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Nuclear Ethics: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography

by Mark Nation

Compiling a useful bibliography is always a challenge, particularly in terms of selection. If that is generally true, it is especially true in treating two topics as complex as ethics and nuclear arms.

There are many facets to ethics, from the multifaceted dimensions of moral philosophy to the numerous recent creative discussions of the use of Scripture in formulating ethics. However, to limit the number of entries, I have eliminated virtually all resources not directly related to the nuclear issue. A few exceptions pertain to the classical Christian approaches to war and peace.

It is also the case that an understanding of nuclear ethics is contingent upon knowledge about the nuclear arms race, including issues ranging from capabilities of nuclear weapons to an understanding of the Soviet Union to knowledge of strategies for use and non-use of nuclear weapons. Again, with few exceptions, I have refrained from listing resources not directly connected to ethical discussions, realizing that some of the entries listed deal with issues relating to nuclear arms. There are a couple of exceptions. Though aware of its biases, I have included the Ground Zero book as a general, readable overview of the nuclear arms race. The other exception pertains to an issue that repeatedly cropped up, implicitly or explicitly, in discussions of nuclear ethics as *the* decisive issue. It is a matter related to nuclear doctrine. To oversimplify, is the engagement in nuclear war so awful to contemplate that our best talent and strategizing should go into the effort to prevent nuclear war? Or, rather, should we expend a considerable allotment of time and energy contemplating how we might fight and, perhaps, win a nuclear war? The articles by Gray and Payne, Howard, Keeney and Panofsky, and Wohls-tetter were added to the bibliography to give examples of some of the best thinking on various sides of these issues.

Another question I confronted was whether to limit the entries to Christian writers. I decided not to for two reasons. First, many Christian writers, through employment of natural law or for other reasons, debate this kind of issue in terms that are not specifically theological or Christian. Second, even for others, the questions raised and issues discussed by many of the writers listed here are definitely relevant for Christians of every ilk—even if their final conclusions might be based on different beliefs and values.

Finally, every attempt has been made to be fair in selecting and annotating the entries. However, in order to maximize the usefulness of the bibliography, I have, when appropriate, rendered what I considered to be fair judgments.

Asterisks indicate the books or essays I would most recommend to someone who wants a brief course on nuclear ethics.

Aukerman, Dale. *Darkening Valley: A Biblical Perspective on Nuclear War*. Seabury Press, 1981, 229 pp., \$8.95. Though not explicitly written about ethics, this book bristles with numerous thought-provoking insights that have relevance

for ethical deliberation. *The Christian Century* has said about this book that it "is unlikely to be surpassed by anything written on nuclear war from a religious perspective."

Barrs, Jerram. *Who are the Peacemakers? The Christian Case for Nuclear Deterrence*. Crossway Books, 1983, 64 pp., \$2.95. Introduced by the late, well-known Francis Schaeffer, this brief polemical book argues for a "peace through strength" position on the basis of Barrs' understanding of the demands of justice. Contains some rather weak and strange arguments.

*Bernbaum, John, ed. *Perspectives on Peacemaking: Biblical Options in the Nuclear Age*. Regal Books, 1984, 265 pp., \$6.95. A collection of some interesting essays, mostly from the evangelical conference that was held in Pasadena in May 1983. Various perspectives are represented. Includes essays by people such as Senators William Armstrong and Mark Hatfield, Jim Wallis, Edmund W. Robb, and Richard J. Mouw.

Bonkovsky, Frederick O. *International Norms and National Policy*. Eerdmans, 1980, 220 pp., O.P.—available from UMI for \$58.50). Bonkovsky challenges much just-war theorizing as unrealistic and impractical. He proposes some specific guidance for formulating realistic international "procedural" norms and means for more objectively evaluating conflicting values. The book raises some interesting questions.

Brown, Dale W., ed. *What About the Russians? A Christian Approach to U.S.-Soviet Conflict*. The Brethren Press, 1984, 159 pp., \$6.95. An interesting collection of essays divided into three sections: 1) "Who Are the Russians?" 2) "Why Do We Fear the Russians?" 3) "Can Christians Trust Russians?"

