

perspective

Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship
Vol. 9, No. 2 - March/April, 1975.

\$25,000 Donation and New Board Advance Curriculum Work

Since the beginning of the year two events have occurred for the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) that promise to accelerate its curriculum work. At the end of January, an anonymous donor pledged \$25,000 to the AACS for the CDC's preparation of Christian curricular materials. And during February the formation of a 15-person Board of Consultants was finalized to assist the CDC staff in its curriculum decisions.

The AACS is especially thankful for this \$25,000 donation since by Trustee action (June, 1974) the AACS had pledged budget assistance to the CDC

for 1974 and 1975. However, it is the donor's hope that an equal sum will be raised during 1975 from other sources with the result of doubling the rate at which the Christian curriculum materials could be produced. This grant should not be seen as a "match-it-or-else" proposition, but rather as an encouragement to all these interested in this work. The AACS is now making plans to solicit funds to match this generous donation.



CDC staff discuss future curriculum projects

The news of this gift sparked considerable excitement among the Curriculum staff. The present staff members, all on a part-time basis, are Arnold De Graaff-1/5 time; Jean Olthuis-4/5 time; Anne Tuininga-4/5 time; Harry Fernhout-3/5 time. With the hope of the gift being matched, CDC is now taking steps to employ additional researchers and an editor. Dr. De Graaff reports that there are well-qualified, experienced people

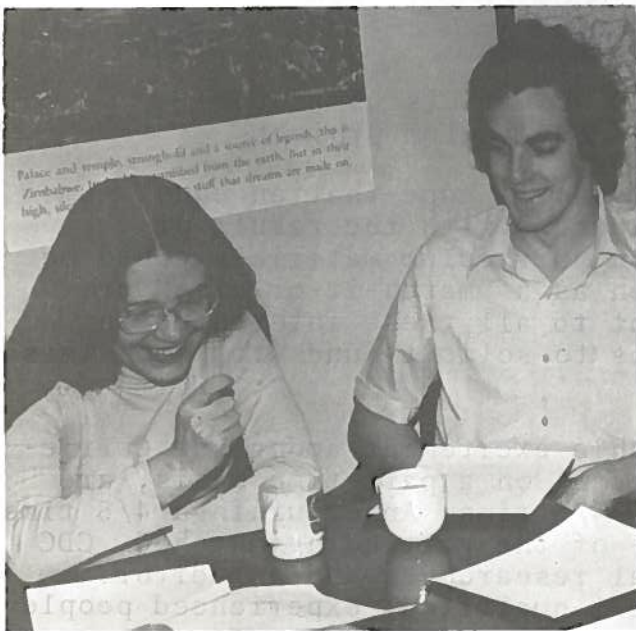
in every curriculum area. Now that more money is available they can take advantage of the extensive work that these people have already done in Christian curriculum work.

In 1973 the Centre published Joy in Learning, an integrated curriculum for the elementary school, especially designed for grades 1-3. A 617-page loose-leaf curriculum guide, Joy in Learning helps teachers interrelate all of a child's learning, the writing, science, reading, and social studies. It presents a Christian view of life in terms of the daily experiences of the child and the common subjects of study. The book was so well received that the first printing is almost sold out. Orders have been received from twelve different countries.

At the present time, Jean Olthuis and Anne Tuininga are working on Ways of Life (Joy in Learning, Volume II). This manual will help teachers show children the cultures of five Oriental and African lands (Japan, China, India, East Africa, and West Africa) as ways of life different from their own. The first draft of Unit I of this volume has now been written and is presently being tested in the schools. Publication of the entire volume of six units is scheduled for the fall of 1976.

Harry Fernhout, who began in January, is working on Biblical Studies, the third curriculum manual. This volume will provide a Bible course for the junior high school level, dealing with the period of the kings and prophets. It will also include a study of the gospels and the book of Acts. The course will be structured so that it can be integrated with the study of ancient cultures and history.

Besides opening the possibility for additional personnel to work on Ways of Life and Biblical Studies, the \$25,000 financial boost will accelerate the work schedule for Volume IV, The Number of Things. This volume will provide a complete mathematics program for the elementary school (grades 1-8), using the metric system. The work on this manual could begin as early as July, 1975, and would utilize extensive research already completed by Christian teachers in summer workshops.



The CDC staff is very enthusiastic also about their newly formed Board of Consultants. Working closely with Dr. De Graaff, the Centre's Director, this board will help the writers in evaluating the curriculum material and will guide the development of CDC. Each board member has agreed to advise the CDC staff in a particular area of his curriculum competence.

