Extent

340 folders, approximately 17,451 pages

Summary

This collection contains the files of Jeff Shesol, Presidential Speechwriter. During his time at the White House, he worked on a wide range of topics. His speeches cover International issues such as: global trade, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund. They also include domestic issues such as: school violence, the Columbine High School memorial, social security, and the minimum wage. As Deputy Chief of Presidential Speechwriting, Shesol was lead writer on key presidential messages like the State of the Union and President Clinton's Farewell Address.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2006-0467-F are a selective, not necessarily all inclusive, body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. Jeff Shesol considers himself to be an accidental speechwriter. In Shesol's biography on his company website, it is said that his book Mutual Contempt: Lyndon Johnson, Robert Kennedy and the Feud that Defined a Decade (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997) attracted the attention of President Clinton. The President then contacted Shesol and invited him to be a speechwriter. Shesol, a Rhodes Scholar, has a Masters Degree in History from Oxford University, from which he graduated in 1993 and an undergraduate degree from Brown University. During his years at Brown, Shesol wrote and drew a political cartoon entitled "Thatch." His comic strip was nationally syndicated from 1994-1998 appearing in over 150 papers nationwide. Not surprisingly this collection contains a large number of Shesol's doodles. Shesol claims he had no intention of becoming a presidential speechwriter though he previously helped draft a tribute to America's nurses as a Capitol Hill intern. During his almost-four-year stint at the White House,

Shesol worked on a wide range of topics. His speeches cover International issues such as: global trade, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund. They also include domestic issues such as: school violence, the Columbine High School memorial, social security, and the minimum wage. As Deputy Chief of Presidential Speechwriting, Shesol was lead writer on key presidential messages like the State of the Union and President Clinton's Farewell Address. In 2002, Shesol served as the Anschutz Distinguished Fellow in American Studies at Princeton University, where he taught a course on the history of the presidential speech. He co-founded West Wing Writers with partners Vinca LaFleur, Jeff Nussbaum, Paul Orzulak, and Ben Yarrow in 2001. West Wing Writers is a professional speechwriting and public strategy firm based in Washington, DC. Shesol's most recent book, Supreme Power: Franklin Roosevelt vs. the Supreme Court (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010) focuses on Roosevelt's battles with the Court over public programs during the Great Depression. These records contain the drafts, final copes and notes related to the writing of a number of speeches given by President Clinton between 1998 and the end of the Administration. The collection covers a wide variety of topics from economic policy to the humorous Radio and Television Correspondents speeches. Every effort was made to maintain, to the greatest extent possible, the original order of Shesol's collection. This is reflected by an arrangement that progresses from newest speech to oldest speech within each OA. The organization is therefore roughly choronological by the date of the speech.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in one collection area—Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files. White House Staff and Office Files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and documents all levels of administrative activity.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 USC Chapter 22) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 USC 552 as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 USC Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Subject Headings

Speechwriting
Speechwriters
Speeches, addresses, etc., American

Processed by

Staff Archivist, July 2010. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2013-03-14

Container List

View all digitized files in the National Archives Catalog (NAC)

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2006-0467-F:
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WH Correspondents 2000 [1] [OA/ID 18672]
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WH Correspondents 2000 [3] [OA/ID 18672]
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Commencement 6/5/98 - Historical Context [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Speech Drafts [1] [OA/ID 18672]
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Jeff Shesol
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Commencement 6/5/98 - MIT: Facts [1] [OA/ID 18672]
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Commencement 6/5/98 - Meeting Notes [OA/ID 18672]

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Commencement 6/5/98 Intro: Hacks and Ho. [David] [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Historical Analogies [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Infotech and the Economy [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Access: E-Rate, etc… [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Research and Development [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Teacher Training [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Computers and Schools [1] [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Computers and Schools [2] [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Computer Literacy [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Corporate Social Responsibility [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 - Kalil Memos (NEC & DPC) [OA/ID 18672]
Box 3
Commencement 6/5/98 - Memo Drafts [OA/ID 18672]
Commencement 6/5/98 [MIT Cambridge, MA] [OA/ID 18672]
Commencements [OA/ID 18672]
Farewell Address 1/18/01 Miscellaneous – Farewell [OA/ID 18672]
Ronald Reagan [Binder] [1] [OA/ID 18672]
Ronald Reagan [Binder] [2] [OA/ID 18672]
Ronald Reagan [Binder] [3] [OA/ID 18672]
Ronald Reagan [Binder] [4] [OA/ID 18672]
Computers for Cartoonists: A National Imperative, If I've Ever Seen One / An MIT Speech Briefing Book [Binder] [1] [OA/ID 18672]
Computers for Cartoonists: A National Imperative, If I've Ever Seen One / An MIT Speech Briefing Book [Binder] [2] [OA/ID 18672]
Computers for Cartoonists: A National Imperative, If I've Ever Seen One / An MIT Speech Briefing Book [Binder] [3] [OA/ID 18672]
Box 4
Empower. Zones Talking Points 7/15/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Youth Handgun Safety 7/8/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Departure Statement - Tobacco 6/22/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Family Reunion Conf. Nashville 6/22/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Denver Broncos 6/16/98 [1] [OA/ID 19942]
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Speechwriting