Cesaretti, C. A. and Joseph T. Vitale, eds. *Rumors of War: A Moral and Theological Perspective on the Arms Race*. Seabury Press, 1982, 138 pp., \$6.95. This is a study guide for four sessions of study: "Peace," "Security," "Just War," and "Stewardship and Christian Responsibility." There are four appendices, the first two of which contain almost 100 pages of readings to supplement the lessons. There is little attempt to present a balanced perspective. And though present policies are not discussed, the readings would tend to be critical of them.

*Clouse, Robert G., ed. *War: Four Christian Views*. InterVarsity Press, 1981, 210 pp., \$6.95. Nonresistance, pacifism, the just war, and the crusade or preventive war positions are defended as Christian positions by proponents of the respective positions. Also each author responds to the others' positions. Good format and discussions.

Curry, Dean C., ed. *Evangelicals and the Bishops' Pastoral Letter*. Eerdmans, 1984, 254 pp., \$10.95. A nice collection of essays from various theological and political perspectives.

Davidson, David L. *Nuclear Weapons and the American Churches: Ethical Positions on Modern Warfare*. Westview Press, 1983, 208 pp., O.P. This book was written by a chaplain in the U.S. Army and "prepared under the auspices of the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania." This is a good, objective survey of some current attitudes regarding the ethics of the nuclear

