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I. United States

1. DPRK on DPRK-ROK Nuclear Accord

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA DECLARES NUCLEAR ACCORD WITH SOUTH KOREA 'DEAD,'" 05/13/03) reported that the DPRK declared a decade-old agreement with the ROK to keep the Korean peninsula nuclear weapons-free a "dead document" and blamed the US for the demise of the accord. In a statement denouncing the US on the eve of a White House summit between US President George W. Bush and South Korean counterpart Roh Moo-Hyun, the official Korean Central

News Agency (KCNA) said the 1992 North-South pact had been nullified. The agreement was the last legal restraint on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions after the DPRK pulled out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and abandoned a 1994 arms control accord with the US. Last month the PRC warned the DPRK that pursuit of nuclear weapons would breach the joint North-South accord, while the ROK also reminded the DPRK it was still bound by the agreement. "The Bush administration has systematically and completely torpedoed the process of denuclearization on the Korean peninsula," KCNA said. "The inter-Korean declaration on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was thus reduced to a dead document ..." A top ROK official traveling with Roh said the ROK government had received no official word from the DPRK concerning the accord. "We need a review of this problem in talks with the US. However I think the North Korean authorities have not officially declared it nullified yet," Roh's foreign policy advisor Ban Ki-Moon told journalists. Roh, visiting the US on his first foreign trip since taking office in February, meets with Bush at the White House on Wednesday.

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Brinksmanship

Agence France-Presse ("ROH WARNS NORTH KOREA AGAINST NUCLEAR 'BLIND ALLEY,'" 05/13/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun gave a stern warning to the DPRK that developing nuclear weapons would lead down a "blind alley" ahead of key talks with US President George W. Bush. Roh started a landmark US visit aimed at repairing damage done by anti-US sentiment in the ROK, simmering trade friction and differences over how to counter the DPRK's nuclear weapons drive. "North Korea has two alternatives: It can go down a blind alley or it can open up," Roh said in a speech to the Korea Society in New York. Rho, who will meet Bush in Washington on Wednesday for a summit dominated by North Korea's nuclear weapons, said the DPRK had to renounce its nuclear ambitions. "Pyongyang must give up its nuclear project and come forward as a responsible member of the international community. When the DPRK takes this route, the Republic of Korea and the international community will extend the necessary support and cooperation," Roh said. "Pyongyang's nuclear program poses a serious threat to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia as well as the Korean Peninsula," said Roh who has previously steered clear of direct criticism of the DPRK.

3. ROK-US Presidential Summit

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA'S ROH SEEKS TO EASE TENSIONS WITH US BEFORE BUSH SUMMIT," Washington, 05/13/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun pledged to strengthen ties with the US and took a tough line on the DPRK nuclear arms programs ahead of a summit with US President George W. Bush. Roh, 50, arrived in Washington ahead of Wednesday's White House talks after the DPRK made the announcement that its decade old anti-nuclear pact with the ROK was "dead." The ROK leader, on his first-ever trip to the US, is on a delicate bridge-building mission after months of barely concealed tensions between the ROK and the US on how to handle the DPRK nuclear challenge. After launching his US visit in New York on Sunday, Roh is also seeking to repair damage done by anti-US sentiment in ROK and simmering trade friction. Roh predicted Tuesday that the ROK's 50-year-old alliance with the US would "serve as a stepping stone to the peaceful resolution" of the crisis in a speech to the US Chamber of Commerce and the US-Korea Business Council. "The alliance should be maintained even more solidly," he said. "I am confident that the problem can be resolved through peaceful means without further aggravation," Roh said, noting Bush's declared preference to solve the nuclear issue through diplomatic means. "Korea and the US share a common understanding of how to resolve the problem."

