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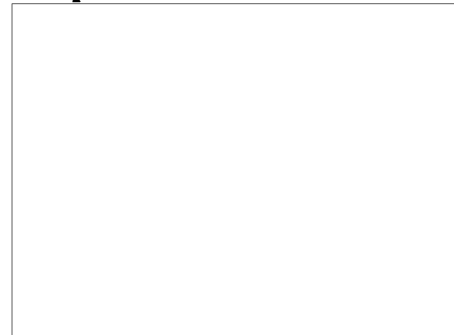
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Directorate of
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Afghanistan Situation Report



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8 October 1985

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NESA M 85-10202JX
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8 October 1985

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT**CONTENTS****NEW INFRARED JAMMER ON SOVIET HELICOPTERS** [] 1 25X1

The Soviets are adding infrared jammers to their helicopters in Afghanistan to counter the insurgents' use of heat-seeking missiles.

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**EXPLOSIONS AT SOVIET AMMUNITION DUMP:
INSURGENT SUCCESS OR SOVIET CARELESSNESS?** [] 1 25X1

Soviet negligence probably was responsible for at least one of two recent explosions at Soviet ammunition dumps in Afghanistan, but we cannot rule out the possibility that the insurgents are getting better at penetrating and sabotaging Soviet garrisons.

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IN BRIEF 3**UPCOMING EVENTS** 4**PERSPECTIVE****GROWING RISKS FOR WESTERN TRAVELERS IN AFGHANISTAN** [] 6 25X1

Western travelers will probably find it more dangerous to travel in Afghanistan because of better Soviet intelligence and increased military sweep operations.

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AFGHANISTAN: THE 1985 LATE-SEASON AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK [] 9 25X1

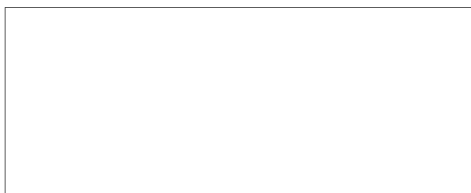
Afghanistan will probably produce an above-average grain crop this year, despite the war's destruction and the persistence of last year's drought through early spring.

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8 October 1985
 NESAM 85-10202JX
 SOVA M 85-10180JX

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This document is prepared weekly by the Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis and the Office of Soviet Analysis. Questions or comments on the issues raised in the publication should be directed to

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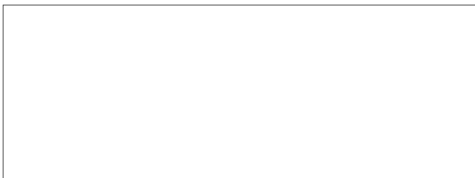
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PUBLICATION NOTE

Unless major developments warrant otherwise, we will not publish the **AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT** next week. The next report will appear on 22 October 1985.



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NEW INFRARED JAMMER ON SOVIET HELICOPTERS



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[redacted] that Soviet helicopters in Afghanistan are being supplied with an infrared jammer system. The infrared jammer, located on the top rear of the fuselage just forward of the tail boom, is designed to increase survivability against heat-seeking infrared missiles such as the Soviet-made SA-7 used by some insurgents. The jammer works with an infrared suppressor to vent exhaust gases aft of the aircraft, thereby reducing heat emissions.

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Comment: The jammers represent the latest in a series of Soviet attempts to reduce helicopter losses caused by insurgents using heat-seeking missiles. Initial Soviet efforts to counter this threat included using flare dispensers, changing flight patterns, and employing better evasive techniques. Infrared suppressors were subsequently added to all Soviet helicopters operating in Afghanistan; Afghan helicopters have not been modified. The modifications demonstrate continuing Soviet concern over aircraft losses and increasing insurgent effectiveness in countering the Soviet air threat.



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EXPLOSIONS AT SOVIET AMMUNITION DUMPS: INSURGENT SUCCESS OR SOVIET CARELESSNESS?



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According to imagery, two Soviet ammunition dumps--one at Konduz and one at Khair Khana in Kabul--suffered extensive damage from explosions during mid-September. The Konduz explosion took place between 11 and 27 September; the US Embassy heard a large explosion in Kabul on the 19th.



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[redacted] Afghans who witnessed the Kabul explosions gave conflicting accounts of the incident,



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[redacted] some claimed the dump was hit by a rocket, while others said an insurgent disguised as an Afghan soldier blew up the warehouse with explosives.



