

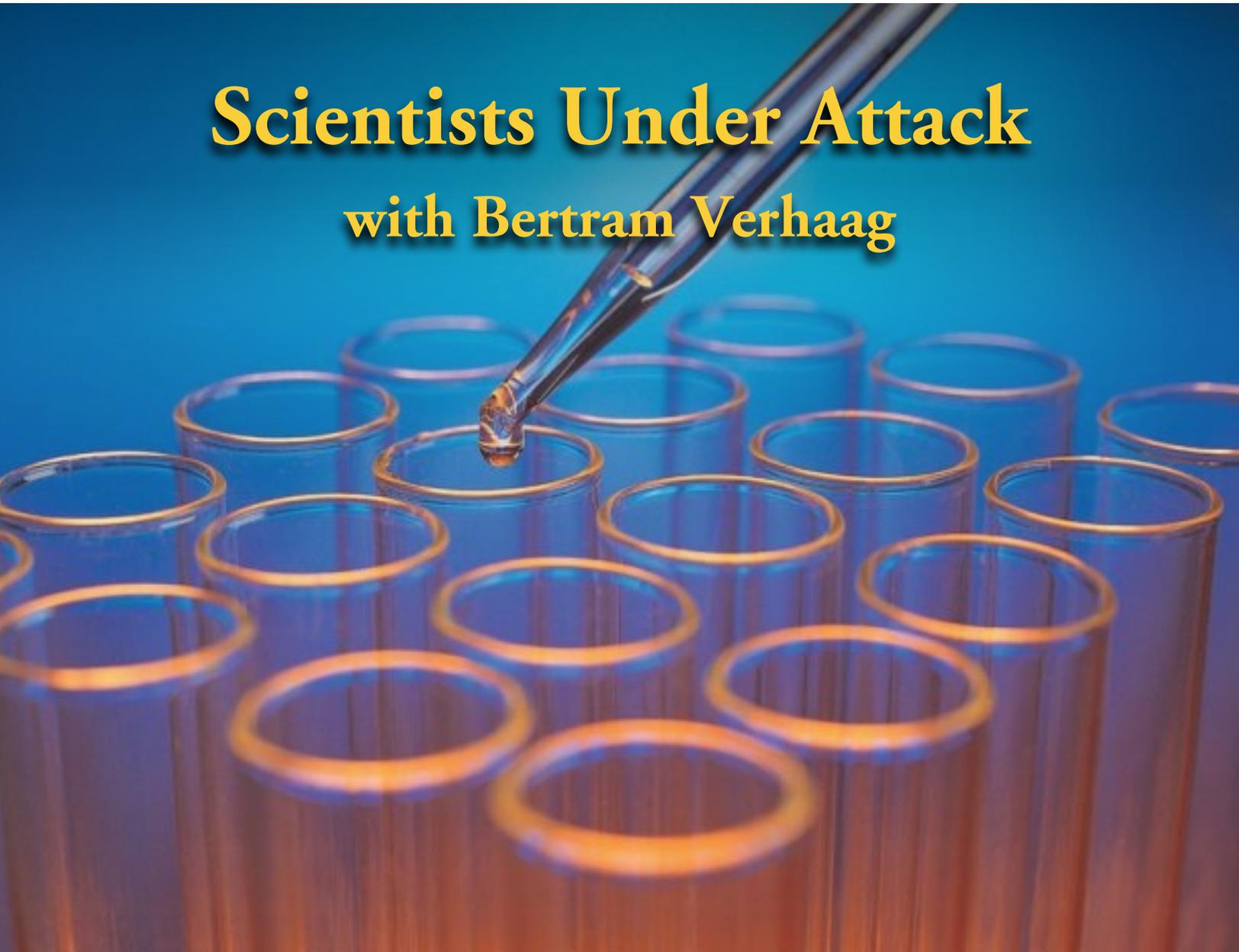
BUILDING WEALTH IN CHANGING TIMES



The Solari Report

JUNE 2, 2011

Scientists Under Attack
with Bertram Verhaag





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C. AUSTIN FITTS: This is a really, really special guy and our team made quite an effort to get over to Germany and persuade him to do this interview and I'm very glad he did. So without further adieu, Bertram Verhaag.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: My name is Bertram Verhaag, the co-founder of DENKmal-Film Production Company in Munich, Germany, which we call DENKmal Films. DENKmal means "monument," and we wanted to make a sort of monuments that make people think about the subjects that we are telling about. Our aim was from the beginning that we would be independent—that we would chose our subjects only from the political, social and environmental areas.

