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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, LS. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. J. KELLER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

Distribution of the 196 seats in the National Council, the Lower House of the Swiss Parliament, altered little in the recently held general elections.

The Socialists, previously the largest party, lost two seats and now have 51, the same number as the Radicals. The Catholic-Conservative party, with two losses and two gains, maintained its position as the third largest party.

The Communists had a net loss of one seat, having made good one of their losses by topping the poll in Geneva, and will have three representatives in the new House.

Party strength after the elections, which were held on the basis of proportional representation, were:

| | | |
|---------------------|----|-------------|
| Socialists | 51 | (2 losses) |
| Radicals | 51 | (1 gain) |
| Cath.-Cons. | 47 | (no change) |
| Peasant & Bourgeois | 23 | (1 gain) |
| Independents | 10 | (no change) |
| Liberals | 5 | (no change) |
| Democrats | 4 | (1 loss) |
| Evangelicals | 2 | (plus 2) |
| Communists | 3 | (1 loss) |

About 65 per cent of the all-male electorate went to the poll.

Partial elections to the Council of States, the Upper House of Parliament, showed no notable changes and maintained its comfortable centre majority.

* * *

Customs receipts for the month of September 1959 totalled 92.4 million francs, of which amount the Confederation receives 60.9 million francs or 3.8 million francs more than in September 1958.

During the first nine months of the current year the receipts amounted to 529.3 million francs, which is 4.5 million francs more than during the same period in 1958.

The Swiss Federal Railways carried 20.1 million passengers in September 1959, or 800,000 fewer than in September 1958. Receipts: 34.4 million francs. (September 1958: 35.7 million francs.)

Goods traffic is returned as 2.35 million tons, or 180,000 tons more than in the same period in 1958. Receipts: 45.0 million francs (September 1958: 41.5 million francs)

* * *

Cantonal

Walter Martin (25) a geological student of Zurich was killed when climbing the south ridge of the Salbitschin. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mgr. Dr. Raimund Tschudi (Uster) has been elected Abbot of the cloister of Einsiedeln, in succession to Dr. Benno Gut, who is taking up an appointment in Rome. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Josef Zumbühl (37) cabinet-maker of Gerliswil, father of two young children, lost his life on a climbing excursion in the Pilatus district. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A shop window of Allemann, jewellers at the Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich, was smashed and goods valued at 40 to 50,000 — francs were stolen. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Danish Ambassador in Berne, Madame Bodil Begtrup, has paid an official visit to the town of Zurich. On this occasion, the Danish Institute for cultural relations in Zurich, gave a reception in her honour, which was attended by members of the cantonal Government. [A.T.S.]

Xmas Greetings

Following former years' practice we propose to publish again in our December issue a collective greeting.

The high costs of Xmas cards, should induce many of our subscribers to make use of this facility to extend to their friends the compliments of the season.

Those of our readers and friends wishing to be included should forward name and address to our office not later than Friday, November 20th, 1959, together with remittance for 10/-.

The G/59 exhibition (Schweiz. Gartenbau Ausstellung) recently held at Zurich closed its doors. More than two million visitors went through the turnstiles. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The municipal riding-school at the Dufourstrasse in Bienne was totally destroyed by fire. Fortunately the horses, which were in the stables, could be saved. The damage caused is estimated to be in the region of several hundred thousand francs. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Sir William Horace Montagu-Pollock, British Ambassador in Berne, paid a visit to the Government of the canton of Solothurn and the town of Solothurn. He was officially received at the Town Hall by Mr. Otto Stampfli, "Landammann". The distinguished guest later on attended a luncheon and dinner. [A.T.S.]