4. ROK on US President Abraham Lincoln

Agence France-Presse ("S.KOREA'S ROH LIKENS HIMSELF TO LINCOLN, TO BOOST PROFILE IN US," 05/13/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun likened himself to president Abraham Lincoln, one of the most revered American statesmen, to help build up his pro-US profile. Roh, who has been on a landmark US tour since Sunday, detailed similarities between himself and his idol Lincoln during his speech to the Korea Society. "I have profound respect for Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the US," said the ROK leader on a second day of his weeklong bridge-building mission in the US. Roh, a former human rights lawyer, outlined his resemblance to Lincoln -- ranging from his career en route to politics, to a belief in fighting for national integration. "It is coincidence that I am filling the 16th (South) Korean presidential term and Lincoln was the 16th US President," he said. The 56-year-old South Korean leader is a serious Lincoln fan, authoring a biography on the US leader published in 2001, a year before his victory at the presidential polls. "President Roh is really a Lincoln adorer. He likes him, the values and principles that he cherishes and his life itself," a senior aide for Roh said. Roh has often made his Lincoln biography a gift to people. The ROK leader is scheduled to visit the Lincoln Memorial in Washington Tuesday on the eve of a summit with President George W. Bush.

5. Canada on US Missile Defense

Agence France-Presse ("CANADIAN CABINET PUTS OFF DECISION ON JOINING US MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM," Ottawa, 05/13/03) reported that the Canadian cabinet, which had been expected to agree last week to negotiations with the US about joining its controversial missile defence system, has deferred its decision. Prime Minister Jean Chretien told reporters after Tuesday's regular weekly cabinet meeting that more consultations were needed with backbench members of parliament in the governing Liberal Party. Chretien said the cabinet would then decide "the week after next or the next week." The Liberal Party is due to hold its regular weekly caucus meeting Wednesday, but there will be no meeting of the cabinet next week because of a one-week parliamentary recess. Defence Minister John McCallum, asked why the cabinet had not decided on the issue already, said: "There are people in the caucus who have not expressed their opinion yet. "The cabinet will make its decision in one or two weeks." Many Liberal backbenchers, and some cabinet ministers, are known to oppose Canada joining the planned national missile defence system which has been dubbed "son of Star Wars" -- a reference to former US president Ronald Reagan plans for a space-based defence system. Foreign Minister Bill Graham rejected that criticism. He told reporters: "I do not consider this anywhere near Star Wars. This is a land- and sea-based system. "This is not about weapons in space."

6. US on DPRK Laser Firing

The Associated Press (Sang-hun Choe, "US: NORTH KOREA MAY HAVE FIRED LASER," Seoul, 05/13/03) reported that the DPRK military may have aimed a laser at a US helicopter in March, a US official said Tuesday, shortly after the North reaffirmed its decision to nullify an agreement to remain free of nuclear weapons. The aircraft's sensors detected the unknown type of laser while it was flying near the heavily fortified frontier that divides the ROK and the DPRK, the US military official said on condition of anonymity. No one was injured and no equipment was damaged in the incident. "Two USFK (US Forces Korea) pilots during a routine training mission in March were alerted by onboard laser detecting equipment that laser systems may have illuminated their aircraft," he said. He did not elaborate on the kind of laser.

7. PRC-US Espionage Case

Agence France-Presse ("ACCUSED PRC SPY PLEADS NOT GUILTY," 03/13/03) reported that Katrina Leung, a millionaire socialite, pleaded not guilty in a Los Angeles federal court to being a double agent for the PRC while working with US intelligence. Leung's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) handler and alleged lover, James Smith, also pleaded innocent to federal charges in the case. The court said separate trials for the two would start July 1. The case has caused enormous embarrassment to the US intelligence service and lawyers for Leung, who has been a prominent fundraiser for the Republican Party, said she has been made a scapegoat for the intelligence failures. A grand jury indicted the pair last week. Leung is accused of being a double agent but does not face espionage charges. Two counts of copying national defence documents and three counts of unauthorised possession of national defence documents were made in court. The PRC-American is accused of taking and copying the papers from the briefcase of her lover. Leung -- who has been dubbed a modern-day Mata Hari -- has been held without bail since her arrest on April 9. She faces 50 years in prison if convicted of all charges against her. Smith, 59, has been freed on a 250,000-dollar bail. He faces four charges of wire fraud and two of allowing the removal of classified documents through his gross negligence. He could go to prison for 40 years if found guilty.