Anne Tuininga and Harry Fernhout

The following are the 15 people who comprise the Board of Consultants:

<u>Name</u>	<u>City (in Ontario)</u>	<u>Curriculum Area</u>
Henk Aay	Rexdale	Geography
Bruce De Boer	St. Catharines	Science
Harmen Boersma	Woodstock	Social Studies (Elementary)
Helen Breems	Toronto	Social Studies (Elementary)
Wayne Drost	London	History & Man in Society
Calvin Jongsma	St. Catharines	Mathematics
Herman Proper	London	Science
Mary Siebenga	St. Catharines	Art
Deborah Steele	Toronto	Literature & Social Studies (Elementary)
John Stronks	St. Catharines	Curriculum Coordination & Administration
William Suk	Brampton	Bible & Man in Society
Harry Westerhof	Toronto	Editing
Henry Wiersema	Strathroy	Geography
Bert Witvoet	Pine Grove	Literature & Man in Society

This board will meet with the CDC staff for the first time on April 4 to evaluate the recently completed curriculum units and to advise the staff on the planning of the future curriculum guides.

In addition to the four volumes of Joy in Learning already mentioned, the CDC staff has outlines for six more, making a total of ten volumes. To a great extent these volumes build on the work done in the past seven years by different groups of teachers and education students. As a result of those efforts, experimental curriculum guides were produced for almost every area of the curriculum. These guides were incomplete, unedited, and in some instances merely introductory. From the experience of those in the summer curriculum workshops and from the feedback of many concerned teachers, it became clear that more time was needed for the writing of curriculum than the six-week summer sessions by volunteers. It was felt that the development of curriculum and the writing of curriculum guides required the year-round efforts of a team of experienced and specialized people. At the end of 1973, the Curriculum Development Centre was organized and officially incorporated as a non-profit organization. Thus, the CDC exists for the purpose of providing an organizational structure that will help accomplish the goal of writing a number of Christian curriculum guides.

We are thankful that the \$25,000 grant and the well-qualified Board of Consultants will greatly support and strengthen the work of the Curriculum Development Centre.

If you would like to help match the \$25,000 pledge and accelerate their work on curriculum, please send your donation to:

Curriculum Development Centre
229 College Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1R4

Good news for AACS Members in Canada

We are pleased to announce that we have received a ruling from the Canadian government that AACS Membership Dues are now tax deductible. We would advise our members to submit their dues receipts along with their donation receipts when filing a tax return. If you have not yet filed for 1974, you can include your 1974 dues as donation credit.

Meyer Posthumus & Wassenaar, legal counsel for the AACS, notified us of the ruling in the following letter:

BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS 4856 YONGE ST., WILLOWDALE M2N 5N2 TEL. 223-9191

meyer
posthumus
& wassenaar

March 12, 1975

RE: Membership fees

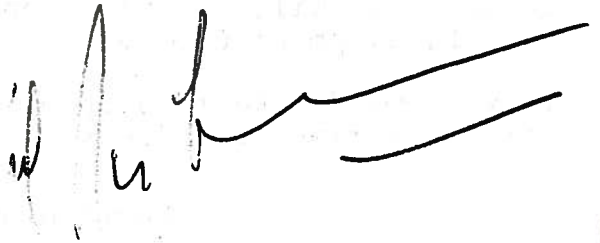
Attention: Mr. H. Houtman

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to advise that we have been informed by the Charitable and Non-Profit Organizations Section of the Department of National Revenue that a membership fee paid to a charitable organization can be considered a gift for income tax purposes if the only advantage accruing to the donor involves the receipt of literature explaining and reporting on the organization's activities and/or the right to vote at meetings.

Accordingly, it is our opinion that the A.A.C.S. can indeed issue receipts for income tax purposes for all monies received from its members without attributing a certain amount to membership fees.

Yours very truly



WGP:tcn

W. G. Posthumus

ICS and Regent to present Colloquium

Regent College, Vancouver, and the Institute for Christian Studies are joining for a PUBLIC COLLOQUIUM on May 16 at which professors from both institutions will be speaking and discussing each others' papers. The theme is "Affirming Creation and History". The Colloquium is being held as part of the Christian Leadership Seminar sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada at York University, Toronto.