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Bulletproof Vest Bill Signing 6/16/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Radio Address School Violence 6/13/98 [OA/ID 19942]
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RFK [Robert F. Kennedy] Statement 6/6/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Sinatra [Frank] Statement 5/15/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Box 5
Child Care Radio Address Mother's Day 5/9/98 [1] [OA/ID 19942]
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WH Correspondents Dinner 4/25/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Child Care 4/23/98 [1] [OA/ID 19942]
Child Care 4/23/98 [2] [OA/ID 19942]
Assault Weapons Ban 4/6/98 - Assault Weapons Ban 4/6/98 Drafts - As Delivered – Press [OA/ID 19942]
Assault Weapons Ban 4/6/98 - Assault Weapons Ban 4/6/98 Background [OA/ID 19942]
Jonesboro, Ark. Shooting Radio Address 3/28/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Jonesboro, Ark. Shooting Radio Address 3/28/98 School Violence [OA/ID 19942]
Gridiron 3/21/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Medicare Buy-In Bill Intro. 3/17/98 Med. Buy-In Bill Final - As Delivered - Press 3/17/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Medicare Buy-In Bill Intro. 3/17/98 Med. Buy-In Bill - Drafts 3/17/98 [OA/ID 19942]
Box 6
NAAG [National Association of Attorneys General] - Tobacco 3/12/98 Tobacco NAAG 3/12/98 - Final - As Delivered – Press [OA/ID 19942]
NAAG [National Association of Attorneys General] - Tobacco 3/12/98 - Tobacco NAAG 3/12/98 – Drafts [OA/ID 19942]
NAAG [National Association of Attorneys General] - Tobacco 3/12/98 - Attorneys General and Tobacco [OA/ID 19942]
AMA [American Medical Association] Conf. 3/9/98 AMA Final Draft, As Delivered 3/9/98 [OA/ID 19942]
AMA [American Medical Association] Conf. 3/9/98 AMA - Press React 3/10/98 [OA/ID 19942]

AMA [American Medical Association] Conf. 3/9/98 AMA - Drafts 3/9/98 [OA/ID 19942]
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Appropriations Bills Statement 10/5/98 [OA/ID 19943]
First Lady - Women's Emergency Committee 10/8/98 [1] [OA/ID 19943]
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Radio Address - Cancer 9/26/98 [OA/ID 19943]
Jazz & Democracy Millennium Even. 9/18/98 Millennium Jazz / Havel 9/18/98 [OA/ID 19943]
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Jazz & Democracy Millennium Even. 9/18/98 Jazz / Voice of America [OA/ID 19943]
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George Wallace Statement 9/14/98 [OA/ID 19943]
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Economic Statement 7/31/98 [OA/ID 19943]
US Capitol Police Eulogy 7/28/98 [OA/ID 19943]

Lionel Hampton 90th Birthday [OA/ID 19943]
Boys Nation Charter Schools 7/24/98[OA/ID 19943]
AFT [American Federation of Teachers] School Discipline 7/20/98 AFT School Discipline- Drafts-As Delivered-Press 7/20/98 [1] [OA/ID 19943]
AFT [American Federation of Teachers] School Discipline 7/20/98 AFT School Discipline- Drafts-As Delivered-Press 7/20/98 [2] [OA/ID 19943]
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AFT [American Federation of Teachers] School Discipline 7/20/98 Teacher Quality [OA/ID 19943]
AFT [American Federation of Teachers] School Discipline 7/20/98 Ed. Agenda – Prev. Speeches [OA/ID 19943]
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files (continued)
Speechwriting
Jeff Shesol
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Long-Term Care / Dem. Dinner, New Hampshire 2/18/99 [OA/ID 19944]
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Cops II Alexandria Virginia 1/14/99 [3] [OA/ID 19944]