Reuters ("FBI AGENT AND CHINA INFORMANT TO FACE SAME JUDGE," Los Angeles, 05/13/03) reported that the same federal judge will preside over the trials of both an FBI counter-intelligence agent and his PRC-American informant, who were initially assigned to separate courtrooms, prosecutors said on Tuesday. Katrina Leung and James J. Smith, who have pleaded innocent to separate indictments, will make their first appearances before US District Judge Florence Marie Cooper on Friday. At this stage in the proceedings, Judge Cooper plans to preside over separate trials of the two defendants. Cooper, a Democrat appointed to the bench in 1999 by President Clinton, was randomly assigned to Smith's case after his indictment. Leung was assigned to US District Judge Gary Klausner, a Republican appointed last year by President Bush. But Cooper, using her discretion in cases that are related, has chosen to preside over the trials of both defendants, the US Attorney's spokesman Thom Mrozek said. Attorneys for Leung, a 49-year-old naturalized US citizen who worked as an FBI informant for two decades under the code name "Parlor Maid," had asked that her case be transferred to Cooper, but it did not appear that the judge was acting in response to that request. Leung, who is being held without bail, is charged with taking classified documents from Smith's briefcase and copying them. She faces a maximum of 50 years in prison if convicted. The FBI paid Leung $1.7 million over the course of her 20 years as an informant, according to court papers. She had an affair with a second FBI agent, William Cleveland Jr., who was not charged in the case but resigned as a top security official at a California nuclear research laboratory after her arrest.

8. ROK Domestic Economy

Agence France-Presse ("RIOT POLICE ON ALERT AS TRUCKER STRIKE CRIPPLES CONTAINER PORT," 05/13/03) reported that thousands of riot police were deployed here as striking truckers crippled the world's third largest container port, inflicting significant damage to the ROK economy. Business leaders and Prime Minister Goh Kun, who called in the army to help shift stranded shipments, expressed worries about the fallout on an already slowing economy. Some 5,000 riot police were on alert around the city's main port and other key locations after Goh called for "stern measures" against illegal labor action. The strike had brought container yard traffic for exports and imports through Busan to a virtual standstill for the past five days. By Tuesday, cargo transport was running at 35 percent of capacity, after the government mobilized private and military cargo trucks to replace strikers truckers. The move came after some 2,000 truckers voted to continue the strike begun on Friday in Busan, which handles 75 percent of the ROK's sea-borne export cargo. "The paralysis of cargo shipments for exports and imports in Busan is causing severe damage to our

economy," Goh said in a statement late Monday. Union leader Kim Jong-In vowed to wage an indefinite strike until the government bowed to demands for tax cuts and other measures to protect the interests of truckers. Strike leaders resumed negotiations Tuesday with transport companies and government officials. But the talks stalled again. Government officials have promised to improve working conditions by lowering highway tolls and easing legal restrictions on cargo transport. Truckers have demanded a 30-percent increase in service fees, lower highway tolls and fuel prices, a cut in income and oil taxes, state insurances and a change in industry practices whereby job contracts are farmed out to truckers through middlemen.

9. Japanese Saudi Blast Victims

Agence France-Presse ("THREE JAPANESE INJURED IN SAUDI BLASTS: KOIZUMI'S MIDEAST TRIP STILL ON," 03/13/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Saudi Arabia later this month will go ahead as scheduled despite a series of deadly bomb blasts in Riyadh, the top government spokesman said. Japan also confirmed Tuesday that three of its nationals were slightly injured in the blasts that hit residential compounds, killing at least three people and injuring 50 people, according to residents and hospital staff. "Although terrorism has occurred, it has nothing to do with the visit," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference. "The prime minister will go to Saudi Arabia as planned." Koizumi is scheduled to head to Egypt and Saudi Arabia after meeting US President George W. Bush May 23 at his Texas ranch. He returns to Japan on May 26. Seiichi Miyoshi, 56, and Mitsutaka Hoshi, 29, both employees of the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Saudi Arabia, were slightly injured by shattered glass, an agency spokesman said. "The two JICA employees were lightly injured and were receiving treatment at a hospital," said JICA spokesman Yoshikazu Wada. "Their injuries are not life-threatening." A US State Department official said in Washington that three car bombs were detonated late Monday in front of three compounds, one of which was a high-rise building. The Japanese government had as of May 1 noted that US facilities in Saudi Arabia were the subject of terrorist threats and warned its nationals to be on guard in crowded places and to keep abreast of news events. It planned to issue another warning following the series of blasts that it said occurred just after 11:00 pm.