We also always try to make on one subject more than one film. And when the industry planned the nuclear repossessing plant here in Munich, we decided to follow this process for 10 years. It's a very Catholic area where the people felt they were very good to the authorities, the government thought they could place here a nuclear repossessing plant. But very soon the people found out that they were not us. That something was built there, they do not know what it is and what the dangers are. They don't want to have it before their door and so in this area raised up, and also from all over Germany and other (inaudible) and made small villages in tents, and they were also very radical young people coming in this region and normally people from this region wouldn't speak with them or wouldn't invite them to their house. And so it changed because the people there, where this nuclear repossessing plant would be built, should have been built because it was stopped then. They invited these people and they discussed with them and they found out in what sort of a democracy do we live in.

The police were coming with an enormous power, and the government tried to force to build the repossessing plant in this area. The more the



force came from that side the more the distance was coming up. It was nearly eight years until the end of this repossessing plant it was quite built but then the industry said, “OK, we don’t see any chance that we can really built it with the support of (inaudible) and people went to the court and so they decided before finishing he whole thing, to bring their nuclear waste to France, where there was already a big repossessing plant. Our aim was to, with our camera, to accompany this process, and we did this for eight years. And we made five films on this subject. And maybe it was with our help and support and the work that we done made the industry gave the project up in the end.

This was one example and then I made a lot of films on racism and the most successful film in which we made in 30 years was the film “Blue-Eyed.” I shot it in the States with Jane Elliot who made the famous blue-eyed, brown-eyed experiment giving people a lot of new experiences who participated in her process. There were already five films done in the States but I thought I would do it in my own way, and it was the most successful film we had during the three decades.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I must say, from watching the films that I’ve watched, you’re an immensely talented producer and director and writer too. When did you start looking into genetically modified food?

BERTRAM VERHAAG: It was nearly ten years ago. I was asked in the beginning of the 90s, I was asked if I would make a film on the so-called (canton) which was patented in the European office and I said, “no I’m not a scientist. I don’t know anything about it, somebody else will do that.” It took 5 years that I wrote a very small article on the so-called Terminator seed. Terminator seed is a seed, which is genetically modified so that it will be good for only one season. So you bring it out, you have your yield, but you can’t use part of this yield for the next year. This opened my eyes from one second to another when I started to understand why genetic engineering is done, and especially is done in the area of seeds and (inaudible). And I said, “OK, I don’t have to be a scientist to clearly say I don’t want it. I don’t want the industry changing the spring of life to make it fertile because of their interest to get power in the market or to earn money.”



So I decided I want to start and make films to ask this question because I didn't understand in the beginning and most of the people don't know what it is. I know in the United States, most of the people still today don't really know what genetic engineering is and how it is already on the market. That was one point that made me furious, that industry is trying to change in this way our fruit and vegetables and everything.

“I know in the United States, most of the people still today don't really know what genetic engineering is and how it is already on the market.”

The second thing is that I found out that the industry is just introducing this technology into society without asking me, or without asking anybody. They just create a situation and they can say, “no” after 15 or 20 years. How much cost and energy do they bring into the world which we could have used for wonderful other projects? In this world the two movies that I've tried to make sense are genetic engineering and we made our first one, during the last 10 years we made 9 films. The first most important was a 90 minute film, the title is “Life Running Out of Control”, which can be found in the United States by Bullfrog Films. Bullfrog Films has the rights for the United States and Canada to distribute the DVD. This film developed to an absolutely standard film on genetic engineering. If somebody doesn't know anything about it, you should look at this film so you can understand and see who is doing what in this...

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I just have to interrupt you because that's the one I watched last night. I've been watching steadily for the last couple of days, and I have to tell you, it's the best introduction to the topic that I have found yet. It's absolutely outstanding. I'm going to say the name again, “Life Running Out of Control” and the subtitle is “Gene Food and Designer Babies.” One of the things it goes into is not just the genetic modification of vegetables and fruits, but of animals. It's absolutely terrifying. You may not want your young kids watching this. But its important information and its information we have to look at. One of the things that I think is fantastic is that you really sought out wonderful people who have really done their research. You see in the