During the afternoon, Dr. C.T. McIntire of the Institute and Dr. Carl Armerding of Regent will both speak on "God's work in history: in the biblical epoch and the post-biblical epoch". Dr. Seerveld will respond to a paper by Dr. James Houston on the doctrine of creation in contemporary thought. In the evening Dr. Olthuis and Dr. Clark Pinnock will speak on the Word of God and creation.

The registration fee for the Colloquium is only \$5. Overnight accommodations are available at York University, where the meeting is to be held. Write AACS for more information and a registration blank if you wish to attend.

The entire Christian Leadership Seminar, running from May 13 through 16, is expected to draw several hundred people to the York campus. Featured speakers are Rev. John R.W. Stott, Dr. Stephen S. Olford, and Dr. Donald A. McGavran. You may get information and applications materials on this Seminar also from AACS.

Attention: psychologists, psychiatrists, medical counselors, lawyers, theologians, and philosophers.

The Institute for Christian Studies is one of nine co-sponsors for the International Conference on Human Engineering and the Future of Man. This conference will be held July 21-24 at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. It has been planned because recent research in genetic intervention and modern experiments with behaviour conditioning of human beings has sharpened the need to thoroughly consider ethical and value guidelines.

The conference features dialogue with six internationally respected experts on these questions so important to the future of the human race. James Olthuis of the ICS and John Olthuis of the Committee for Justice and Liberty, Toronto, are two of the respondents to these dialogues.

The conference planners hope to give input to a 20-member international Commission which will develop a preliminary Evangelical response for human engineering research and application, and recommendations for continuing dialogue between the religious, scientific and legislative communities regarding public policy on human engineering issues.

Conference brochures are available from the ICS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1R4. The deadline for applications is May 20.

Junior members assess work at ICS

Perspective held a group interview recently with three junior members of the Institute for Christian Studies. Tom Malcolm, AACCS Director of Educational Services, conducted the interview, focussing on their work at ICS.

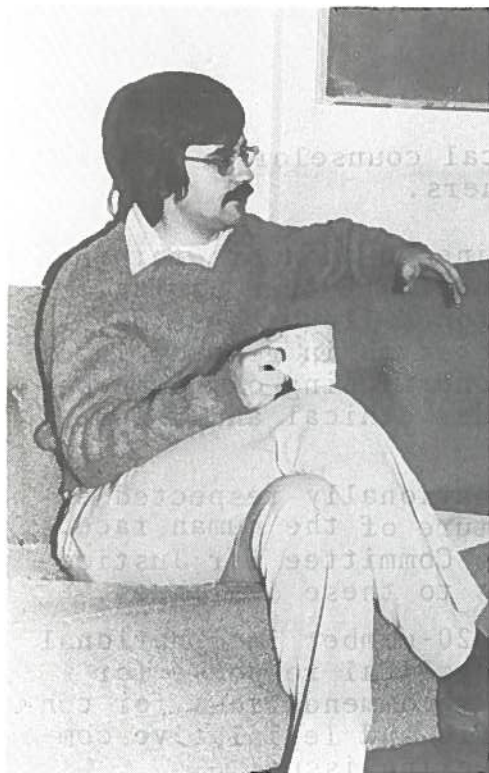
John Hull is finishing his M.Phil. (Master of Philosophy) program. He is from Sutton, Nebraska, and is a graduate of Dordt College. John comes from a calvinist church of German origin.

Christiane Thies and Don Vander Klok are both first year junior members. Christy comes from Ann Arbor, Michigan, is a graduate of the University of Michigan and is studying political theory at ICS. Her church background is Baptist.

Don is studying theology. He comes from Kalamazoo, Michigan, is Christian Reformed and has a B.A. from Calvin College. He spent one year teaching in Oshawa, Ontario, before coming to Toronto.

PERSPECTIVE: Most supporters of the Institute for Christian Studies are used to thinking of higher educational institutions in traditional terms. So they would expect to find professors and students in the Institute. But you are called "junior members" and not "students". Why?

JOHN: When we were shaping up the internal structure of the Institute we worked with the idea of establishing a community of scholars. We don't look upon ourselves as a teaching institution wherein professors "dispense" knowledge to students who sit with open heads and get filled up so they can go dispense to others. The Institute is a place where research is done at a fairly advanced level. The junior members ("students") are less advanced than the senior members ("professors") but are still doing research. They don't sit around waiting to be lectured to, but are participating in the research right along with the senior members. The common title "member" indicates that we are all involved in the same task. But, to acknowledge the fact that some members are more mature and advanced than others, the junior-senior distinction was initiated.



