

THEATRE IN THE FLAT



OSBERT LANCASTER

The impact of the unassailable Maudie Littlehampton on the latest absurdities that harass our daily life should once again make every politician run for the shelter of the nearest cliché, the Carnaby Street tycoon take refuge in his latest jabot and every ageing hippie rattle his beads and do his thing in the anonymity of a passing demo. The rest of us will laugh and take the point—and what deadly points they are when sharpened by Osbert Lancaster. He is gone but pollution is still with us: the red hands of Ulster are rivalled by the Little Red Schoolbook: last year's pill is superseded by the quick visit to Harley Street: and international (and heavenly) peace is still being wrecked, though now by the slipstream of Concorde. And there is of course the entry into the Common Market, some of the practical problems of which are brought to our notice not only by the writing on the wall but by the designations on the doors.

In short, as *The Sunday Times* said of Lancaster's last collection: 'One by one the flies in our ointment are neatly pierced, pinned and mounted for display.'

1972

1285

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THEATRE IN THE FLAT



31.xii.71

THEATRE IN THE FLAT



New Pocket Cartoons

by

OSBERT LANCASTER



JOHN MURRAY, LONDON

1972

Osbert Lancaster's other works

PROGRESS AT PELVIS BAY
PILLAR TO POST
HOMES SWEET HOMES
CLASSICAL LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURES
THE SARACEN'S HEAD
DRAYNEFLETE REVEALED
FAÇADES AND FACES
HERE, OF ALL PLACES!
ALL DONE FROM MEMORY (Autobiography)
WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE (Autobiography)
SAILING TO BYZANTIUM

Pocket Cartoons

SIGNS OF THE TIMES 1939-1961
STUDIES FROM THE LIFE
PRIVATE VIEWS
THE YEAR OF THE COMET
MIXED NOTICES
FASTEN YOUR SAFETY BELTS
TEMPORARY DIVERSIONS
MEANINGFUL CONFRONTATIONS

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have appeared in the *Daily Express*

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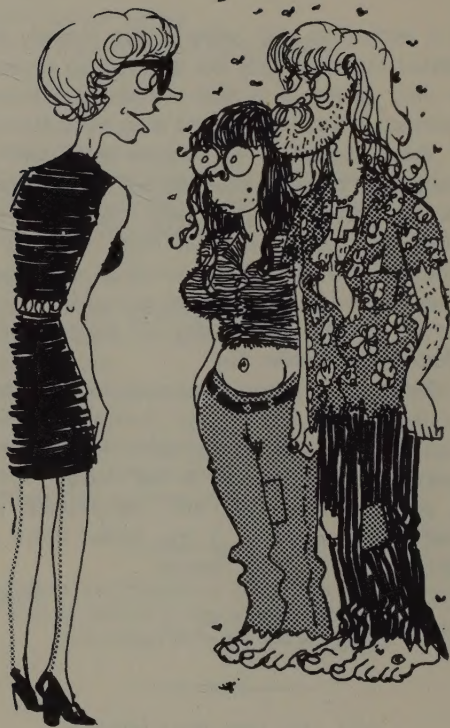
WARNING

In a permissive age, when it has recently been decided that even dirty old men can be corrupted by dirty books, it is with a feeling of shameful inadequacy that I am forced to confess that none of these drawings—all factory-fresh and untouched by human hand—carries a Government mental-health warning. A filthy mind, it has been rightly said, is a perpetual feast, but with the Repeal of the Porn Laws much of the old zest seems to have gone, and I am compelled to admit that all that the eager reader will discover here is a feast of good clean fun.

Moreover, at a time when sackcloth and ashes are fashionable wear, I am conscious of being singularly ill-dressed, having never yet overcome a natural reluctance to join in the chorus "We are all guilty". Wholesome and unrepentant, it is clearly high time that I was pulled down and redesigned by Sir Basil Spence.