food area these people who are just givers of life, like Percy Schmeiser or so many of the people you found. They love the idea of feeding people with wonderful healthy food and they are so appalled by what's going on. You really see it in a very responsible way. It's fascinating but it's very responsibly done.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: It's also in my interest to tell this story, which is terrible subject, if you see what the industry is doing with our food. On the other hand, I'm showing people who are fighting against it, who are trying to get more knowledge out to the people that they understand and everyone who understands what genetic engineering is doing, they don't buy it. That's also the reason why it's not allowed to be labeled in the United States. Or maybe they are starting to, but in general the industry is fighting against labeling. And also in Europe, too.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: One of the things you really understand watching "Life is Running out of Control", is how important labeling is. It's absolutely critical as one of the steps we need to deal with this. And the fact that so much has been done to keep this switch invisible. And part of the economics, and I look at things through economics, is you think you're buying one thing, but you're buying something else, and that's part of the fraud.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: The last sentence in this film, "Life Running Out of Control" is from a Norwegian scientist who thinks that 95% of the scientists who are working in this area are paid by industry. So industry has the control over their research, over that part of research that will be published or will be not published. This was another motive for me to make this new film, "Scientists Under Attack." I found some scientists who were even very optimistic like towards genetic engineering. They said, "Okay there may be something good in it" and then he made his feeding studies and he made them quite a long, long time more than the industry is doing it. He was very frightened by what he found out. The immune system was down; the rate of the organs had changed. So him as a scientist we had to look what is happening there. If animals are eating in that case mice, are eating genetically modified potatoes. Then it happens that who came by and they asked him something. It was not



planned. He said, “No I wouldn’t eat that until it’s really in long term study research.” The second thing, because he knew that already a lot of food was in the supermarkets, which contained genetically modified parts and so he said, “it’s unfair to use our fellow citizens as guinea pigs.” After he said this, and it was transmitted in the BBC in England, two days later he was thrown out of the institute, he was forbidden to talk about anything that he did during his research, and so on.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I believe it was Jeffrey Smith who documented the trail of President Clinton calling Tony Blair and then Tony Blair pressuring, as someone who’s seen that kind of force come from the White House and similar sources, it’s hard for most people to fathom the speed at which it will come all the way from the top. It’s like a knife that just cuts through everything. It’s very terrorizing. You get enterprises and heads of research institutes literally doing things. Here we have a scientist that’s very respected with years of peer reviewed successes and suddenly, in two days, he’s bounced. It’s a wonderful case study in what is making this go. Not only is this done to a very respected researcher, but also there’s no financing available for researchers who want to do this kind of research.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: That was the astonishing thing for me that I found out. During the ten years that I was working on this subject there is no study that gives people the information. You can use genetically modified food or you can’t use it, because they are dangerous and so on. There are no studies really done that give you the security to say, now we can decide if we want it or not. That is my democratic aspect. We are not informed that we are able to say, “yes or no.” It’s absolutely astonishing that no government, even in the States or in Germany or in Canada, is really initiating this research that is absolutely necessary for five to ten years minimum, to see the long-term consequences if people or even animals are eating genetically modified food.

In Germany, or in Europe, we have legislation that says, each food that you eat which contains more than 0.9 genetically modified parts has to be labeled. But you don’t find anything that is labeled that way because the food industry doesn’t like to write it down and so they try to get the parts which will be genetically modified as far down as possible. They



know that if they have to label it that way, people wouldn't buy it. All over Europe, 80% of the people say that they don't want to eat genetically modified food.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I think of Europe as having been much more instrumental in slowing these developments down because a lot of the pressure to do this is coming from the United States. So this is really a poisoning of the seed and food system, which is being visited on the world through the United States. Am I being too blunt about our responsibility for visiting this evil on the world?

BERTRAM VERHAAG: It's absolutely right what you say because we have this legislation on the food, which I just described. But we don't have legislation on everything, which is eggs, cheese, meat, milk and everything, which comes from animals that are fed genetically modified feed. This was not included in the legislation. We don't have it until now, in the last six years. We are fighting for this, to get also a labeling for milk, which comes from animals that have been fed genetically modified soy, or whatever. This process is (inaudible) only to send to the consumer who make the demonstration before big factories who make the milk and try to force these factories to influence their farmers to feed the cows in another way, in a conventional way or in biological way, which would be better, but not genetically modified. Then afterwards they can say, "Our milk is free from genetic modification."

I just made a film in February about a feed retailer who decided only to sell feed which was not genetically modified. He was able to change a whole region with all these farmers. He discussed it with them and persuaded them to make a big, big change. There were a lot of genetically modified-free regions in the area, but also from Austria to North Germany. I'm proud to say, which was also created after seeing my film, "Life Running Out of Control."