* * *
A sixty-eight year old man, on leaving a restaurant at the Eisenbahnweg in Klein Basel was attacked by a young man, and robbed of an amount of 1,000 — francs. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The Government of the canton of Basle-Country has appointed Dr. phil. Hans Sutter (Rickenbach) to the post of keeper of the cantonal archives. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Frau Emma Herzog-Frueh of Flawil (Ct. St. Gall) has celebrated her 100th birthday. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The Ambassador of the West German Federal Republic in Berne, Dr. Mohr, has paid a courtesy visit to the town of St. Gall, where he was received by Dr. Frisch "Landammann". He visited a number of textile concerns, and the Pestalozzi children's village at Trogen. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The OLMA exhibition (Schweizer Messe für Land- und Milchwirtschaft), which was recently held at St. Gall was visited by 294,000 persons, or 2,000 more than last year. [A.T.S.]

* * *
At the recent Parliamentary elections two members of the Government of the canton of Aargau have been elected as National Councillors, namely Dr. Ernst Bachmann (Liberal) and Mr. A. Riehner (Socialist). Owing to a resolution passed by the Grand Council, that only one member of the cantonal Government is entitled to sit in Parliament, Dr. Bachmann (a former member) will again resume his seat in the National Council. Dr. Arthur Schmid (Socialist) of Unterkulm will be substituted for Mr. A. Riehner. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Recently, a postbag containing 102,000 — francs disappeared in transit between the premises of the Swiss Bank Corporation in Le Locle, and those of the

Swiss National Bank in La Chaux-de-Fonds. After lengthy investigations, the police have been able to trace the thief in the person of a night watchman, Jean-Pierre Guisolan, who was arrested. The whole amount, less 25. — francs, has been recovered. [A.T.S.]

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Professor Theodor Broglie, in Basle at the age of 65. The deceased was formerly Director of the Basle Fair and Professor for "Betriebswirtschaftslehre" at the University of Basle. From 1926 to 1931, he was Professor at the Commercial University St. Gall, and from 1932 to 1938, rector of the Cantonal Commercial University Basle. Professor Broglie sat in the National Council from 1947 to 1951.

Pierre Pellegrini, in Lugano aged 58. He had been since August 1959 a member of the Government of the canton of Ticino. From 1930 to 1959, he sat in the Grand Council of the canton of Ticino.

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Pellegrini was formerly Director for 30 years of the socialist paper "Libera Stampa".

Vinzenz Fischer-Schumacher, architect, in Lucerne at the age of 69.

Aloys ab Yberg, in Schwyz aged 81. The deceased was for many years a member of the "Kantonsrat" Schwyz, and from 1916 to 1924, a member of the cantonal Government. For two years (1920 to 1922) he held the post of "Landammann". Aloys ab Yberg was a Member of Parliament (National Council) from 1928 to 1935.

Moritz Rueckhäberle, Merchant, in Basle at the age of 79. He was well known as an amateur actor and author of plays in Basle dialect.

Dr. Karl Lamm, public prosecutor of the canton of Basle-Town, and a member of the Grand Council, in Basle aged 58.

Willy Abegg-Inderbitzin, "Strassenbau-Inspektor" of the canton of Schwyz, in Schwyz at the age of 61.

Dr. E. E. Heiman, in Geneva aged 67. Founder, Publisher and Chief Editor of the "Interavia", the "Interavia Luftpost" and "Interavia A.B.C."

Dr. med. Josephine Tobler, for forty years a medical practitioner in Lucerne, in Lucerne at the age of 80. She was one of the first woman medical practitioners in Switzerland.

Mme. Rachele Giudici, for many years a teacher at the cantonal teachers seminary, Locarno, and an expert on national costumes, in Faïdo aged 72.

Pierre Cart, consulting engineer, Head of the office of works of the town of Le Locle, in Le Locle at the age of 54.

Dr. med. Ernst Forster, from 1932 to 1954 surgeon-in-chief of the "Bürgerspital" Solothurn, and from 1933 to 1942 a member of the "Kantonsrat" Solothurn, in Solothurn aged 73.

Henry Huebscher, a member of the Board of the lead-pencil concern "Caran d'Ache", in Geneva at the age of 66.