Detroit Economic Club 1/8/99 Econ. Club of Detroit - Drafts - Press 1/8/99 [1] [OA/ID 19944]
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New Markets I Anaheim - NAF [National Academy Foundation] 7/8/99 - Drafts Anaheim [OA/ID 19945]
New Markets I Anaheim - NAF [National Academy Foundation] 7/8/99 - New Markets: What's in it for Business? [OA/ID 19945]
Disabilities Leg. 6/15/99 (Kennedy-Jeffords) - Statement on Disabilities Leg. (KennedyJeffords) 6/15/99 [OA/ID 19945]

US Conference of Mayors Video Feed 6/11/99 - US Conference of Mayors Past POTUS Sp. 6/11/99 [OA/ID 19945]
US Conference of Mayors Video Feed 6/11/99 - US Conference of Mayors Video Feed -
New Orleans 6/11/99 [OA/ID 19945]
Nat'l Assoc. of Theater Owners 6/8/99 [OA/ID 19945]
FTC [Federal Trade Commission] / DOJ [Department of Justice] Study Kids & Violence 6/1/99 - Kids & Violence FTC/DOJ Study 6/1/99 [OA/ID 19945]
EZ [Empowerment Zones] / EC [Empowerment Conference] Conf. Edinburg, TX 5/25/99- Empowerment Zones Conference - TX 5/25/99 [1] [OA/ID 19945]
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EZ [Empowerment Zones] / EC [Empowerment Conference] Conf. Edinburg, TX 5/25/99- Empowerment Zones Conference - TX 5/25/99 [2] [OA/ID 19945]
EZ [Empowerment Zones] / EC [Empowerment Conference] Conf. Edinburg, TX 5/25/99 - EZ Conference Past POTUS Remarks [OA/ID 19945]
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Columbine High School Jeffco, CO 5/20/99 - Columbine POTUS Speeches [OA/ID 19945]
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Columbine High School Jeffco, CO 5/20/99 - Columbine H. S. Facts & Clips 5/20/99 [2] [OA/ID 19945]
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Entertainment, Ind. 5/15/99 [OA/ID 19945]
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WTO [World Trade Organization] Seattle Agenda - DLC Gala 10/13/99 - New Economy
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Federalism Conf. Quebec 10/8/99 - Federalism – Background [OA/ID 19946]
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Federalism Conf. Quebec 10/8/99 - NGA [National Governors' Association] [OA/ID 19946]
Federalism Conf. Quebec 10/8/99 - DGA [Democratic Governors' Association] [OA/ID 19946]

Federalism Conf. Quebec 10/8/99 - Federalism - Executive Order POTUS & Federalism
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Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files (continued)
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New Opportunity EITC [Earned Income Tax Credit] - DLC [Democratic Leadership Council] 1/12/00 - New Opportunity Speech EITC Rollout 1/12/00 [2] [OA/ID 19947]
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New Market II Arkansas, Chicago 11/5/99 - POTUS and Bradley County [Arkansas] [OA/ID 19947]

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Speechwriting
Jeff Shesol
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Robert Rubin Portrait Unveiling 6/27/00 [1] [OA/ID 21461]
Robert Rubin Portrait Unveiling 6/27/00 [2] [OA/ID 21461]
Departure Statement Prescription Drugs & Tobacco 6/22/00 [OA/ID 21461]

School Construction Queens [NY] - P.S. 131 6/16/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] [Talking Points] Business Roundtable
6/15/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] China Talking Points Florida Trade Conf. 7/31/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Box 21
Carleton [College] Commencement 6/10/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Sons of Italy Dinner 5/25/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] House Vote 5/24/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] Oval Office Address (Undelivered) 5/21/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] Greenspan 5/18/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Africa / CBI [Caribbean Basin Initiative] Bill Signing 5/18/00 Caribbean / Central America [1] [OA/ID 21461]
Africa / CBI [Caribbean Basin Initiative] Bill Signing 5/18/00 Caribbean / Central America [2] [OA/ID 21461]
Africa / CBI [Caribbean Basin Initiative] Bill Signing 5/18/00 Africa - CBI Bill Signing 5/18/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] - AG. Shakopee, MN & Akron, OH 5/12/00 China - Shakopee, MN 5/12/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] - AG. Shakopee, MN & Akron, OH 5/12/00 China - Akron, OH 5/12/00 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] - AG. Shakopee, MN & Akron, OH 5/12/00 China Recent Remarks 5/2000 [OA/ID 21461]
China PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] - AG. Shakopee, MN & Akron, OH 5/12/00 China PNTR 5/2000 [OA/ID 21461]
W.H. Photographers' Dinner Video 5/6/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Bowen School of Law Dedication 4/27/00 [OA/ID 21461]
COMDEX [Computer Dealer's Exhibition] (New Markets) Chicago 4/18/00 Drafts - COMDEX 4/18/00 [OA/ID 21461]
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COMDEX [Computer Dealer's Exhibition] (New Markets) Chicago 4/18/00 COMDEX 4/18/00 [OA/ID 21461]
SAFE Rally Denver 4/12/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Departure Statement - Guns & Budget 3/16/00 [OA/ID 21461]