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8 October 1985
NESA M 85-10202JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX

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[Redacted]

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Comment: [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Poor storage practices may have contributed to extensive damage at both facilities. Similar cases of accidental explosions, some with spectacular results, have occurred at ammunition storage areas inside the Soviet Union. [Redacted]

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We cannot rule out the possibility that insurgents sabotaged one or both of the ammunition dumps, however. The proximity in time of the recent explosions is unusual. Only two other explosions at Soviet ammunition dumps--one accidental and one at the hands of a disgruntled Soviet--have been observed [Redacted] since 1979. Insurgent sabotage, if true, would suggest an improved ability to penetrate Soviet garrisons. [Redacted]

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IN BRIEF

-- Resistance alliance spokesman Gulbuddin Hekmatyar announced that the group will send a delegation to the UN General Assembly to lobby for unseating the Kabul government; the alliance is also planning to seek recognition from the Organization of Islamic Conferences. [Redacted]

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[Large Redacted Block]

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[Redacted]

8 October 1985
NESA M 85-10202JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX

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- On 21 September, two Saudis working with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society were attacked and robbed of \$62,500 while en route to Afghanistan, [redacted] 25X1
- [redacted] Two Afghans from Gulbuddin's Hizbi Islami group were accompanying the Saudis when they were attacked, suggesting that the Muslim Brotherhood may be making direct cash payments to Gulbuddin's group. [redacted] 25X1
- Babrak Karmal told the Revolutionary Council on 25 September that insurgents have caused more than 35 billion afghanis in damage--\$700 million at the official exchange rate or \$270 million at the black market rate--since April 1978. [redacted] 25X1
- Radio Free Afghanistan began broadcasting into Afghanistan from Munich on 2 October. Soviet and Afghan media have roundly criticized the broadcasts as CIA-sponsored. [redacted] 25X1

UPCOMING EVENTS

11-13 November The UN General Assembly debate on Afghanistan. [redacted] 25X1



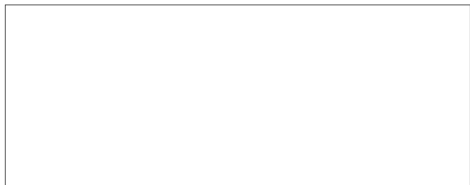
8 October 1985
NESA M 85-1020JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX

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8 October 1985
NESA M 85-10202JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX



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PERSPECTIVE

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GROWING RISKS FOR WESTERN TRAVELERS IN AFGHANISTAN



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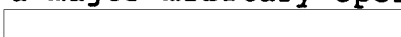
Although Western journalists and medical personnel have been able to operate inside Afghanistan relatively easily in the past, better Soviet intelligence and more frequent military operations are increasing the risks. The recent death of an American journalist during an apparent Soviet attack underscores these dangers.



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Soviet Attitudes Towards Westerners

We believe the Soviets place a high priority on preventing Westerners from visiting or working inside Afghanistan without the Afghan Government's permission. Soviet commanders sent an airborne unit to capture French journalist Jacques Abouchard in 1984 and apparently assigned a unit to capture French doctor Philippe Augoyard during a major military operation in Paktia Province in 1983,



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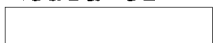
Both men were subsequently released after a relatively short incarceration and regime-staged show trials.



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The Soviets oppose the presence of Westerners, including doctors and journalists, because credible eyewitness reports often contradict Soviet and Afghan claims that the war is being won, and the insurgency has no local support. By capturing Western infiltrators, moreover, the Soviets probably hope to reinforce their charges in the international media of massive outside support for the insurgents.



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Despite a hostile Soviet attitude, Westerners were able to operate inside Afghanistan relatively easily in the past. Since 1980, the Soviets had captured only one of the approximately 300 European doctors who have worked clandestinely in Afghanistan and only one of the many Western journalists and scholars who have travelled there. Soviet and Afghan attacks caused the death of only one journalist--in October 1985; another was killed--probably inadvertently--during a Soviet or Afghan bombing attack in 1982.



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8 October 1985
NESAM 85-1020JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX

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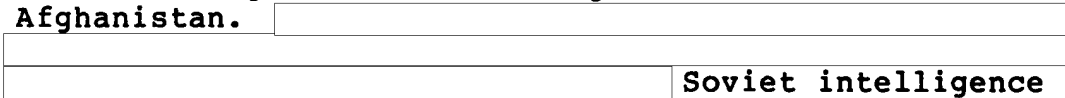


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Increasing Dangers

Nevertheless, many observers believe--and we agree-- that the dangers are increasing for Westerners inside Afghanistan.