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- arms race, including most major denominations and several Christian ethicists. Includes a chart of church positions on specific issues in response to a questionnaire prepared for this study.
- Dougherty, James E. *The Bishops and Nuclear Weapons: The Catholic Pastoral Letter on War and Peace*. Archon Books, 1984, 255 pp., \$22.50. Written by a political scientist, this is the most serious, substantive, critical response to the Bishops' letter I have seen. Dougherty especially takes issue with specific policy recommendations of the Bishops.
- *Duke, David N. "Christians, Enemies and Nuclear Weapons," *The Christian Century*, Vol. 100, No. 32 (Nov. 2, 1983), 986-989. Explores the relevance in a nuclear age of Jesus' teaching regarding love for enemies. Stimulating and helpful.
- Dwyer, Judith A. "Catholic Thought on Nuclear Weapons: A Review of the Literature," *Religious Studies Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1984), 103-107. A very helpful, brief overview of current Catholic thought.
- Falwell, Jerry. "Peace Through Strength—Preserving Our Freedom," *Fundamentalist Journal*, May 1983, 8-9. When I was writing an article on Jerry Falwell and the nuclear arms race in 1983, I wrote to him to ask for anything he had written on the subject. This article was what I received. The key to his argument is his statement: "Freedom is the basic moral issue of all issues."
- Geyer, Alan. *The Idea of Disarmament: Rethinking the Unthinkable*. The Brethren Press, 1982, 256 pp., \$11.95. As Geyer says, this is "more of a think-book than a fact-book." As such it offers some interesting critiques of deterrence and counterforce doctrines as well as possible scenarios for disarmament. I believe this was revised for a 1985 edition.
- Glynn, Patrick. "Why an American Arms Build-Up is Morally Necessary," *Commentary*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (Feb. 1984), 17-28. A spirited argument against the M.A.D. (Mutually Assured Destruction) strategy as supported, e.g., by Spurgeon Keeny and Wolfgang Panofsky and most mutual, verifiable, nuclear weapons freeze proponents.
- Goodwin, Geoffrey, ed. *Ethics and Nuclear Deterrence*. St. Martin Press, 1982, 199 pp., \$22.50. A collection of articles representing various viewpoints from discussions sponsored by the British Council on Christian Approaches to Defense and Disarmament.
- *Gray, Colin S. and Keith Payne. "Victory is Possible," *Foreign Policy*, No. 39 (Summer 1980), 14-27. Colin Gray is one of the most impressive, capable apologists for current administration nuclear policies. This influential article argues that we should develop nuclear strategy that is focused much more on fighting and winning a nuclear war than the M.A.D. logic allows for.
- *Ground Zero. *Nuclear War: What's In It For You?* Pocket Books, 1982, 272 pp., \$2.95. A readable, general introduction to the nuclear arms race.
- Hardin, Russell, et al., eds. *Nuclear Deterrence: Ethics and Strategy*. University of Chicago Press, 1985, 395 pp., \$10.95. This book represents some of the best thinking on the subject by people within the moral philosophy guild. All but two essays are from the April 1985 issue of the journal *Ethics*.
- *Hauerwas, Stanley. *Against the Nations: War and Survival in a Liberal Society*. Winston Press, 1985, 208 pp., \$16.95. This book contains three of Hauerwas' essays on war, two specifically on nuclear war. Hauerwas wants to press us to ask what it means to be specifically Christian in nuclear and other contexts. These three essays take on greater meaning in the context of the rest of the essays in this book and his *The Peaceable Kingdom*. However, if we are willing to weather Hauerwas' dense writing, we will emerge with new questions and, perhaps, a more Christian vantage point from which to view the issues involved.
- Heyer, Robert, ed. *Nuclear Disarmament: Key Statements of Popes, Bishops, Councils and Churches*. Paulist Press, 1982, 278 pp., \$7.95. A good collection of formal statements, including more than thirty pages of Protestant church statements.
- Hoekema, David A. "Nuclear Issues Resources (Part I)," *The Christian Century*, Vol. 100, No. 26 (Sept. 14-21, 1984), 819-825. A good discussion of a number of books on the nuclear arms race, most of which are not listed here. The only limitation is that so much has been published in the last two years.
- _____. "Nuclear Issues Resources (Part II)," *The Christian Century*, Vol. 100, No. 27 (Sept. 28, 1983), 850-854.
- _____. "Protestant Statements on Nuclear Disarmament," *Religious Studies Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1984), 97-102. A good overview of official statements.
- *Hollenbach, David, S.J. *Nuclear Ethics: A Christian Moral Argument*. Paulist Press, 1983, 100 pp., \$3.95. Though one might want to supplement it with other readings, this is a good, brief text on nuclear ethics. This fine study is well-written and thoughtful.
- Howard, Michael E. "On Fighting a Nuclear War," *International Security*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Spring 1981), 3-17. A response to Colin Gray et al. (see Gray and Payne above) by one of the foremost British historians of war.
- Johnson, James Turner. *Can Modern War Be Just?* Yale University Press, 1984, 215 pp., \$17.95. This book is comprised of eight essays by a former student of Paul Ramsey and one of the most prominent and prolific just-war theorists writing today. Johnson wants to take issue with those who answer "no" too quickly to the question posed by the title. Therefore he is somewhat critical of the Catholic Bishops' Letter (see Wohlstetter, Albert & Critics below) and would lean more toward endorsing policies of limited nuclear war, flexible response, etc. But he seems somewhat more cautious than, e.g., W. V. O'Brien.
- *Johnson, James T. and David Smith, eds. *Love and Society: Essays in the Ethics of Paul Ramsey*. Scholars Press, 1974, 251 pp. Includes four fine essays on the just-war tradition. Johnson's essay gives a good overview of the jwt as well as a good, brief explication of Ramsey's understanding of the jwt. LeRoy Walters' essay is one of the few to discuss how the jwt has actually worked in practice.
- *Keeny, Spurgeon M., Jr., and Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky. "MAD Versus NUTS: Can Doctrine or Weaponry Remedy the Mutual Hostage Relationship of the Superpowers?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Winter 1981/82), 287-304. A key article in discussions about Colin Gray's and Albert Wohlstetter's writings (see biblio. entries) as well as other proposals regarding nuclear strategies and, therefore, nuclear ethics. Keeny and Panofsky contend that given the properties of nuclear weapons and the reality of other components of conceivable nuclear war scenarios, it is dangerous to ignore the fact that the Superpowers are in a mutual hostage relationship. To formulate strategies of nuclear war fighting, etc., while ignoring these realities makes mutually assured destruction much more of a possibility. An important essay.
- Lackey, Douglas P. *Moral Principles and Nuclear Weapons*. Rowman & Allanheld Pubs., 1984, 265 pp., \$25.00. Whether or not one agrees with all of the specific recommendations, this book is quite instructive. Lackey, a philosophy professor, not only relates just-war categories to the nuclear