10. WHO SARS Premature Optimism Warning

Agence France-Presse ("WHO WARNS AGAINST PREMATURE OPTIMISM AS BEIJING SAYS SARS UNDER CONTROL," 05/14/03) reported that claims by Beijing to have SARS under control were dampened by the World Health Organiztion, which warned PRC officials that the battle against the killer disease was far from won. Tensions simmered in the PRC capital as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome showed continued signs of waning in hot-spots Hong Kong and Singapore but took further root in Taiwan. Meanwhile German scientists announced they had discovered a weakness in the SARS virus which could help speed up the development of a treatment to counter infection. The breakthrough at the University of Luebeck has started a race against time to develop a treatment that could prevent atypical pneumonia from spreading through the body. After 48 new cases and five deaths were reported in the PRC on Tuesday, Han Demin, executive deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Health Bureau said the capital was under control. "Currently, we have indeed adopted a large number of effective measures. We can see the incidences of the disease have clearly been brought under control," he said. WHO's most senior representative in the PRC, Henk Bekedam, however, cast doubt on the claims. "I still believe if you have 40 to 50 new cases a day, it is not a victory," he said. "Forty to fifty, that's still quite a big number of extra cases." Keiji Fukuda, a WHO expert studying the epidemic in Beijing, tempered the agency's criticism, saying PRC authorities deserved praise for what they had achieved so far. "We don't believe we can say the epidemic is declining, but we are encouraged," Fukuda said. "It is possible that in about a week we will see

another upward surge. So the bottom line is what we are seeing is encouraging, but we can't relax efforts."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-US Summit Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Hoon, "ROH STRIKES A CONCILIATORY NOTE IN U.S," New York, 05/13/02) reported that on the first day of his visit to US, President Roh Moo-hyun tried to appear conciliatory over the thorny issue of pulling back US troops in ROK from the inter-Korean border area. "I will make an earnest request to the U.S. side to help the South from its current locations until the North Korean nuclear situation is resolved and various security measures are drawn up to put Koreans at ease," Mr. Roh said Monday. "Relocation of USFK is a very political matter in the short term," Mr. Roh said at a meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel with 700 Korean residents of New York. "Because South Korea's security is disturbed due to North Korea's nuclear issues, a serious dilemma may arise if the troops are moved without the South's consent." The Pentagon reportedly wants to withdraw 15,000 front-line infantry troops to areas south of Han River. Mr. Roh was optimistic about his planned talks with US leaders on nuclear issues. He told reporters on the presidential plane that he saw no difference between his views and those of U.S. President George W. Bush on zero tolerance for a nuclear-armed North Korea. But, he added, the two leaders differ slightly in how to remove the nuclear weapons in DPRK's possession. Ban Ki-moon, Mr. Roh's foreign affairs adviser, said the joint communique to be released after the two presidents' meeting was nearly complete, with officials wrapping up the fine points. Mr. Roh's attempt to strike a conciliatory note toward US is a marked change from his past reputation. "I have envied the values of freedom and human rights that the United States pursues," Mr. Roh said. "My own civic activity and politics were aimed at such American values." The United States and its people are still skeptical about South Korea and its president, Mr. Roh said, but the summit will completely resolve such doubts.