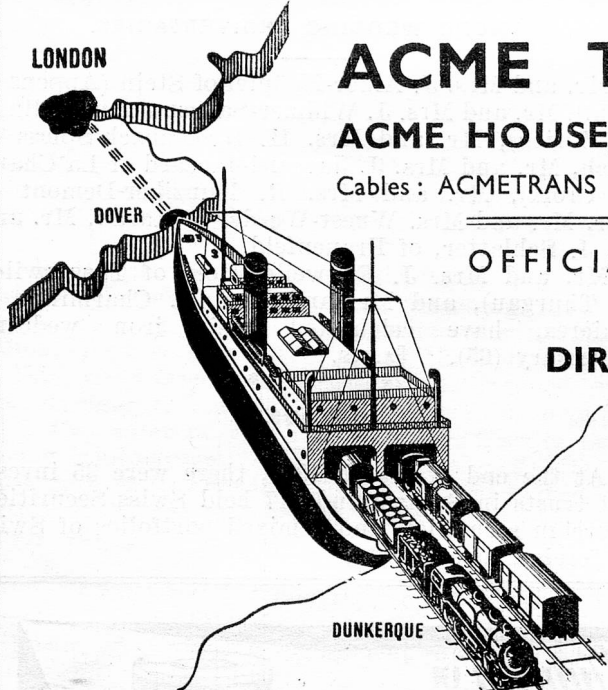
Paul Andres, from 1909 to 1947 head teacher at the agricultural school, Solothurn, in Kütigkofen aged 81.

Adolf Fischer-Simonius, Chairman of the firm "Simonius, Vischer & Co." woollen merchants of Basle, in Basle at the age of 81. The deceased was at one time President "des Verbandes Schweiz. Transit- und Welt Handelsfirmen", and Vice-President of the Basle Chamber of Commerce.

Professor André Bonnard, in Lausanne aged 71. The deceased was a well-known Hellenist. He was Professor of Greek language and literature at Lausanne University from 1923 to 1957. Professor Bonnard was the author of several translations of ancient Greek plays and his "Antigone" was performed with much success by the Comédie Française at the Roman amphitheatre in Orange.

Mrs. M. Koenig-Scholz, the oldest inhabitant of the town of Zurich, at the age of 101.

Dr. ing. h.c. Alfred J. Buechi, in Winterthur aged 81. The deceased was an authority in the field of diesel and gas engines. In 1937 the American Society of Mechanical Engineers honoured him with the Admiral Melville medal, and a year later (1937) he received the degree of *doctor honoris causa* from the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich,



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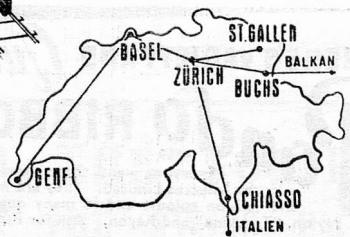
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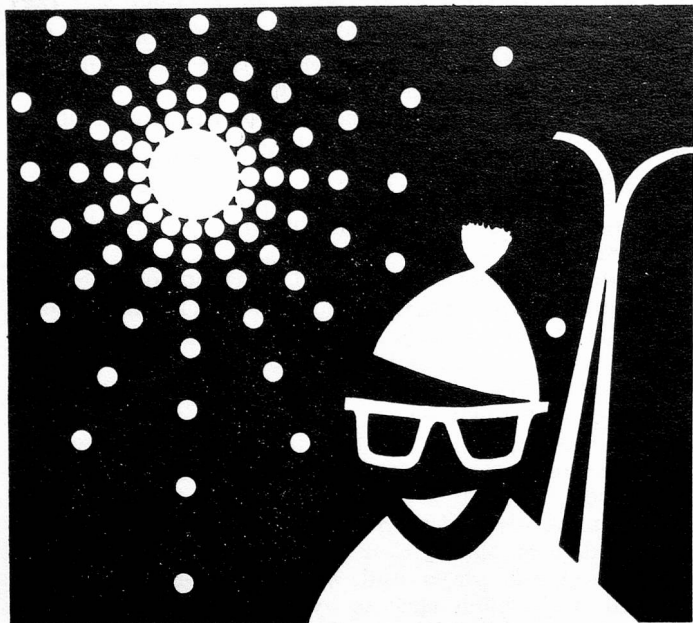
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Switzerland

and in 1952 the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia awarded him the Henderson medal.

