts, or injury and insults being committed on their wives and daughters. After living such a life for a few months with convicts everywhere surrounding them, the farmers would sell out at any figure offered them. In fact the farmers were forced to sell their land, they were practically evicted by the Feudal Lords of Powell County, the Barons of Deer Lodge Valley, in order that farming by convicts might be extended and money made for the barons. The extent of the territory farmed or covered by convicts working for Conley & McTague can best be understood when we state that families were not safe to camp at Rock Creek Lake, sixteen

miles away from the penitentiary, owing to convicts roaming at large robbing the camps. The farms owned by Conley & McTague are all farmed by the convicts and have been for the past eighteen years or more. The convicts take care of all the live stock, plow the fields, sow the seed, harrow and in the summer great crews of convicts are taken every morning from the penitentiary to the farms where they irrigate the fields the whole day long. Some of the crews have had as many as thirty-eight men. A convict cook accompanies each irrigating or harvesting crew to the farm and prepares the meals for the convicts. The guards who are employees of the state, superintend the job of the convicts and Conley & McTague get the profits of the harvest. When the caring of the convicts was let by contract, Conley & McTague worked the convicts, made them raise the vegetables consumed by the convicts and all the time the firm of Conley & McTague were receiving top notch prices from the state for caring for and feeding the prisoners. At present the state feeds the prisoners and convicts raise all the vegetables consumed in the penitentiary. The state pays Conley & McTague for this stuff, yet the prisoners raise the garden truck and Conley gets \$3,000 a year from the state for acting the part of warden of the penitentiary. No bids are called for to supply the state prison with food, no contracts are let, the farmers in the surrounding neighborhood don't get a chance to sell their product to the state to be consumed by the convicts. Conley & McTague sell the farm produce to the state that is used in the prison; they have no competitors; they have as complete a monopoly as the Standard Oil ever had. And the greatest graft of all is that Conley & McTague do no farming, but the convicts, the state prisoners, do all the work, raise their own grub and the great state of Montana foots the bill and the people of Montana are thus grafted upon. Not only farming is carried on by the convicts, but stock raising as well. The finest stock farm in western Mon-

tana is the farm of Conley & McTague located in the vicinity of Deer Lodge. Here can be seen the finest horses and as fine thorough bred cattle as one will see in any state west of the Mississippi are to be found on the ranch of Conley & McTague. The display of live stock at the last State Fair held in Helena last October which was exhibited by Conley & McTague, was the admiration of all visitors. The fine thorough bred horses and cattle are all attended to by convicts. Convicts raise and harvest the grain, alfalfa, and hay that feed the stock,

convicts built the barns, stables and sheds to house this fine blooded stock. Convicts groom and care for them in winter time. The state of Montana or the convicts get nothing for all this labor performed. The courts of Montana sentence men to serve a term of years at the state prison at Deer Lodge where they must spend a certain portion of their lives creating wealth for the firm of Conley & McTague and we call this Justice. This is Convict Chattel Slavery. What a Graft! It can be truly said that Justice in Montana is blind.

The Bunco Steerer is again active in Deer Lodge in an attempt to do his master's bidding. This time the master class of Deer Lodge are directing their attention to disrupting and weakening the Trades & Labor Assembly, hoping by this means to be able to make an attack on the Retail Clerks' Union.

The Trades & Labor Assembly is the central body by which all the unions in the community federate and act in unison, listen to each other's grievances and from which the mutual help and co-operation of all pass to the organization that is in trouble or in need of the strengthening power that comes from numbers. When any organization leaves the central body, the men involved are easily defeated when attacked, and the central body is also made weaker by the loss. At present in Deer Lodge an effort is being made to have two organizations withdraw from the central body and form another council. There is no need for such actions, as the greatest harmony exists between all the unions in Deer Lodge. The only reason for dismembering the Trades & Labor Assembly, is to weaken the organizations that the grafters may more easily beat down and break up the Retail Clerks' Union.