Malcolm begins interview
with ICS junior members

PERSPECTIVE: You, Christy, came to the Institute directly after graduation from the University of Michigan. Don taught school, but only for a year after graduating from Calvin and then came to ICS. So you have both fairly recently been students. What is the difference between being a student and being a junior member as John has described it?

CHRISTY: There is a big difference between the way I do my studies here and the way I did them back in the University. There I did feel like an "open head" that people dumped things inside. I "learned" what was dumped in, wrote papers, took tests. Now, I feel that for the first time I am learning how to really read a book, take things apart and evaluate. A lot more is expected of me. I would feel badly coming unprepared to class and not being able to contribute insights or raise questions. In lectures we are not told things, but alerted to questions that need to be worked on. I also feel much more responsibility. As a student, it didn't really matter whether I attended classes or did my assignments; the only one affected was me. Now in classes I feel that we are a body working together. If someone is holding back or pushing forward, we are all communally held back or pushed forward.



Don Vander Klok and Christy Thies

DON: As to the research aspect, things are really different in that everything is not immediately related to some practical focus. That bugged me at first and I wondered how I could get any meaning out of it. Lately in some courses we have begun to relate the theory to practical issues so I have begun to see the meaning. Seeing that the theory does indeed bear an important relationship to issues in everyday life has given me a new appreciation for the theory itself. I feel good about doing research without having to go immediately to a practical focus.

PERSPECTIVE: The academic bulletin says that the ICS concentrates on "foundational studies". What does that mean?

CHRISTY: In my own field that means we don't hop from issue to issue. We don't bring in the morning paper and deal superficially with the latest news from the Middle East or what Kissinger did yesterday. We work with questions like "What is justice?" We take some political thinkers and ask things like "What is their view of what it means to be human? How does that direct their political theory?" Those are pre-issue questions: the kinds of questions you have to answer before you can look at an issue and deal with it in a Christian way. If you know something about what justice is, you can know how it applies to a particular issue.

PERSPECTIVE: People are fond of labelling that kind of study "ivory towerish" or "speculative". How do you see the relevance of your studies to the issues in daily life?

DON: In my studies a theoretical course has practical grounding. Theory arises from practice. On the other hand practice always

has some sort of theory behind it. Everyone works from some kind of perspective.

CHRISTY: There are greater or lesser degrees of distance between theory and practice, but never a complete split. I don't believe in ivory towers. You can't know what the real central issues in your discipline are without being in the real world and knowing what is important there. But, that still doesn't mean you have to spend your time in political theory class reading Newsweek or Time. We study political thinkers, critically. What I am gaining by doing that is not all the specific answers but a general framework that's Christian and will help me be more obedient as a worker in the political arena. I already find that it is easier to deal with daily newspaper headlines and know what to do with that kind of information when you have such a framework.

JOHN: I have been studying philosophy for seven years now and wouldn't stick with it if I thought it wasn't meaningful. There aren't many job openings for philosophers and probably all one can do is teach philosophy to other people. The work of philosophers seldom has immediate impact on peoples' lives. The way I feel good about sticking with it is to think generationally. In our day and age we look for immediate "results". In the history of philosophy, on the other hand, there are numerous examples of how what people thought in one generation began to shape the lives of people in the street five, ten, a hundred years later. Even philosophy that was "ivory towerish" at the time it was being done filtered down to street level because of the power of ideas. I don't feel badly about not being able to implement tomorrow what I think about today.

But, there's more to it. A Christian theorist has to look beyond himself to a community. There need to be many bridges built from the researcher of foundational issues to the people in the street. The researcher must be able to rely upon people who understand his theoretical work and can build those bridges. On the other hand, a theorist must work with others who are not, so that he can keep checking to see that he is thinking about the real world and not speculating.

PERSPECTIVE: The trend in science arising from humanist motives today is toward specialization. The name of the game is to get things compartmentalized, neatly nailed down and distinguished. To the contrary, thinking in the Institute concentrates on how things fit together. How do you justify bucking the major trend in science?

CHRISTY: Secular thinkers have a "patchwork quilt" or "building block" kind of theory about what reality is. They can become so highly specialized in a certain area of study and just totally exhaust that area but never see how it is related to everything else. It becomes totally blown out of proportion. People work on building better atom bombs without realizing that this is more than just a scientific exercise. There are all kinds of things involved, including moral issues. But a good secular scientist will say, "Well, that's not my field. Leave that block to those who study ethics". Unless you understand what it means to be obedient in a full life integrated way, you are open to all kinds of distortions in your studies.