Dr. Buechi was for a few years a member of the National Council. In the army he was at one time in command of the 6th artillery brigade, and afterwards was chief of artillery of the 3rd army-corps.

Jean Burri, Industrialist, President of the Board of the "Fabrique de Decolletage" Burr, S.A.", Moutier at the age of 77.

Dr. h.c. Paul Laufer, from 1905 to 1945, Professor at the "Eglise Libre Vaudoise" faculty, in Lausanne aged 88. In 1930, he was honoured with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* by the University of Lausanne.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

ANNIVERSARIES.

General Henri Guisan (85) of Pully, commander-in-chief of the Swiss army from 1939 to 1945.

Dr. E. Koenig, (70) of Reinach, a former editor of the "Schweizerischen Beobachters". [A.T.S.]

* * *

ARMY.

During manoeuvres in the Schwegalp district, between the 3rd motorised cavalry regiment, and a detachment of heavy artillery, Fus. Bernhard Eisenegger (39) of Mettlen nr. Braunau (Ct. Thurgau) was killed. Four other soldiers were injured.

Lance-corporal André Müller (34) of Fleurier, driving a military lorry between Kaufdorf and Toffen (Ct. Berne) was accidentally killed on overtaking a horse and cart. [A.T.S.]

* * *

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Alder-Knöpfel of Stein (Appenzell A. Rh.), Mr. and Mrs. J. Widmer-Saurenmann of Illnau (Ct. Zurich), Mr. and Mrs. H. Rickenbach-Spiess of Zurich, Mr. and Mrs. J. Jaccard-Jaccard of La Chaux (St. Croix), Mr. and Mrs. R. Hunziker-Demont of Uster, Mr. and Mrs. Wuest-Werder of Aarau, Mr. and Mrs. J. Schlatter, of Frauenfeld.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Engweiler-Heer of Taegerwilen (Ct. Thurgau), and Mr. and Mrs. A. Charmillot of Sèphières, have celebrated their iron wedding anniversary (65). [A.T.S.]

* * *

VARIOUS.

At the end of March 1959, there were 35 investment trusts in Switzerland; 17 held Swiss Securities, 15 foreign securities, and 3 mixed portfolios of Swiss and foreign investments.



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In 1958 Switzerland's balance on current account was 960 million francs to the good, against an exceptional deficit of 195 millions in 1957.

* * *

The nominal value of the share capital of all limited companies registered in Switzerland has increased during the last ten years by 51 per cent, that is from 8.1 milliard francs at the end of 1948 to 12.3 milliard francs at the end of 1958. During the same period the number of such companies has increased by 48 per cent to 28,935.

* * *

With 250 completely self-service shops per million inhabitants, Switzerland stands fourth after the United States of America, Sweden and Norway.

* * *

During the month of September 1959, Switzerland has exported 3,979,000 watches to the value of 196 million francs, or 598,700 more than in September 1958.

* * *

According to the statistics of the French Customs Administration it would appear that the trade balance between France and Switzerland is more favourable to France than is her trade balance with any other country. France's balance sheet in regard to her trade balances with all countries, in 1958, shows a favourable balance of 33 thousand million francs in respect of Switzerland, of 20 thousand million francs in respect of Great Britain, and of 17 thousand million francs in that of Italy. France's most unfavourable balance is with the United States of America.