The unions of Deer Lodge, with one exception, are composed of veterans in the labor movement, aggressive, militant, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of unionism. With the unions standing united as at present it is impossible for the enemies of labor in Deer Lodge to defeat them.

Any man who proposes that any union withdraw from the central body should be branded as a traitor, regardless of the reasons advanced by him. The object aimed at by such an advocate is to further the interests of the grafters of Deer Lodge.

Union men of Deer Lodge, beware of the man who would weaken your organization at this time. The Bunco Steerers are abroad in Deer Lodge at present. By their acts ye shall know them.

### Want Industrial Training For All

The social and industrial conditions in the United States demand that industrial education for rich and poor alike should be democratic. This conclusion was reached by many prominent leaders of working men and industrial educators, addressing the American Federation of Labor's committee on industrial education. Suggesting that European countries were far ahead of the United States in the matter of fitting young girls and boys for a trade, Charles F. Richards of New York City, originator of the National Society for the promo-

tion of industrial education, argued that the committee should fight for a plan that would relieve the American school boy of the confusing plight of not knowing what to do when turned away from school. He declared more than one-fourth of the boys left the public schools in New York before graduating, because they "were sick of it". This, he regarded as due to the lack of industrial training. President James Duncan of the Federation, strongly endorses the proposition of introducing training into the last grades of the grammar schools.

### COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PASS RESOLUTIONS

#### Moss and George of Billings Said to be Active to Legalize Convict Labor and to Secure it for Beet Fields

At a state meeting of the County Commissioners of Montana recently held in Billings, a resolution was presented in favor of having convicts work on the roads of the state. This resolution was adopted by the County Commissioners in convention assembled July that they take action towards getting a law passed that will legalize the convicts working on the roads of the state. It seems that the efforts to legalize convict labor in Montana are all originating in the vicinity of Billings. When the convention of the Montana Federation of Labor was held in Billings, August 1908, the same resolutions that were adopted by the county commissioners, were presented to the Federation convention soliciting labor's endorsement of working the convicts on state highways. The delegates to the Montana Federation of Labor convention refused to endorse the proposition, and the judgment of the convention was, that it would be a bad precedent to establish. At the last session of the Montana legislature a bill was introduced during the last part of the session, providing for the employment of convicts upon state highways, and to allow the state to contract the convicts out to the several counties through which the road would pass. This bill passed the senate without a dissenting vote but the house by an almost unanimous vote rejected the bill when it was placed by them on its final passage. The bill was championed by Billings people and it was introduced toward the end of the session with the hopes that it would become a law before organized labor could protest. The bill was defeated only through the active work of the labor lobbyists at the state capital and the opposition that the labor unions made against the proposed law. During the sessions of the last legislature it was persistently reported at the state capital that Moss and George, two of the leading Citizens' Alliance men, when that organization was strong in Billings, were active in

an endeavor to legalize convict labor, and it was also rumored that it was desired to secure convict labor in the beet fields for the benefit of the branch of the sugar trust that is located at Billings. It would appear that the monied interests of Billings envy the graft that Conley & McTague have got and want the graft divided up. Of course the monied interests are in favor of exhibiting the convicts to the general gaze of the public by working them on the roads of the state and exposing the unfortunates to the ridicule of the rabble, just the same as convicts were treated a few generations ago, when the punishment for crime was to chain a criminal in some public square and let the children of the community pelt him with rotten eggs and decaying vegetable matter, about the same as they do in China at the present day. It is only poor men that get into the state prison, men who steal a bronco, or a few dollars, or have not money enough to appeal the case to a higher court on a legal technicality. The rich thief that steals the land in the vicinity of Billings and in eastern Montana has his case tried before an aristocratic, labor union hating judge, who usually fines the rich man for stealing forty thousand acres of land, \$500.00 and sentences him to spend twenty-four hours in the parlor of the sheriff of Lewis & Clark County where the prisoner can pass the sentence in chatting with his friends, smoking some fine cigars and drinking fine wines. The rich criminal runs no chance of going to the penitentiary, it is only the poor that it is desired to work on the state highways. This proposed plan of working the convicts has a nice graft attached to it as one can see. The convicts will have to be moved all over the state and this will give the railroads a good rake off to the tune of \$300 for every hundred miles that one hundred convicts are moved, and a rake off to some one in boarding the convicts in the different parts of the state. The principal objection to working the convicts on the public road is that

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SOCIALISTS AS LABOR LEADERS.