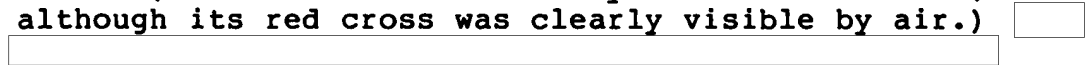
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Soviet intelligence began to improve in 1984 and that the Soviets--using local informers and reconnaissance aircraft--can now often quickly locate French clinics. (In one incident in 1981, Soviet aircraft destroyed a French clinic, although its red cross was clearly visible by air.)

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Western physicians must move their clinics more frequently because of better Soviet intelligence,

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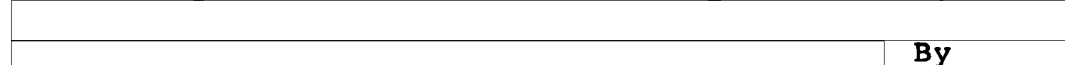
movement inside Afghanistan has become more dangerous because the Soviets are bombing the main infiltration routes more frequently. The large number of Soviet and Afghan air violations of Pakistan--190 so far this year--reflects more aggressive military operations near the border.

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We believe Westerners entering southern Afghanistan from Pakistan face particular danger because of the area's flat terrain. The Soviets captured Abouchard during his first day in southern Afghanistan, and the American journalist was killed near Qandahar City.

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By contrast, Augoyard was captured in Paktia Province--in southeastern Afghanistan--only after spending several months there.

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In the most recent incident, as many as four helicopters attacked a truck carrying four Americans and about 12 insurgents on the night of 19 September seven miles north of Qandahar City, killing newsman Charles Thornton and probably wounding another American. The helicopters left soon after the attack, allowing the survivors to escape and bury Thornton's body. Two of the Americans decided to continue their



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[REDACTED]

travels in Afghanistan and one returned to Pakistan.
Arrangements were being made for the removal of
Thornton's body, [REDACTED]

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Outlook

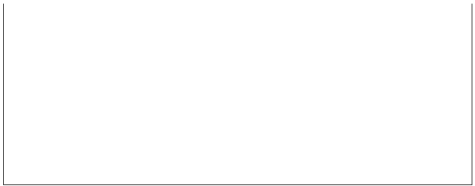
We believe that the Soviets will continue to improve their intelligence capabilities against Western travelers. Stepped up Soviet sweeps along insurgent infiltration routes from Pakistan, moreover, suggest that Western travelers will inevitably bear some of the fallout. We believe that the Soviets probably view Westerners traveling with insurgent bands as fair game, and make a special effort to attack or capture them if they become aware of their presence. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

8 October 1985
NESA M 85-10202JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHANISTAN: THE 1985 LATE-SEASON AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK



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A preliminary crop survey of key grain-growing areas in Afghanistan indicates that the 1985 wheat crop will be larger than last year's estimated 2.7 million tons. Other grain crops are also expected to do better than average. Irrigation water, dangerously low early in the year, was replenished in time for the winter grains to produce above-average yields. The dryland crops and the summer crops should also produce above-average yields.



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The abandonment of agricultural fields is extensive in some combat areas, but these fields represent only a very small portion of Afghanistan's agricultural land and their loss should not significantly reduce total grain production. Furthermore, the loss of much of this grainland has been offset by the expansion of cultivated land elsewhere in Afghanistan, and the diversion of some land previously used for industrial crops to food production.



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1985 Weather Summary

Afghanistan suffered a serious water shortage until the last week of March as a result of unusual weather patterns. secondary rivers and most feeder streams were dry or nearly dry during March--much lower than in March 1984. Irrigation canals were running, but with greatly reduced flow.

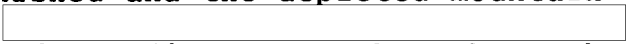


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The outlook began to improve on 31 March when a deep low pressure area with an associated frontal system moved across the country from west to east, dropping unusually large amounts of rain. For example, in Farah Province, a weather station recorded 106 mm, an amount equal to its average annual rainfall. A second low pressure system moved across the country during the first week in April. Rivers, irrigation canals and reservoirs were replenished and the depleted mountain snow fields expanded.



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numerous pools of standing water throughout the country.