- arms race but also illuminates the discussion by applying the moral categories of common good, human rights, and justice in a way that responds to a broader range of concerns. Has a good, fifteen-page bibliography.
- Lawler, Philip F. *The Ultimate Weapon*. Regnery Gateway, 1984, 126 pp., \$8.95. Lawler is the president of the American Catholic Conference, an independent organization founded to help Catholic lay people express their views on political and social issues that affect their church. Written as a study-guide for the pastoral letter, the book is quite critical of the letter, particularly regarding specific policy recommendations. The title makes a dual reference to prayer and nuclear weaponry.
- Miller, Richard B. "Tradition and Modernity in the Nuclear Age," *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (April 1985), 258-270. An interesting, illuminating discussion of Jerram Barrs' *Who Are the Peacemakers?*, David Hollenbach's *Nuclear Ethics*, Stanley Hauerwas' *Should War Be Eliminated?* (included in *Against the Nations*), and Edward LeRoy Long's *Peace Thinking in a Warring World*.
- Murnion, Philip, ed. *Catholics and Nuclear War: A Commentary on the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter*. Crossroads, 1983, 346 pp., \$10.95. The book is divided into sections corresponding to the Letter. Includes the text of the Letter. Writers include David Hollenbach, Peter Steinfels, Charles E. Curran, J. Bryan Hehir, James Finn, and Richard A. McCormick.
- *National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*. U.S. Catholic Conference, 1983, 103 pp., \$1.50. The Bishops' Pastoral Letter on war and peace. A carefully wrought document. Very influential.
- Novak, Michael. "Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age," *National Review*, Vol. XXXV, No. 6 (April 1, 1983), 354-392. An influential essay by a conservative Catholic. Also available, slightly expanded, with other essays, in book form from Thomas Nelson.
- O'Brien, William V. *The Conduct of Just and Limited War*. Praeger Pubs., 1981, 495 pp., \$15.95. A Catholic political scientist, O'Brien is one of the foremost experts on the just-war tradition. This book discusses the history of the just-war tradition, the justifiability of U.S. involvement in some major conflicts and the possibility of just and limited warfare today. On the nuclear issue O'Brien's positions would, for the most part, be consistent with current Administration policies. It seems to me that his conclusions largely depend on siding with Gray and Payne (see above) over against Keeny and Panofsky (see also above). O'Brien is a serious scholar. Even for those who disagree with him, by implication he raises some of the right questions.
- *O'Brien, William V. "Just-War Doctrine in a Nuclear Context," *Theological Studies*, Vol. 44 (1983), 191-220. See entry on *The Conduct of Just and Limited War*.
- *Potter, Ralph B. *War and Moral Discourse*. John Knox Press, 1969, 123 pp., \$1.95. This often quoted little volume was written in the context of the Vietnam War. However, Chapter 2, "The Complexity of Policy Recommendations," and Chapter 3, "Uses and Abuses of Moral Discourse," would contribute greatly to many discussions of nuclear ethics and public policies.
- Ramsey, Paul. *The Just War*. Univ. of America Press, 1983 (original ed. 1968), 554 pp., \$15.75. One of the two basic collections of essays by the dean of just-war theorists of the past generation. Because of his continuing influence, it is important to be familiar with Ramsey's writings.
- Ramsey, Paul. *War and the Christian Conscience: How Shall Modern War Be Conducted Justly?* Duke Univ. Press, 1961, 331 pp., O.P. See entry on *The Just War*.
- Schaeffer, Francis, Vladimir Bukovsky and James Hitchcock. *Who is for Peace?* Thomas Nelson, 1983, 112 pp., \$3.95. Arguments for a "peace through strength" kind of position by a deceased, influential evangelical, a Soviet dissident, and a conservative Catholic historian. Schaeffer's essay is weak in substance. All three essays leave much to be desired.
- Schall, James V., ed. *Out of Justice Peace—Joint Pastoral Letter of the West German Bishops; Winning the Peace—Joint Pastoral Letter of the French Bishops*. Ignatius Press, 1984, 124 pp., \$3.95. The approach and time (particularly in the French Bishops' Letter) is significantly different from the U.S. Bishops' Letter, also published in 1983. And one could assume that they would make what are generally considered to be more conservative practical suggestions regarding, e.g., deterrence, first-use, etc. However, they don't spell out specific recommendations as the U.S. Bishops did.
- *Shannon, Thomas A., ed. *War or Peace? The Search for New Answers*. Orbis Books, 1980, 255 pp., \$9.95. Some fine articles. The one by James Childress on "Just-War Criteria" is particularly helpful with the nuclear issue. The asterisk applies to Childress' article.
- Shaw, William H. "Nuclear Deterrence and Deontology," *Ethics*, Vol. 94 (Jan. 1984), 248-260. Raises good questions regarding the ways in which people argue for and against deterrence.
- Sider, Ronald J. and Richard K. Taylor. *Nuclear Holocaust & Christian Hope*. InterVarsity Press, 1982, 368 pp., \$6.95. A carefully conceived, articulate book by two convinced Christian pacifists. They relate their position to Scripture and the just-war tradition. And they also discuss practical steps toward peace, including a lengthy discussion of non-military means of national defense.
- Sterba, James. P., ed. *The Ethics of War and Nuclear Deterrence*. Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1985, 182 pp., \$9.50. A collection of articles by several prominent philosophers et al., including George Mavrodes, W.V. O'Brien, Douglas Lackey, and George Kavka.
- Voorst, L. Bruce. "The Churches and Nuclear Deterrence," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (Spring 1983), 827-852. A good survey of recent church positions.
- Wallis, Jim, ed. *Peacemakers*. Harper & Row, 1983, approx. 170 pp., \$5.95. A collection of brief autobiographical sketches of some interesting contemporary peacemakers.
- Wallis, Jim, ed. *Waging Peace: A Handbook for the Struggle to Abolish Nuclear Weapons*. Harper & Row, 1982, 304 pp., \$4.95. Intended as a study guide for churches, this is a good collection of essays of facts, analyses, ethical positions, and practical suggestions. There is no attempt to represent a full range of perspectives.
- Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument With Historical Illustrations*. Basic Books, Inc., 1977, 361 pp., \$7.50. James Childress, himself a scholar of the just-war theory, said this is "one of the most important books on just-war theory in this century." It has certainly been an important and influential contribution to the literature.
- Weigel, George. *Peace and Freedom: Christian Faith, Democracy and the Problem of War*. Institute on Religion and Democracy, 1983, 80 pp., \$6.00. According to Weigel there are three major obstacles to peace in the world today. These are the threat of nuclear weapons, the threat of "the armed totalitarian power of the Soviet Union," and the threat of a "survivalist" ethic which is "so single-mindedly focused on the threat of nuclear weapons that it ignores or mini-