* * *

Some 22,000 drivers of heavy trucks recently decided to make a special contribution to the fight against the ever increasing rate of road accidents. These "knights of the highways" undertake to keep always to the extreme right, stop at a safe distance from closed railway barriers and to control exhaust gases. As a distinctive emblem, the truck drivers have chosen a white star which they attach to their vehicles. "White star", in fact, has already become a synonym for "highway courtesy" in Switzerland.

* * *

St Moritz, Winter sports fans will now be able to have a leisurely open-air swim watching the snowflakes whirling down, St. Moritz tourist officials announced here recently. One of the palatial hotels of this world-famed Swiss winter and summer resort has inaugurated a year-round open-air swimming pool, the water of which is being electrically heated during winter-time. The pool is designed after the most up-to-date American structures and named after Esther Williams, the famous American swimmer and movie star.

* * *

"It's a Raffael!" scenographer and restorer Adolf Engel recently affirmed to beaming town officials at Willisau, after visiting the ancient town hall when he

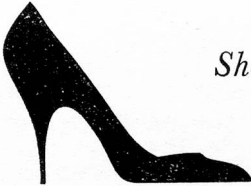
thoroughly examined a badly neglected painting. He claimed that this must be an original sketch of the Italian renaissance artist's planned painting "The Battle of Constantin", which had been ordered by Pope Leo X but was actually painted by Raffael's pupil Giulio Romano. To prove his sensational theory Engel travelled to Rome to compare the Willisau sketch with Giulio Romano's picture in the Vatican's Constantin Hall. Although challenged by some other Swiss experts, Engel maintains that tiny Willisau (pop. 2,100) is harbouring a unique and priceless art treasure.

* * *

The Swiss Parliament has now ratified the proposal to modernise the Stansstad-Engelberg Railway and link it with the Bruenig Line at Hergiswil. The project includes a one-mile-long tunnel from Hergiswil to a point near the present road bridge across the narrow entrance to the Alpnachsee, a concrete viaduct, improvements to the permanent way, new electric power plant and six three-coach electric train sets, each with a capacity of approx. 200 passengers. Fast trains will complete the journey between Lucerne and Engelberg in 50 minutes as against 1½-2 hours it takes now. Three years will be needed for the work involved.

* * *

Geneva. A new apparatus which was invented by three Geneva technicians may well be destined to revolutionize to-day's system of parking in areas with limited space, Geneva's daily newspaper "Tribune de Genève" reported recently. The "mobile chronograph", as it has been named by its inventors, can be attached to any motor vehicle where it will start



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registering time as soon as the car stops moving. The checking of the "mobile chronograph" is as easy as the control of parking meters which nowadays "ornament" the pavements of Swiss cities, and "cheating" is practically impossible as a reverse movement of at least forty yards is required to bring the meter back to zero. The only problem is that every motorist would be compelled to buy his own "parking outfit" which would cost him an estimated S.frs. 20.—. However, "Tribune de Genève" points out that this amount would soon be amortized since the motorist would no longer have to drop coins into parking meters. Geneva city officials are said to be testing this new system before purchasing another 500 parking meters, and it is expected that the federal authorities will examine the possibility of introducing it on a nation-wide basis.

* * *

Basel. When a huge African Elephant of Basel's famous Zoological Gardens was pushed recently through the entrance of one of the city's hospitals it soon turned out that the pitiful passers-by who deplored the "poor sick animal" had jumped to foregone conclusions. "Omari", a tractable bull, in fact did not show the slightest sign of illness but was simply being used as a "guinea-pig" by a firm specializing in radiographs. A röntgenogram of "Omari's" majestic head would have been the main exhibit at a publicity show, but although the installations at this hospital are modern and otherwise very efficient, and a special "jumbo-size" film was being used for this occasion, the X-rays failed to pass through the elephant's bulky forehead. Other sections of "Omari's" body also proved impenetrable, and, in the end, the specialists had to content themselves with the röntgenogram of one of the animal's feet. It was now "Omari's" turn to shake his head pitifully while quietly returning to the homely zoo.