2. ROK Troops to Iraq

Joongang Ilbo ("SEOUL IS COMPLETING TROOP DISPATCH TO IRAQ," Seoul, 05/13/03) reported that ROK will complete its dispatch of troops to help with the rebuilding of Iraq this week. A group of 329 military engineers will leave Wednesday morning for Iraq via Kuwait aboard a charter plane. This will complete the contingent of 675 Korea troops ROK is sending to Iraq project ? including 575 military engineers and 100 medics. A group of 326 engineers and medics was sent to Iraq April 30, following an advance team of 20 that left earlier. The new group has been training to get used to conditions in Iraq. It will arrive at Nasiriyah Thursday. The South Korean troops will be stationed at the Camp Adder, US Army's logistics supply area in south-central Iraq. The engineers and medics will support the allied force's reconstruction projects and help Iraqi civilians.

3. DPRK Leader, Threatened by US

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Jae-ho, "US WANTS NORTH TO NOTE IRAQ LESSON," Seoul, 05/13/03) reported that U.S. intelligence officials are speculating that Kim Jong Il's withdrawal from public appearances from Feb. 12 to April 3 was probably out of fear of being targeted by a precision military strike citing the New York Times of its Sunday edition. During that 50-day span, in which US was building up forces for attacking Iraq, US deployed 24 long-range B-1 and B-52 bombers to bases in Guam, to reinforce American power in the region. It also sent several F-117 Stealth fighters to ROK for a joint

military exercise. Those fighters are designed for quick strikes against targets ringed by heavy air defenses, and are the same kind of radar-evading aircraft used to attack Saddam Hussein and his sons.

III. Japan

1. Japan's Military Emergency Legislation

The Asahi Shimbun ("LDP SEEKS EARLY END TO TALKS ON MILITARY EMERGENCY BILLS," 05/10/03) reported that the Liberal Democratic Party wants to wrap up talks with the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) on military emergency bills, even though the two sides remain wide apart on a number of points. Hidenao Nakagawa, LDP Diet Affairs Committee chairman, and Fumio Kyuma, deputy chairman of the LDP's Policy Research Council, agreed to continue talks on revisions of the three bills with the DPJ. Kyuma later met with Seiji Maehara, point man for the DPJ in the debate over the bills. While Kyuma suggested that the establishment of a so-called crisis management agency could be included in a supplementary resolution, he told Maehara that it would be difficult to include clear provisions for the protection of basic rights in the proposed legislation. Those two issues were among the major points the DPJ has insisted upon. Another point the opposition party is stressing is the passage of a basic law that covers emergencies other than just military attacks. Kyuma said there was not enough time to discuss the DPJ-proposed basic law for emergencies. The DPJ officials have shown signs of compromise on this issue and are now willing to accept a plan to pass the basic law within a year of the passage of the military attack legislation package. The opposition party also wants Diet involvement in the decision-making process for dealing with military emergencies, particularly the authority to pass a resolution to end measures responding to a military attack. Kyuma has indicated that the LDP could take a flexible position on that issue.

Kyodo ("DIET TO PASS 1ST WAR-CONTINGENCY BILLS IN JUNE," Tokyo, 05/13/03) reported that Japan's parliament is expected to enact a set of bills in June that will give the country its first full legal framework to respond to a foreign attack after ruling and opposition leaders compromised Tuesday on key disputed points. The agreement paves the way for the House of Representatives to pass the bills at a plenary session Thursday. "It was epoch-making in the history of Japanese politics," Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told reporters at the Diet building, commenting on the agreements he and Naoto Kan, president of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), reached in an evening meeting. During last-ditch talks Tuesday, the ruling and opposition camps agreed to revise several points in the bills to erase concerns among some lawmakers and pundits who warned the legislation could help revive Japan's prewar militarism. Both camps agreed a revised version would say provisions in the Constitution related to the protection of human rights "must be respected to the maximum." Secondly, the ruling bloc agreed to meet the opposition camp's request to endorse a resolution in connection with the bills demanding the government make another law to boost measures aimed at protecting people's safety. "The results were very good," Kan told reporters after the meeting, noting the ruling camp accepted many of his party's requests before reaching the agreement. But Kan faced immediate criticism over his agreement with Koizumi on the bills, even from other opposition parties. Tadayoshi Ichida, chief of the Secretariat of the Japanese Communist Party, told reporters the ruling camp and the DPJ should be held accountable for their decision to vote on the bills Wednesday at the committee without fresh debate on the revisions. Ichida also accused Kan of neglecting the peace-oriented Constitution in his attempt to show the public he could replace Koizumi as government leader.

2. Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI, EX-PREMIERS DISCUSS NEED FOR U.S. JOINING INT'L UNITY," Tokyo, 05/09/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and three of his predecessors discussed last Friday evening the need for Koizumi to urge US President George W. Bush in an upcoming summit to prioritize the UN in rebuilding postwar Iraq, they said. During a dinner at a Japanese restaurant in downtown Tokyo, Koizumi expressed his concern about Japan's slow economic recovery and pledged to do his utmost to prop up the sagging economy, former Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, one of the participants, told reporters.

The Japan Times ("MOTEGI TO VISIT IRAQ, ASSESS AID," 05/11/03) reported that Japanese Senior Vice Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi left for Baghdad on last Saturday to assess how Japan can assist in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Iraq. Motegi will be the first senior Japanese government official to visit Iraq after the US-led war. He is expected to meet Jay Garner -- head of the US Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA)-- as well as officials of UN relief agencies and non-governmental organizations.

3. Japanese Logistic Support for US

The Japan Times ("CABINET APPROVES FRESH EXTENSION OF ANTITERROR SUPPORT," 05/10/03) reported that the Japanese Cabinet on last Friday approved a plan to extend Japan's logistic support for US-led antiterrorism operations in Afghanistan by six months until Nov. 1. The Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have conducted refueling and airlift operations for the US and its allies working in and around Afghanistan based on a special two-year law detailing Japan's antiterrorism measures introduced in October 2001. The actual support operations were set in a six-month basic plan, which was compiled in November 2001 based on the antiterrorism law. The plan has already been extended twice by the government and was to end May 19. Defense Agency Director General Shigeru Ishiba told news conference the government judged that another extension in necessary because "terrorist threats still remain" and "the purpose of the antiterrorism law has not yet been fulfilled." He said if the situation remains the same when the law expires Nov. 1, the government will consider extending the law beyond the two-year term.

4. US Bases in Japan

Kyodo ("U.S. NAVY SEA BLASTS START: MINISTRY," Naha, 05/09/03) reported that the Okinawa government was informed last Wednesday evening that the US Navy conducted underwater explosives drills nearby in the East China Sea as planned and that a cancellation notice issued earlier in the day was a mistake, local officials said. According to the prefectural government, the Foreign Ministry said the drills in the East China Sea and in the Sea of Japan near Nagasaki Prefecture were carried out last Wednesday. According to the Japan Coast Guard, the US Navy gave advance notice to Japanese authorities that it would conduct the drills on Wednesday in six locations, including the exclusive economic zone some 300 km west of the main island of Okinawa. The Fisheries Agency urged the US military to cancel the drills out of fear they would have a serious impact on fishing operations. The local fisheries industry reacted sharply to the plan.

Kyodo ("U.S. CARRIER IN YOKOSUKA," Yokosuka, 05/11/03) reported that the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson made a port call last Saturday at the US Navy base in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture. The call by the 91,487-ton vessel is the first to the base by a US nuclear carrier since September 1997, when the USS Nimitz docked. Capt. Richard Wren said the Carl Vinson would act as a deterrent in the region while another US carrier, the USS Kitty Hawk, undergoes repairs. The Kitty Hawk returned on May 6 to its home port in Yokosuka from the Persian Gulf, where it was involved in the US-led war in Iraq. Fearing accidents and excessive noise from the

Carl Vinson, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government has requested that the US military not fly aircraft aboard the carrier to the US Atsugi base in the prefecture. But Rear Adm. Evans Chanik, who leads the Carl Vinson battle group, told reporters he may fly aircraft to the base to transfer personnel and goods. A local civic group protested the arrival of the vessel, saying the visit is a strategic move on the part of the US military to make the base a home port for a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

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