C. AUSTIN FITTS: When did you make "Killing Seeds?"

BERTRAM VERHAAG: "Killing Seeds" was really our first film made in 2001. It was a story of some German farmers but mainly on Percy Schmeiser. In



this part we put in a new film which we finished in 2010 about Percy Schmeiser, where we showed the ten year fight with Monsanto who were against Percy.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: For those of you who don't know Percy Schmeiser, he's a Canadian farmer who got tangled in litigation with Monsanto. Your interviews with him are so inspiring. He's such an inspiring and extraordinary person — what a leader, and with incredible courage. The ones I've seen in both "Killing Seeds" and "Life Running Out of Control." I've never seen that much footage on Percy Schmeiser, and it's just wonderful, very inspiring material.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: Yes, it's 65 minutes and only on him and his story. At the end he has won. He fought all the way to the federal court of Canada. This court said that he had damaged the patent rights of Monsanto. But he hadn't taken advantage of this because he didn't buy the chemicals that Monsanto was offering besides the seeds, the Round Up. So he didn't have to pay any money to Monsanto. And then he went to his fields and he saw some of this Monsanto grape seeds. He phoned up Monsanto and said, "There is something on my field, please come and take it." They came over and looked at it and said, "Yes, it's our seed, you are right. But if you want us to take it away from your field, you have to sign a paper that you never will sue us again and not speak about it." Both Percy and his wife said, "No, we are not crazy. Okay Monsanto, I'm hiring some people and taking it out of my field and I will send you an invoice." And Monsanto said, "No you can't do it because it's our property." Percy went ahead and did it and he sent an invoice for \$660,000 Canadian dollars to Monsanto and they refused to pay. So he took them to court with this invoice, and five minutes before the decision of the judge, they gave him the check and said, "Okay."

"This court said that he had damaged the patent rights of Monsanto. But he hadn't taken advantage of this because he didn't buy the chemicals that Monsanto was offering besides the seeds, the Round Up."

He's a wonderful person, this Percy Schmeiser, who was Mayor in his



local municipality. He was quite experienced to fight with such companies and people. Finally he won his fight and he could save his property from Monsanto. Most of the processes they win against the farmers who are identified for using the genetically modified seeds.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: You see the importance of the scientist to the farmers and how by literally getting the scientists out of the way, it's much easier to industrialize the process and really turn the farmers into serfs or put them out of business, which is what you see in India with the extraordinary number of suicides by farmers who have basically been destroyed by this industrialization of agriculture and dependency on big companies for their seed.

I wanted to mention the subtitle on "Scientist Under Attack" is "Genetic Engineering and the Magnetic Field of Money." I was hoping you could explain that subtitle because it's very much of interest to me — the issue of how this relates to money.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: There is no real research done on this subject of genetic engineering. There is no real study that has been done over a long time period that can if this is good or not. Companies are just entering this industry without asking, and with their only interest being to get power in this market. They don't hesitate to say: "We want to get the power of the market from the fields to the table where you eat your food, mostly processed foods." What is their main motto? It's not for doing good to the consumers, as they always try to tell us, or to stop the hunger of the world. It never happens.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: The lies are very forceful and thick.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: We show it in our film, "Scientists Under Attack." There's a scene taken in Brazil, where scientist show us in the field how plants are overwhelming the soil. The soil can't be right. It couldn't even be harvested because the stem of the plant was so big that it couldn't be yielded. You have millions of hectares in the United States, which are in the same situation. The plants or the cotton that you want to yield are not able to be yielded. If you see it now, the only advice the industry is



giving is use more poison or use stronger poison. That's in their interest because they have been a chemical company, and then they bought all over the world the seed companies. They combined it, the seed with the poison and they had double profit from this, too. Now they want to sell more poison because they can't help you in another way. They are inventing the so-called (inaudible) seeds. That means for the moment we have Roundup ready seeds, which are resistance against one poison like Roundup, containing glyphosate. Now they are creating plants, by genetic modification, which are resistant against eight different poisons. They create this because if this one wouldn't work, you can use another one. They say that a plant like soy wouldn't be touched by this. They don't think about how these different poisons work together. What is happening if you have more poisons and what is happening if you are changing a salad being afterwards resistant against eight different poisons? To do this they really should test these particles, these greens, which go into the salad, and you can imagine that it will be destroying maybe the whole order of the salad and what will be happening there. If you eat an animal that was fed genetically modified feed, you are eating a different animal. It's no more the same animal. There's no research being done in this area.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: It's interesting; I read a review of "Scientists Under Attack" that described it as a documentary thriller. This is a topic that I think I know a lot about, and yet I was watching it and saying, "Oh my God, it is a thriller!" The way you weave the story, you have Jeffrey Smith going down the road and finding this, and talking to this person. It's kind of like a journey where you experience the shock of what some of these scientist have discovered and experienced.