* * *

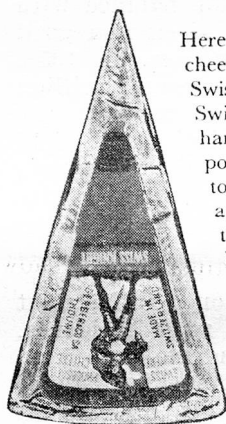
Mountaineering tours to several Alpine peaks towering 10,000 ft. above sea level are organised every week by the tourist office of Mürren, Bernese Oberland. The jaunts are led by expert Swiss mountain guides and offered as a free-of-charge facility to holiday-makers visiting this Alpine summer and winter resort.

LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

A number of charitable institutions of the commune of Teufen (Ct. Appenzell A.Rh.) have received legacies totalling 20,000.— francs, in memory of the late Ernst Graf, consulting engineer in Saarlouis. He originated from Teufen. [A.T.S.]

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Zurich — Heidi, the little Swiss girl made world-famous by Johanna Spyri, Switzerland's favourite writer for young people, and her playmate, Goat Peter, recently arrived here via Swissair directly from Tokyo. The tiny Japanese schoolgirl, Kazue Saito, 12, and her 12 year old companion, Ichizo Kato, as a matter of fact, came not out of Frau Spyri's book but merely posed as Heidi fans. When "Heidi and Peter", a production by the Swiss film company Praesens, made its appearance in Japan's cinemas they entered a nation-wide essay contest for school-children. Their nicely written pieces on Heidi and the Swiss Alps won them a Swissair flight to Zurich and a holiday trip through Heidi's own homeland. Accompanied by a Tokyo news reporter they visited the hamlet of Hirzel in the Canton of Zurich where Johanna Spyri spent most of her life, the picturesque winegrowers' town of Maienfeld near Ragaz Spa in the foothills of the Grisons mountains, where the author of "Heidi" is said to have modelled her heroine after a local peasant girl, and the Diavolezza above Pontresina which was one of the scenic locations of the Heidi film. Before returning to Tokyo by air the two Japanese children spent a day at the Pestalozzi Children's Village near Trogen where orphans from all over the world have been given a happy home and upbringing.

* * *

Pontresina — At the upper fringe of the Languard Forest, overlooking Pontresina from an altitude of over 6000 ft above sea-level, stands the quaint little mountain church of Santa Maria which in recent months has been carefully restored and equipped with special protective devices against frost, snow and humidity. It has been known for some time that this Marian chapel contained precious art works some of which were discovered only a few decades ago.

It has now been established that the murals which will henceforth be protected from weather-beatings, include priceless frescoes of the early 12th century and 19 paintings depicting the Mary Magdalene legend and dating back to the second half of the 15th century.

A new "Mot-Hotel" has been opened recently by the Touring Club of Switzerland at Ragaz Spa. The so-called "castle" of Ragaz has been transformed into a hotel and sixteen motel bungalows situated in a wonderful park have been added. The "mot-hotel" also boasts a comfortable camping site.

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THE WEEK AT HOME.

By MAX NEF

The Autumn Session of the Federal Parliament came to an end, in October, and with it, also, the 35th present legislative period. On the first Monday, in December, the new Lower Chamber resulting from the October elections, will be sworn in, for a new period of office, extending over four years. This means a new period of office, also, for the Federal Government, which will have to be elected by the new Parliament. It is still too early to make any surmises regarding the possibilities of new replacements in the Cabinet. Although — when compared with similar conditions

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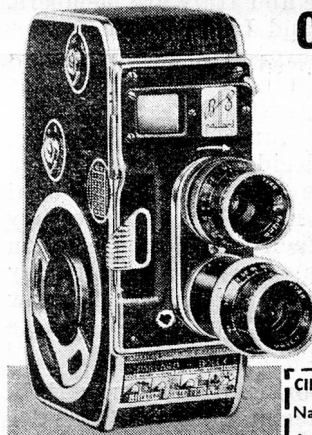
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