mizes the Soviet threat, while at the same time draining us of the vital moral energy necessary to work for both peace and freedom." If we remain conscious of these obstacles and pursue certain goals outlined in this book, Weigel believes we can move much closer to true international peace. Weigel also has a little booklet on the Bishops' Letter entitled *The Peace Bishops and the Arms Race*.

Wohlstetter, Albert. "Bishops, Statesmen, and Other Strategists on the Bombing of Innocents," *Commentary*, Vol. 75, No. 6 (June 1983), 15-35. Written by a mathematical logician, formerly of RAND, the article challenges some basic components of the Bishops' Letter. This is the kind of essay that challenges one to know the facts and reason carefully. The Keeny and Panofsky article (above) as well as various *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* articles challenge some of Wohlstetter's claims.

*Yoder, John Howard. *The Christian Witness to the State*. Faith and Life Press, 1977, 3rd ed., 90 pp., \$3.95. Gives a theological and ethical rationale for why Christians engage in politics in a partisan manner. Incidentally this book belies the notion that pacifists have no right to be, or rationale for being, involved in politics.

Yoder, John Howard. *Nevertheless: Varieties of Religious Pac-*

ifism. 2nd ed., Herald Press, 1976, 143 pp., \$2.50. This small book helps correct the stereotypes of pacifism that continue to exist in the minds of many. It also offers a powerful apologetic on behalf of pacifism.