O. L.

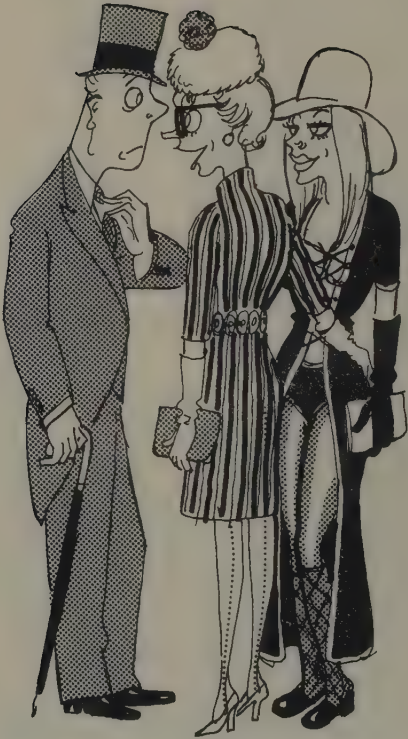
August 1972



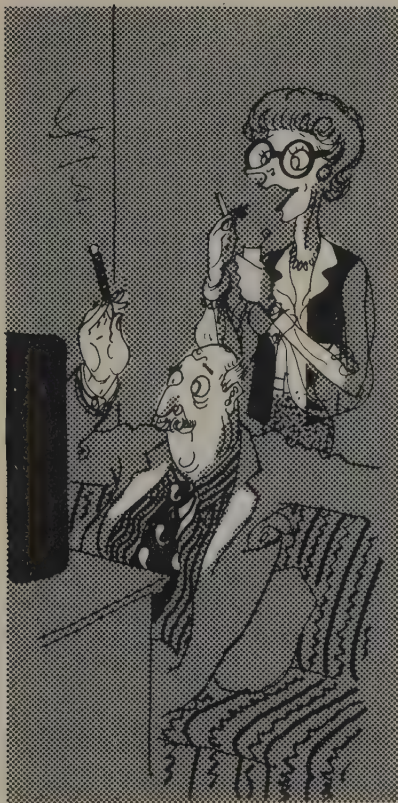
“Excuse my asking, but which side are you on—
pollutionwise?” 12.v.71



“And just to think we’re goin’ to be able to drink in all this wonderful old-world culture without being pushed around by the natives.” 19.v.71



“Nymphomaniacs Anonymous has done wonders
for Justine.” 17.vi.71



“And which of our never-to-be-forgotten men is getting free publicity for his forthcoming memoirs tonight?” 22.vi.71



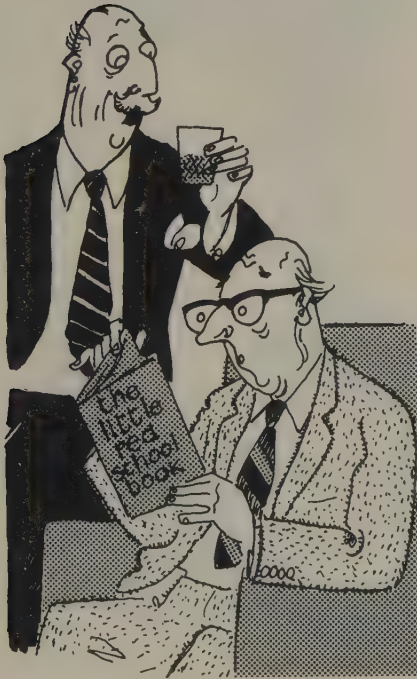
“I don’t like it, sir! I’ve always said and always shall, ‘Wogs begin at Calais!’” 24.vi.71



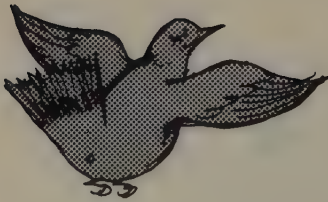
“Tell me, do we *have* to take Ireland with us?”
25.vi.71