The Socialist party is not something apart from the general labor movement. It is the political expression of that movement. In British Columbia, when the coal miners are fighting for better conditions they know that the socialist members of the local parliament are fighting with them. To be sure the same thing is supposed to be true everywhere. But in some ways the socialist party in most localities has lost direct touch with the class struggle.

The above is from a recent article from Comrade Simons. It is remarkable how the great labor struggles of the world are beginning to look to the socialists to formulate and systematize their struggles. The socialists have been the brain, the system, and the enduring power of the Swedish struggle. But in Sweden there is no such a thing as a union man who is not a socialist.

The murder of Ferrer has aroused the most vehement protests from the working class all over the world, these great demonstrations being uniformly led by the socialists.

The socialists of England formed and are shaping the policy of the great Labor Party.

In 1908 a conflict came up between the organized peasants of Parma and the associated land-owners. The proprietors imported scabs and protected them with armed hirelings, locked out the peasants and did everything possible to bring them to complete submission. But the peasants showed such solidarity that the strike could neither be broken nor the crop be saved. The industrial workers supported the strike of the peasants, and called a general strike. In order to relieve the strike, 3,000 of their children were sent to other districts to be cared for. Women joined in the strike, communistic soup kitchens were instituted, and the land owners had to acknowledge defeat. There was a strike with a social goal.

In the McKee's Rock strike it was the socialists who came in and brought order and discipline to bear on the situation. The general chaos has presented a favorable culture bed for the Industrial Workers of the World throughout western Pennsylvania.

Socialists with their constructive programs should be the ones who step to the front in every labor crisis and necessity. It is their place; it is their reason for existence. Thus the new industrial society is formed.

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY? As additional material to the universal question that is consuming the space of socialist papers at the present time, we have received the following letter from a certain prominent socialist in Montana:

"Dear Comrade—Enclosed please find \$1.50 for subs I sold. Have been busy. Wanted to do better. Will try and gather a few more before spring. It looks as though our local was going to play out. I took a day and went around to the members with poor success. I expect we will have to send in our charter if we cannot do any better than we have.

With best wishes for the success of the News.

This is not an isolated instance.

The same report is coming from all over the state. It is an admission of lassitude, lack of interest and collapse that must be confronted as a condition, and not merely contemplated as a theory.

This party laxness is in striking contrast to the socialist sentiment and convictions that exist throughout the working class and especially throughout the ranks of organized labor in Montana. The socialist sentiment is tremendous, but labor is disgusted with the socialist party. And in this it does not differ from conditions that prevail largely all over the country.

What is the matter? The matter is that the socialist party is not dealing with practical issues. It is not stepping into the harness and helping labor pull its load. It is not attacking the abuse and disabilities under which labor struggles. It spends its time theorizing over the opinions of some one who never has anything to do with labor.

Organized labor is restless under this horse play. It wants political class action. The socialist party is falling utterly as a political organization in Montana. But labor is determined to act politically in Montana and the result will be that a labor party will be formed in Wyoming and Montana. The unions are talking of this everywhere, and questions are continually being asked as to the modus operandi of the British Labor Party. It is surprising how anxious the unions especially are for information on this subject.

If a labor party is formed in Montana it will be a real one this time. It will be no Heinze decoy duck. It will be a labor party financed and controlled by labor.

Now if this should happen it will be a horrible menace to the plans of the capitalists in Montana. It will be a fruitful flocking ground for the politicians in Montana. The labor committees would have to hedge themselves at every point to keep from being gobbled by unscrupulous labor men, who would get in to deliver them hand and foot to the capitalists.