*Yoder, John Howard. *The Politics of Jesus*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972, 260 pp., \$4.95. This very influential book argues for the relevance of the New Testament to social ethical thought.

Yoder, John Howard. *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics As Gospel*. Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1984, 222 pp., \$8.95. An important collection of essays that illustrate several dimensions of Yoder's understanding of Christian social ethics. James Childress says that this book ". . . should be read by all Christians interested in the meaning of their faith and its ethical implications."

*Yoder, John Howard. *When War is Unjust: Being Honest in Just-War Thinking*. Augsburg Pub. House, 1984, 95 pp., \$5.95. This book raises a lot of good questions for Christians (and others) intent on taking the just-war tradition seriously. As Charles P. Lutz, a just-war proponent, says in the introduction, "[Yoder] asks us, for the sake of the world, to demonstrate the credibility of our ethic, to put it to the test, to be honest about where it leads us."

The Church: A Social Institution?

by Dennis P. Hollinger

Scrutinizing the church as a social institution has never been popular among evangelicals. Sociological inquiry, it is feared, will inevitably lead to a reductionist view of the church, systematically stripping away all supernatural explanation of the church's origins, forms, and message, until all that remains is another human institution. Evangelicals have chosen instead to affirm the church as a Body of Christ, a royal priesthood, a holy Temple, the *ecclesia*—a divine body that transcends socio-cultural explanations and owes its very existence to Christ, its founder, Savior, and Lord.

Certainly sociology has not always been kind to the church or to religion in general. To acknowledge that "the Christian Church is a natural community. . .," says James Gustafson, "appears to reduce a special creation of God's gracious work to the dismal and uninspiring realm of natural man with his physical, social, and psychological needs."¹ Durkheim, Marx, Freud, and a host of other modern behavioral scientists have joined the ranks of those opting for monolithic explanations of the church's existence based solely on social, economic, and psychological factors.

But one need not be a reductionist to utilize sociological categories. Indeed one need not assume a skeptical stance to view the church from a socio-cultural perspective. It is both possible and desirable to analyze the church using theological categories which affirm its unique origins, message, and purposes, in conjunction with sociological categories which reckon with the socio-cultural milieu out of which it emerged.

The sociological perspective is important for several reasons. First, it helps us distinguish those dimensions of the church which emanate from the culture and those which come from God. Too often throughout history well-meaning Christians have argued that particular forms, politics, ideas, and styles within the church were divine in origin. A century or so later when those aspects of ecclesiastical life had changed, one was almost left to conclude that God was fickle, since he

had presumably ordained them. Sociological study can be a valuable tool in helping us discern how and why certain trends emerge within the church. To attribute all human forms and practices to divine initiation is akin to idolatry, even when those forms and practices are good and beneficial. God has indeed ordained certain things for the church, but in many areas there is also freedom in order that the church may adapt its God-given mandates to the needs of particular socio-cultural contexts. But to do this effectively one must distinguish that which is cultural from that which is supracultural.²

A further rationale for sociological inquiry is the insidious inclination to succumb to cultural Christianity. Cultural Christianity involves a syncretism of biblical ideals and practices with those cultural ideals and practices which are antithetical to Christian principles. The use of cultural motifs serves a vital function in contextualizing the gospel, as many missiologists have recently contended.³ To do so requires careful socio-cultural analysis in order to identify modes of thought, organizational methods, and stylistic forms which can be adapted to church life. However, there are limits. When aspects of the socio-cultural context which conflict with the gospel are utilized, or when relative cultural motifs are baptized as absolute Christian principles, cultural religion results. Sociological analysis can be used to help illuminate the distinction between legitimate contextualization and illegitimate cultural captivity by clarifying relevant social processes, norms, and role expectations.

A final reason for sociological analysis of the church is to understand the ways in which the church helps shape its culture and related social institutions. Many social scientists have studied religion primarily as a dependent variable in which religion is acted upon by society. Karl Marx, for example, saw religion and the church as mere reflections of the economic institution in that the owners of production utilized religious ideas to placate their workers. In such analysis religion has no dynamic of its own to impact upon society.

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