One of the things I wanted to mention is that I have a theory: if you look at the efforts in the 90s to kind of roll the control of the seed and the food supply out, one of my theories is that for many years the U.S. dollar and the control of the fiat currencies has depended on controlling the trade in oil and the sea lanes. The reality is if we switch to different kinds of energy, the question is, what asset are you going to control that will control a global digital currency? Looking at the ferociousness with which this is implemented globally, one of the things I wonder is, do the



bankers think they need control of the food supply to maintain a successful reserve currency globally? There may be more connection between seed and food and money than most people think.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: Sometimes I have the idea, maybe some day Monsanto, or companies like Monsanto would say, “Oh, it was an error to do the genetic modification, etc., etc. It didn’t work out as we planned.” But at the end, they have the patent on all the plants all over the planet. That maybe is their real aim. Like we find out now with the resistance to all these plants that try to cover the soil and cotton fields, they can sell more poison and more chemicals.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I think that absolutely is their aim. If you look at the story of “Scientists Under Attack” about the scientist who discovered that these genetically modified seeds had migrated into indigenous areas, like Mexico, where they weren’t allowed. So thousands of miles beyond where they weren’t supposed to be, they are. One of the questions I have is that I think there is a reasonable chance that they have been spraying and spreading them illegally to make sure they do get everywhere.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: They try it in different ways: The United States gave food help to African people, and this was genetically modified maize. On the other hand, they tried to create this so-called beta carotene rice. This so-called “golden rice” that would help so many people in the Eastern areas in Bangladesh so people wouldn’t get blind and so on. But it didn’t work because people had to eat more than five or six times the portions that they normally eat from rice. And on the other hand, they need oil and fat to get this beta-carotene to really work in that way. They use this and say, “How appetizing and good this will be,” and so on. And the main lie that they were creating is that “we can stop the hunger in the world.” What they promise is that if we use less poison and less pesticide we will have higher yields. All these points proved meanwhile as wrong, because in the first two years, maybe the yields go up, but then they go down. And also with herbicides and poisons they go up.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: You have to understand what is really happening to fathom that it’s really this extraordinary. You need to go through the different



parts of the food chain: the scientists, the farmers, the lawyers, the researchers, the consumers, and you need to do it globally.

That's why multiple documentaries over a decade's time is such an important and amazing contribution because it's that way that you can go through the whole food chain and see it in all its complexity and see how many excellent people there are who have taken extraordinary efforts to try and understand and communicate and document this. But without a media that will show us that picture, I think we're lost. And so, I like to think we're found, thanks to you and your film.

Before we end, if you could simply walk us through how to buy these documentaries. One of the things I'm going to encourage my subscribers to do, is to buy them, and to watch them, and to pass them around, because I think they're great, they're excellent documentaries, excellent information, and invaluable. So if you could walk us through how we get them that would be terrific.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: "Life Running Out of Control" is with a distributor, Bullfrog Films in the United States: <http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/lroc.html>.

With Percy, we don't have a distributor. If somebody is interested, we can send a DVD. "Scientist Under Attack" which is available from Jeffrey Smith and the Institute for Responsible Technology: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/>

Also on our own website: www.denkmal-film.com.

And directly on the film's website: <http://www.scientistsunderattack.com/>

C. AUSTIN FITTS: I have a friend who's a documentary maker who told me that the reason "The Secret" was phenomenally successful was that you

“Without a media that will show us that picture, I think we're lost.”



could stream it on the internet for not that much money. Have you ever thought of making these available by streaming?

BERTRAM VERHAAG: Yes, we are trying to start this, but have not done it yet. We are filmmakers, first, and we would like to have distributors who take the films and promote them, but unfortunately most of this is on our shoulders, too.

C. AUSTIN FITTS: Watching what you have accomplished, it's just amazing, taking your camera and crew all over the world. Thank you Bertram Verhaag, very, very much. I really appreciate it. Have a wonderful evening.

BERTRAM VERHAAG: Have a wonderful day.

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