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**8 October 1985
NESAM 85-10202JX
SOVA M 85-10180JX**

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[REDACTED]

Unseasonable rain in varying amounts also fell over wide areas during the remainder of April, May, and June. Still more rain fell in the northeast provinces during the normally dry month of July. When last observed [REDACTED] rivers and streams in most areas of the country were still flowing well above normal and at significantly higher levels than last year. [REDACTED]

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1985 Production Outlook

Despite last winter's precipitation shortfall, we believe that this year's grain harvest will be better than last year's estimated 2.7 million tons.* This preliminary analysis suggests that:

- The irrigated winter grain crop, mainly wheat, should produce above-average yields--slightly better than last year.
- The dryland grain crop, mainly wheat, should produce above-average yields--considerably better than last year's crop, which fell an estimated 25 percent from 1983 levels due to drought.
- The irrigated summer crops, consisting mostly of corn and rice, should produce above-average yields--slightly better than last year.

Because most food shortages in Afghanistan have resulted from crop failure in the dryland region, the above average estimate for dryland grain production and the average to above-average estimates for the other large producing regions indicate that Afghan food supplies will be adequate this year. [REDACTED]

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Favorable reporting on harvest and procurement activities in neighboring countries, which are generally affected by the same weather patterns as in Afghanistan, also support our assessment of above-average Afghan crop prospects. The size of the grain harvest in south Uzbek, SSR--which adjoins the Afghan

* Estimated wheat production in 1984 was identical to the 1980-84 wheat production average, which is based on both Foreign Agriculture Organization and CIA estimates. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

8 October 1985
 NESAM 85-10202JX
 SOVA M 85-10180JX

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dryland area on the north--was above plan in late June, according to Moscow radio. Reporting from Pakistan indicates that grain procurements for the May-July period ran about 10 percent higher this year than last.



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Impact of the War on Food Production


Our preliminary analysis of the principal agricultural areas reveals no large-scale deliberate destruction of crops or irrigation systems by Soviet or Afghan military forces. Military action--such as bombing and armored vehicle traffic--is estimated to have damaged less than one percent of the total agricultural area.



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The abandonment of agricultural fields is extensive in some combat areas, but these fields represent only a small portion of Afghanistan's agricultural land and should not significantly reduce total grain production.

-- Agricultural activity in the Panjsher Valley in 1985 was nearly nonexistent, but grain production there normally accounts for less than 2 percent of total national output. The continued presence of Soviet and Afghan military forces apparently discouraged farmers from returning to the valley; most of the villages in the central part of the valley remain abandoned and the fields unattended.

--  the Konar Valley, site of recent heavy military actions, shows a steady decline in population and cultivated land since the Soviet invasion. Approximately 50 percent of the population has left since 1979. The majority of the abandoned land is on the eastern side of the Konar River. The agricultural area abandoned in and near the entrance to the Konar Valley equates to less than 2 percent of Afghanistan's grain producing area, however.

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-- Military operations this summer in and around Herat had no significant impact on grain production since most of the activities occurred after the main grain harvest was completed.



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Arriving at an Estimate

This preliminary assessment of the agricultural outlook in Afghanistan is based on analysis of weather data [redacted]

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[redacted] of the most important agricultural areas in the country. These areas include the irrigated cropland in the vicinity of Kabul, and in Jalalabad, Qandahar, and Herat Provinces; and the principal dryland farming area in the northern provinces (Badghis, Faryab, Jowzjan, Balkh, Samangan, Konduz, Takhar, Badakhshan, and Baghlan). [redacted]

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[redacted] was used to check the availability of water in the irrigation systems; to determine crop health during critical growth stages; and to make a rough estimate of the size of the harvest based on the number and density of post-harvest straw shocks. Because of the direct relationship between the amount of grain harvested and the amount of straw shocks observed in the fields, this methodology provides a reliable indication of relative differences in grain yields from one year to the next. [redacted]

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Less than half of Afghanistan's approximately 8 million hectares of arable land is cultivated due to limited supplies of water. Some 3.3 million hectares of the arable land are irrigated but, because of fallowing practices, only about three-fourths of this area is cropped each year. Irrigated land produces approximately 85 percent of the country's food and industrial crops. Dryland crops occupy about 900,000 hectares and are concentrated mainly in the foothills of the northern plains region. [redacted]

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Afghanistan's agricultural production is highly weather-sensitive because 85 percent of Afghanistan's food and industrial crops are produced on irrigated land. The dryland crops are totally dependent on spring precipitation and the summer crop is heavily dependent on irrigation water. Water for irrigation comes primarily from snow-fed rivers flowing out of the central mountain region and is augmented by ground water and spring rains. Since little rain normally falls after May, the principal rivers depend on snow melt and mountain springs to maintain their flow during the late spring and summer, when demand is high. [redacted]

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8 October 1985
 NESAM 85-10202JX
 SOVA M 85-10180JX

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