“But it’s *not* dirt—it’s just environmental pollution!” 29.vi.71



"Filling in the gaps left by Winchester and New
College?" 30.vi.71



“Conformist!” 16.vii.71



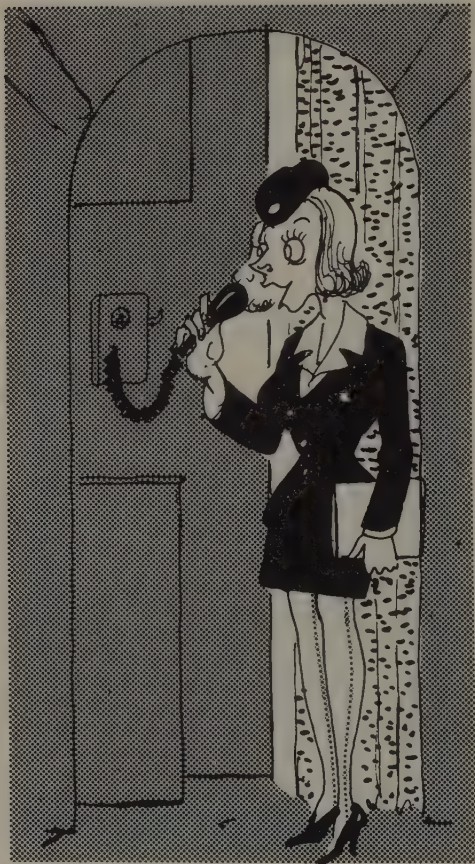
“Personally, Professor, I would have thought that Modern Science would be better employed clearing up the mess they’ve made of one planet rather than mucking up a second.” 3.viii.71



“This report has cost the taxpayer a quarter of a million pounds—unfortunately it’s so confidential that no one, repeat no one, must ever be allowed to read it.” 5.viii.71



“Fertility symbols are all very well, but if you ask me some of these drawings are straight pornography!” 6.viii.71



“In five minutes we shall be landing at Heathrow; please extinguish all cigarettes and get right back into your own seat-belts. Thank you.” 10.viii.71



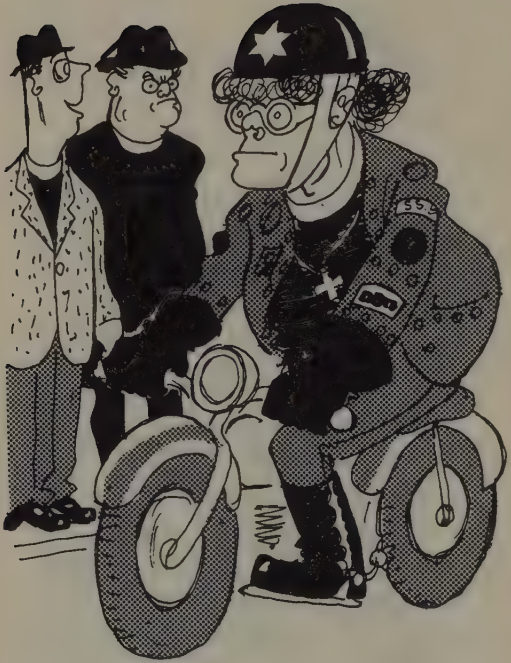
“And to think that we’ve always been led to believe that the one thing the Americans really knew about was money!” 17.viii.71



26.viii.71



“Do you mean to say no one’s ever told the Six
about the Irish?” 2.ix.71



“Fr. Cuthbert has recently moved over to what he laughingly refers to as St Michael and Hell’s Angels.” 3.ix.71



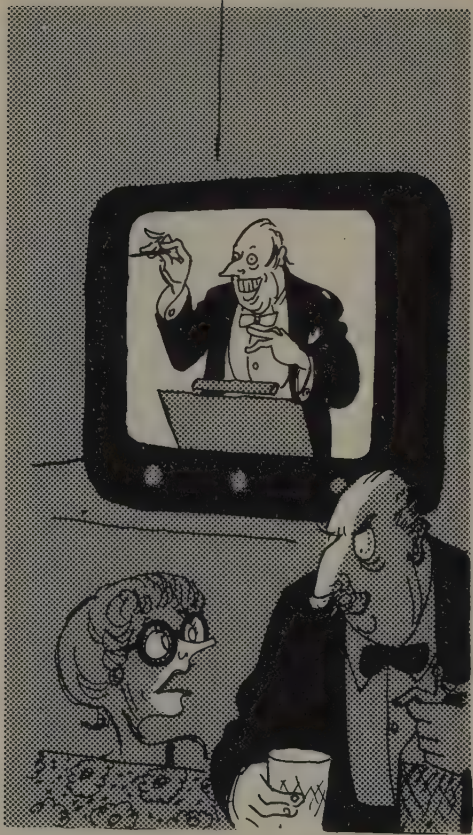
"Seen any good No-plays lately, dear?" 6.x.71