The better way would be for labor to pick up the socialist party and make it over. Its platform and conditions of protection are such as labor would want anyway.

But we fear our advice is wasted. The socialist party has become the rallying ground for so many freaks, freakism, and dead ones, that it looks as though the labor political wave were about to flow in some other direction.

ENGLISH SOCIALISTS AWAKE.

What splendid work those British socialists are doing! How they are preparing for empire—the empire of the working class! They are doing the work of statesmen in parliament. They are agitating British dominion over the budget. They are reaching out to embrace all nations and peoples in the international empire of the working class. The socialist rulers are preparing for the statesmanship by which they know how to handle the entire foreign policy of England.

Keir Hardie made a trip to India and came back and exposed the atrocities of British rule in India. Hyndman had done much before in writing and speaking on this subject.

Will Crooks, member of parliament, has now sailed for Quebec. He will make a complete tour of Canada, across the continent; and how he will inspire the Canadian socialists, and what plans he will give them for wresting the power from the crown. From Vancouver he will embark for Australia and New Zealand. These British socialists know what they are doing.

Ramsay MacDonald has sailed on a voyage for India. How he will teach Indian labor to revolt against tyranny.

Keir Hardie went to Geneva to be present at the congress of the Egyptian revolutionists, the Nationalists, trying to obtain a constitution for Egypt. Many socialists of Europe went to Geneva to encourage this congress.

This is what the socialists of the world are doing, and this is the way they are spending money and time, while Montana socialists are wanting

to sell their linotype, got together with infinite sacrifices and hardships, that the cause of workers might have a voice and an expression—in order that they themselves may have more luxuries.

For shame!

BERNSTEINISM TRIUMPHANT.

When the German Socialist congress completed its twentieth annual conference since Bismarck's anti-socialist laws, the bourgeois press had hoped that the party would be split by contentions, but the unity of the socialists is stronger than ever.

There are prospects of a great victory at the next elections which has caused all members to feel the great responsibility resting upon them, and the "Marxists" and "Revisionists" have alike striven to promote harmony.

A great surprise to international socialism is the fact that the Revisionists are in the majority, and the German socialist party has decided to get into line with the English Labor Party and the French socialists, and become a parliamentary force. Bebel took part with the Revisionists. The point of controversy was in regard to a bill to raise financial supplies for the government by a tax on the rich.

Another point carried by the Revisionists was the policy of action to improve the condition of the working class whether it be by a working arrangement with the Liberals in the Reichstag or otherwise.

Thus we see that after many years of attack and misrepresentation the contentions of Bernstein are becoming the guide of the German social democracy. The busy workers call it the policy of the new as opposed to ways that are antiquated and no longer get the desired results. And the situation that has forced this revolution in tactics is the same cause in both Germany and England—the war scare—Dreadnoughtism—the government demand for an increase in the budget—England and Germany going to an enormous expense to be equally ready to clutch each other's throats.

So grim necessity, war and death disturb the equilibrium of even the most placid socialist theories, and the materialist conception of history is exemplified in the making.

No Class Suffrage.

Miss Mary MacArthur, secretary of the British Women's Trade Union League, is now in this country, investigating labor conditions, and speaking for socialism, woman suffrage, and trades unionism. She does not believe in any class lines being drawn in the woman suffrage movement, and criticized this feature in the English agitation. This offended the New York suffragists led by Mrs. A. H. P. Belmont, and they canceled the speaking date they had made for Miss MacArthur. This goes to show a decided class character in the American suffrage movement; and this has kept the movement from making much of an appeal to the masses for many years.

If the woman suffrage movement ever makes much progress in Montana the women of the working class will have to pick it up and push it. Those who have taken any interest previously are women completely out of the working class, or those who have clambered out, and who have no sympathy whatever with the labor movement. As Montana is preeminently a labor state, class exclusiveness cannot make much progress in reform in Montana. The working men are leading the way through the Montana State Federation of Labor, and the women should support them strongly with a strong suffrage agitation.