Radio Address - Budget Resolution 3/11/00 [OA/ID 21461]
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files (continued)
Speechwriting
Jeff Shesol
FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] Statue Unveiling 1/10/01 [OA/ID 21462]
DNC [Democratic National Convention] Talking Points 1/18/01 [OA/ID 21462]
Debt Reduction 12/28/00 [OA/ID 21462]
John Lindsay - Statement on Death 12/20/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Globalization Gap University of Warwick, UK 12/14/00 Warwick - Drafts [1] [OA/ID 21462]
Globalization Gap University of Warwick, UK 12/14/00 Warwick - Drafts [2] [OA/ID 21462]
Globalization Gap University of Warwick, UK 12/14/00 Globalization Gap Coventry, UK [OA/ID 21462]
Election Results - Gore Concession 12/14/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Radio Address - Education Budget 12/2/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Box 23
Economy (Poverty #s) 9/26/00 [OA/ID 21462]
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WTO - Seattle Ministerial 12/1/99 Environmental E.O. (VP) 11/16/99 [OA/ID 21462]
WTO - Seattle Ministerial 12/1/99 U. S. Agenda – WTO [OA/ID 21462]
WTO - Seattle Ministerial 12/1/99 "Human Face" Lab / Envir. / Openness, etc… [OA/ID 21462]
WTO - Seattle Ministerial 12/1/99 WTO Ministers' Lunch Drafts [OA/ID 21462]
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Harley [Davidson] - York, PA 11/10/99 Trade Ed. Day - York, PA 11/10/99 [OA/ID 21462]
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New Markets 7/99 New Markets – General [OA/ID 21462]
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New Markets 7/99 Drafts - East St. Louis [OA/ID 21462]
New Markets 7/99 Remarks by Johnson [Lyndon] on Development [1] [OA/ID 21462]
New Markets 7/99 Remarks by Johnson [Lyndon] on Development [2] [OA/ID 21462]
Census Statement 4/1/99 [OA/ID 21462]
White House 200th Anniversary Dinner 11/9/00 [1] [OA/ID 21462]

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White House 200th Anniversary Dinner 11/9/00 [3] [OA/ID 21462]
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Budget 10/25/00 & 10/27/00 Budget Statement 10/25/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Budget 10/25/00 & 10/27/00 Budget Statement 10/27/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Democratic Caucus - Budget 10/19/00 [OA/ID 21462]
President's Cup Golf Tournament 10/18/00 [OA/ID 21462]
Progressive Conference Princeton 10/5/00 Princeton Progressives 10/5/00 [1] [OA/ID 21462]
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Speechwriting
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Progressive Conference Princeton 10/5/00 Princeton Progressives 10/5/00 [2] [OA/ID 21462]
Progressive Conference Princeton 10/5/00 Waldman - POTUS Speaks [OA/ID 21462]
Progressive Conference Princeton 10/5/00 WHIG - Cliosophic Society [OA/ID 21462]
California League of Conservation Voters 9/24/00 [OA/ID 21462]
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Tornado Remarks 4/15/98 - Tornado Stories [OA/ID 24501]
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Senior Staff Speeches - Podesta - Appointment as COS [Chief of Staff] 10/20/98 [OA/ID
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Senior Staff Speeches - Rahm: Safire Roast 10/1/98; Farewell [OA/ID 24501]
Senior Staff Speeches - Rahm: "Race to the Bottom" [OA/ID 24501]
Senior Staff Speeches - Rahm Emanuel - ADL [Anti-Defamation League] 4/7/98 [OA/ID
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Radio & TV White House Correspondents - Radio & TV White House Correspondents Dinners [1] [OA/ID 24501]
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[Diskette] – Jeff Shesol Speechwriting Boxes 1-10 of 10 [OA/ID 24501]
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