22.x.71



"I seem to remember his dear old father being rather keen on Britain withdrawing her troops way back in 1940." 23.x.71



“Don’t go away, dear—any minute now Harold Wilson will be dancing Swan Lake.” 28.x.71



29.x.71



“British European Airways regret to announce that the emergency is now over and that all further delays will be due to the usual causes.” 5.xi.71



“At the third stroke it will be too late to post any more letters for delivery this side of Christmas, precisely.” 6.xi.71



“Great news! Aunt Ethel has just been chosen to play Mother Christmas at the Women’s Lib Bazaar!” 20.xi.71



"I'd like to have heard anyone tell *her* to keep out of the Olympics!" 1.xii.71



“Mrs Rajagojolibarmi says that Mrs Gandhi is firmly committed to a policy of meaningful non-aggression on a wide front.” 3.xii.71



“I must say, dear, that Mrs Indira Gandhi and Mrs Golda Meir do make one feel tremendously unkeen on Women’s Lib.” 7.xii.71



“In the Rev. Trendy’s Christmas play the Holy Innocents stage a protest demo and rough-up Herod.” 10.xii.71



“The Archdeacon tells me, Mr Trendy, that you are thinking of installing a jumbo font in order to accommodate a mass-baptism of the entire cast of ‘Oh! Calcutta!’” 15.xii.71



"Women's Lib is watching you!" 23.xii.71



“While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
I’ve only got two decimal pence,
So please lend me a pound.” 24.xii.71



“Darlings, I got an A-level in Sympathetic Female Therapy!!” 18.i.72



"I'm very much afraid, dear, that this afternoon we're going to have to amuse ourselves indoors—the beach is covered with toluene-di-iso-cyanate, the woods are stuffed with sodium cyanide, there's a sex maniac loose on the common, and there's nothing on at the local but 'Clockwork Orange'."

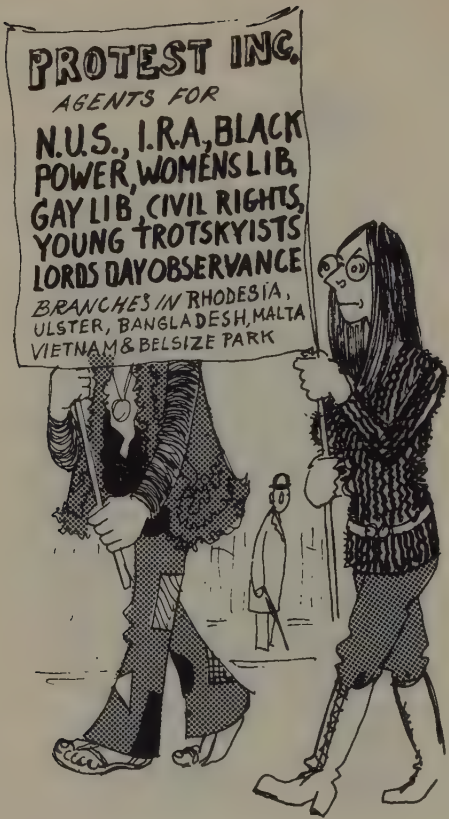
19.i.72



“Prepare yourself, Rigby, for a meaningful, open-ended dialogue.” 29.i.72



“What on earth makes you say the world picture
couldn’t be gloomier? The Olympic Games
haven’t started yet!” 1.ii.72



5.ii.72



*"I only said here with a loaf of bread beneath the
bough, a flask of wine and thou, beside me singing
in the wilderness and wilderness is paradise enow;
—but let it pass."* 9.ii.72



“By the way, Professor, whatever happened to all that lovely nuclear power that was going to revolutionise our lives the last time we met?” 17.ii.72



“Why not an Ombudswoman?” 23.ii.72



"If you ask me, one or two of our members don't
need any 'arrows of desire'." 7.iii.72