County Commissioners Pass Resolutions.

(Continued from Page 1.)

they compete with free labor, and the unemployed problem is great enough at the present time. Moreover, the most of the road work is done by farmers in the fall and early part of the winter. When a man is trying to get himself a home through the homestead method, the struggle for existence is very keen for the first few years, until a few crops have been harvested and his stock has increased. Homesteads at the present time are usually a long way from centers of industry where work can be easily secured, and the only thing open for a homesteader is work upon the roads, and revenue from this source has saved lots of families from destitution, when crops have failed or when the homesteader had little money to commence with.

There is little hope of the bill becoming a law, legalizing the working of convicts on the road, as long as organized labor is awake to its interests, as the power of the referendum will be invoked, and the law submitted to a general vote of the people before it becomes operative.

SOUTHERN TEMPERANCE.

What is behind this overwhelming temperance move in the south? Has the southern planter lost his taste for whiskey? Has he suddenly become "good"? Did anybody ever become "good" anywhere?

No. What is behind southern temperance is—the negro. Bad whiskey is really a dangerous thing for the bad negro to get hold of. The negroes are increasing so rapidly that the south is scared. As long as they were in slavery and drinking could be regulated the south saw no menace in whiskey. But it is afraid of the free negro, especially when drunk. Hence southern temperance zeal.

SOCIALISM WILL BE TRIED.

President Fallieres of France is still laboring under the delusion, common to most of the superficial critics of socialism, that the institutions of socialism are something that can be tried and ejected from history. In a recent interview he stated: "I have made up my mind that the coming election will be largely in favor of socialism. But there is no cause for uneasiness. The socialism experiment will have to be made sooner or later, for Frenchmen, by temperament, are reactionary. Let the socialistic dog have his day, reaction will set in quickly enough."

All the workers ask is just to get a chance to try socialism—real socialism—just once.

If you believe in unionism you should join the union and help to advance the interests of the workers on the economic field.

Join the union! Organize, agitate, educate, work for industrial solidarity. Have your union affiliate with the local and state central bodies.

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Don't you want some socialist envelopes? The Montana News prints them in red ink—only 65 cents a hundred. Make Uncle Sam distribute your socialist propaganda. Do you know of any job work, or any printing of any kind that you could just as well get for a worker's print shop as for a capitalist shop? If so send it in to the News. Remember, the "Mills of Mammon" for 10 subs. Try this deal and see if you don't say you are well paid for your work. Send the champion of the working class leaping skyward, and get a book free that you can give to benighted workers and teach them the horrors produced by the system they are voting for, and the remedy. Order your Job Work NOW.

Poet's Corner

A SONNET.

(To Ida Crouch-Hazlett.)

With vision far that sees the great
Should Be,
Thou gazest longing o'er great pain
of wrong!

Assistance for Comrade.

Comrade G. W. Woodbey of San
Diego, Cal., is a colored comrade
well-known over the United States for
the last eight years for the vigorous
propaganda work he has done for so-

Comrade Woodbey does not care to
do this without trying to render some
equivalent. He has prepared the
manuscript for a book which he will
receive enough advance orders for the
same to meet the expense of publica-

Perhaps, if you realized that law
guarantees, or restricts, your own
personal liberty; protects, or jeopard-

Perhaps, if you paused to think
that law will never represent the
highest intelligence or morality, since
intelligence and morality must always

A London company advertised for
two men, 3,000 answered, and in the
riot to secure a hearing, several were
injured. The prosperity of capital-

Report of the M. W. Wilkins Relief
Committee.

The committee hoped to make a
final report ere this, but contributions
have been coming in so steadily it has
been impossible. The number of those
responding was so surprisingly large

The committee with grateful appre-
ciation confess their amazement at
the large number of comrades
and locals who have responded, an es-

On December 19th a representative
of the committee visited Comrade
Wilkins and handed him twelve hun-
dred dollars, the amount then on
hand. No words can describe his

Comrade Wilkins suggested that all
further contributions be turned over
to the fund for the relief of Comrade
Fred Long of Philadelphia, the com-

An itemized statement of all re-
ceipts and expenses, together with
name, address and amount of each
donation has been filed with the Na-

Fraternally submitted,
MARGARET MOORE GOEBEL,
Secretary.