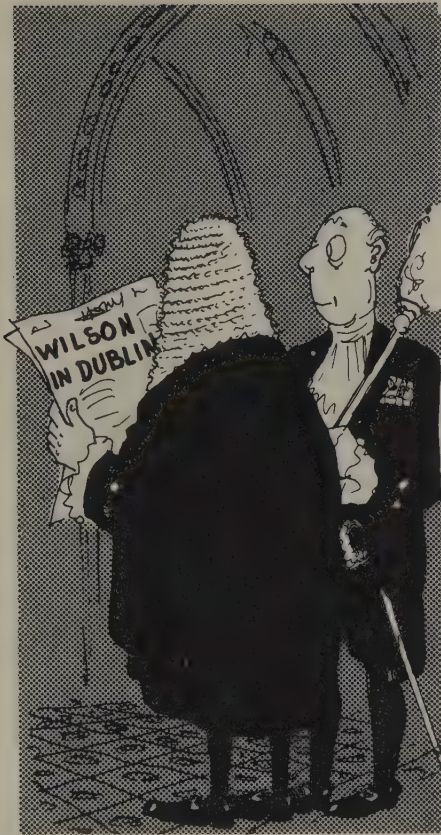


“Every so often, darling, I’m haunted by this terrible feeling that I was born redundant!”

8.iii.72



“What’s the betting that it’ll turn out that he was fast asleep at the time and it was really his secretary speaking?” 9.iii.72



“What on earth does the Leader of the Opposition know about ‘well-disciplined, tightly knit groups’?”

15.iii.72

CHEZ STRIP

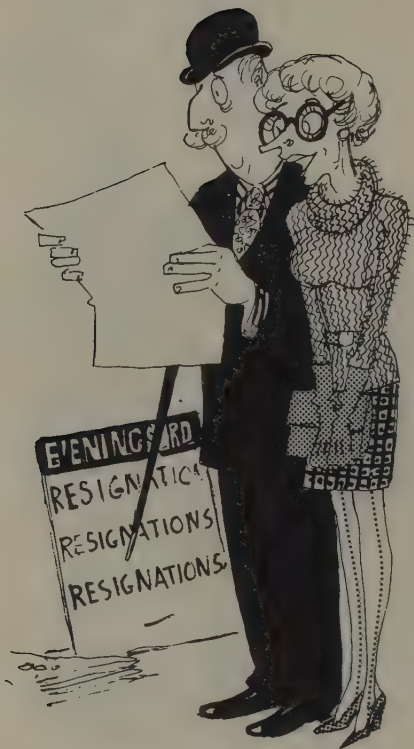
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE



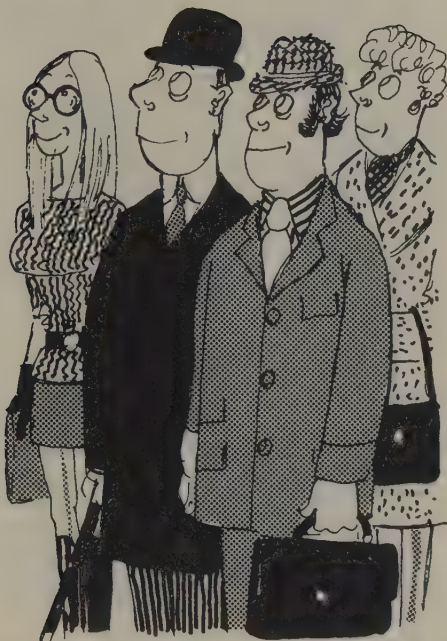
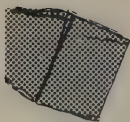
“Don’t overdo it, dear—otherwise you may find yourself liable for Value Added Tax.” 23.iii.72



“If only Mr Faulkner would proclaim U.D.I. then we could impose sanctions and just forget about the whole thing.” 29.iii.72



“Do you realise, darling, that this must be almost the only recorded instance of ships leaving sinking rats?” 12.iv.72



“British Railways regret to announce that the 4.45 from Haywards Heath has just been hijacked at East Croydon and will now arrive dead on time.” 14.iv.72



“Have you ever heard of Lysistrata?” 18.iv.72



“As I said to Mr Marsh, if only the railways didn’t have all those dam’ silly rules then the men couldn’t work to them!” 20.iv.72



“Ever since I was your age, dear child, things have got progressively worse—except, of course, the Irish, who couldn’t.” 21.iv.72