Newark, N. J., Jan. 22, 1910.

Answer Me That.

Charles D. Stewart in The Century
Magazine, makes Finerty say:

D'ye know, Halloran, I have been
sittin' here by this sand pile till all
hours of the mornin' when I ought to
be home. I hate to go home. The

I stay here in the dirt where 't is
clane. An' 't is wonderful how dirt
kapes itself clane. If Marg'ret does
not come back, I will stay here intire-

Perhaps, if you realized that law
guarantees, or restricts, your own
personal liberty; protects, or jeopard-

A young Chicago girl kills herself
and leaves behind a letter giving as a
reason, "I am so nearly starved". She

Inequality of Wages.—It is especial-
ly the law of wages that is contested,
and we must consider its application
in greater detail.

WEEKLY LESSON FOR SOCIALIST
LOCALS AND MEMBERS.

Authorized by the National Executive
Committee—Prepared by Rand
School.

STUDY COURSE OF SOCIALISM

The Economics of Capitalism.

Qualifications.—The laws of value,
price and wages which we have stated
in the preceding lessons would apply
strictly only to an ideal capitalist so-

1. Men's economic activities are not
governed exclusively by economic mo-
tives. Habit and custom and senti-
ments of honor, generosity, friendship,

2. The second qualification is more
important. In no field is competition
perfectly free and instantaneous. To
some extent, as stated, it is checked

Capital cannot be transferred in-
stantly from an industry in which
profits are falling to one in which
they are rising. It takes some time

Labor cannot be transferred in-
stantly from a country or an industry
where wages are falling to one where
they are rising. Habit tends to keep

Finally, the competitive flow of cap-
ital and of labor is retarded by the
incomplete information of all concerned.
Workingmen do not always know

Economic Laws are Statements of
Tendencies.—If we should insist on
our economic laws as absolutely cor-
rect statements of facts, we should be

Our economic laws do not pretend
to be mathematically exact, like laws
of physics or chemistry. They are
true as general statements of facts

1. Wages differ considerably in dif-
ferent countries. This is due partly
to differences in the price of the nec-

essities of life, partly to differences in
the intensity of labor, partly to differ-
ences in the customary standards of
living.

The difference between American
and European wages is not really so
great as it appears, for food and
clothing are cheaper and house rents

Labor is much more intense in
America than in Europe. The Amer-
ican workingman works harder and
faster and expends more energy in ten

But after making both these allow-
ances, there still remains a difference
of wages in favor of America.

A high standard of living was es-
tablished in American during the gen-
erations when most of the people were
independent farmers and artisans; in

2. Wages differ considerably in
different trades. On examination,
however, it will be found that these
differences are less than they at first

In trades which require great mus-
cular exertion, wages are relatively
high. This is due to the need for
more food to recruit the workers'

In trades which require special
training and knowledge, wages are
relatively high, e. g., printers, railway
engineers. This is because a high

Trades in which work is often in-
terrupted by need for recuperation
(e. g., caisson workers) or by weather
or other conditions beyond the em-

After making allowance for differ-
ent cost of living, intermittent em-
ployment, etc., there still remain in-

New and rapidly growing trades
for a time pay relatively high wages
—e. g., at different periods, steno-

Young men just beginning as wage
workers go in larger proportions into
those trades where wages are highest.

Above all, improved machinery re-
duces the need for physical strength
or special knowledge, so that ill fed
and untaught men, or women and

Questions for Review.

- 1. In what sense is it correct to
say that there is overproduction of
goods when large numbers of persons
are insufficiently fed, clothed and
housed?
2. What effect does the opening of
new foreign markets have with refer-
ence to the prolongation of a period
of prosperity or a period of depres-
sion? How?
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