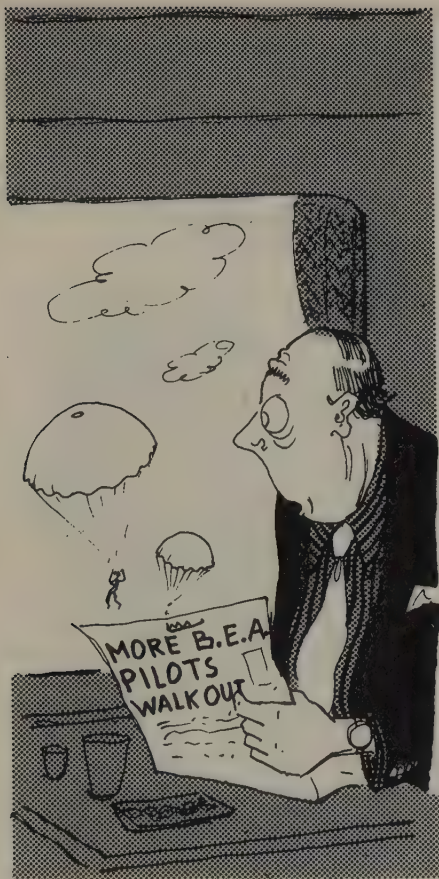


“If only those clever Americans could get out of Vietnam as smoothly as they get off the moon this would be a far less nerve-racking planet to live on.” 24.iv.72

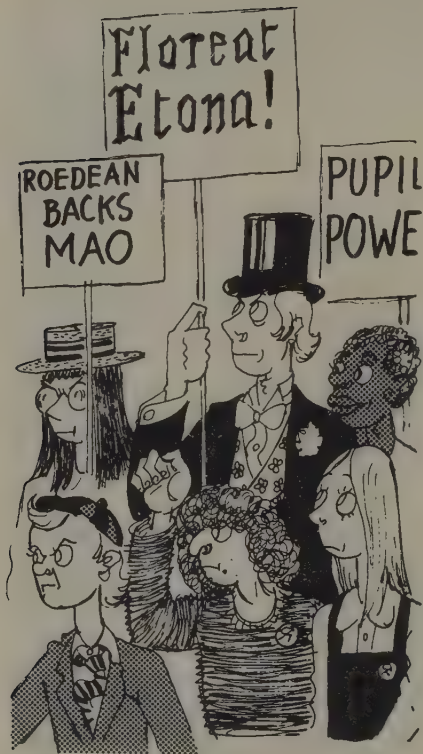


“Pray silence for His Redundancy, the Mayor!”

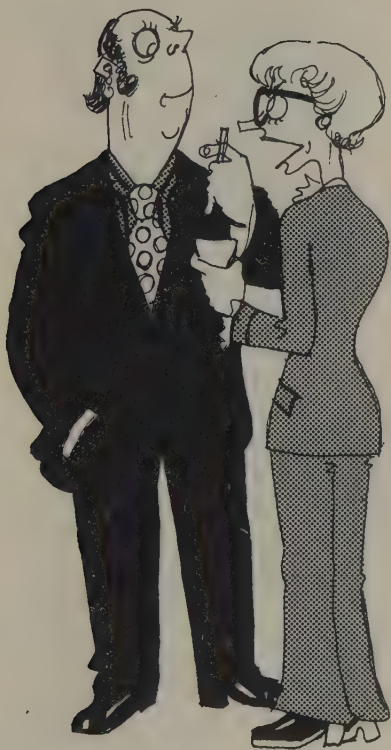
28.iv.72



4.v.72



18 v.72



“You see, it won’t be long now before Gerald Nabarro starts claiming that someone’s planted a time-bomb in his whiskers.” 20.v.72



“Perhaps it would be simpler if I gave you a blank cheque?” 25.v.72



“Well, all we need now is an international agreement for the non-proliferation of nuclear football.”

26.v.72



2.vi.72

Other collections of
Osbert Lancaster's Pocket Cartoons

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
1939-1961

STUDIES FROM THE LIFE
1954

PRIVATE VIEWS
1956

FASTEN YOUR SAFETY BELTS
1966

TEMPORARY DIVERSIONS
1966-1968

MEANINGFUL
CONFRONTATIONS 1970-1971



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