JOHN: It is presupposed by us in our studies at the Institute that God's creation is not such that some pieces can go on independently of others. You can only go on analyzing a small piece of reality so long before it points you to other things in the world of which it is a part. We can get a much fuller appreciation of anything we single out to analyze because, when it points to something else, we don't find that to be a problem. Rather, it is an occasion to work with people in other fields to see how each of your studies singly fits together.



John Hull explains importance of his studies

PERSPECTIVE: Some critics of the ICS say that its perspective is not worth much outside of a narrow Dutch reformed intellectual tradition, and is certainly not serviceable to the majority of North American Evangelicals. Christy, you come from such a North American evangelical background, and evidently don't find the ICS' perspective unserviceable.

CHRISTY: Coming from an evangelical background, my life was really split. I was an unintegrated person. I went through a process of trying to somehow fit my Christianity into this and that. It just wasn't working out. I find that the vision people here have of the Kingdom, that life is religion, that it is an integrated whole, is not something for reformed people only--it's for all Christians. It's healthy and obedient. It is highly applicable to Evangelicals who want to hear and to deal with the sacred-secular split in their lives.

DON: Let me add that I come from a reformed background and within that tradition we have lost the vision of a Christianity working out in every area of life. There is a split in our midst, too, accepting Christianity on one hand and some non-Christian philosophy in other areas of life. Reformed colleges have largely lost the ability to integrate Christianity in their courses of study.

PERSPECTIVE: The name and work of the ICS are more widely known today than ever before, and yet enrollment had declined over the past few years. Why is that?

CHRISTY: I really wonder how many people coming out of colleges and universities are really in touch with the need to do foundational research. The question is how many people have accepted Western culture, its presuppositions, way of life and so don't see the need to cut through a lot of that and deal critically with it. Even if you only come here for a year you can get in touch with those things, begin to think critically about them and redirect your studies. If you don't see that need, you won't come here.

JOHN: For us, a small number of students is not such a problem.

We do not gear for a lot of students, so if we only get 12 or so new ones each year that is probably right on.

The reason we have tapered off in the last few years is that ICS has begun to establish its identity as an academic institution. The Institute was born in troubled times when the "war baby" generation was disillusioned with everything labelled "establishment". People were flocking to all sorts of places looking for some kind of meaning. Many looked to the Institute as a haven, not as a scholarly institution. Students came not to study but to find some meaning in life. And the Institute was susceptible to that trend as it was just being born. In those days one was able to get by discussing things on a "visionary" level. We were very non-scholarly.

As times have changed we have arrived at the point where we must be doing sound academic work if we are to be a bona fide institution. As we become more of an academic entity we are less able to provide for the general needs of people. Our numbers have declined because people who weren't really interested in scholarship began to leave. Other institutions and individuals must get going to meet the other needs those people have.

PERSPECTIVE: You all seem to find it meaningful to study here. But right now you don't have assurance that your ICS studies will be officially recognized. An ICS degree may not be given the credit it deserves on a job application. Why stay on here?

JOHN: Behind it all there has to be a certain amount of commitment. You make a choice and are aware that there are certain consequences. Do I want to work in an institution that aims to be biblical and do scholarly work? There are rewards and difficulties in saying "yes". Toronto is an expensive city to live in, the Institute is small and not established. One big shortcoming is that we are not even recognized by Christian colleges and would have a tough time getting teaching jobs even there.

The rewards come in that you are not studying to get a grade, but are working for members of the Association, fellow junior and senior members as well as yourself. That is an awesome responsibility. In college we didn't feel the burden to come through for the people who supported the institution. Here I feel a responsibility to the people who put in their \$25, \$50, \$100 or whatever each year. I want to take up some task among those people.

I was given certain talents and placed in a certain situation. We first students through the Institute must work to establish its reputation. That is a responsibility that makes it worthwhile to continue. I just trust that there will be an opening for us somewhere in the Christian community when we are done here. I hope that those who have patiently supported the Institute year after year will realize that students are thankful for their support and are hoping that there is room among them to use what we have learned. We are willing to serve.

CHRISTY: It is important to recognize that students who do come here are making a sacrifice. We pay tuition and get no recognized

credit. People really consider that deeply before making a decision to come here. Your reasons must go far beyond getting a degree that will get you a job for financial reward. Being responsible is indeed the key. I feel benefited by being here in terms of the things I am doing and the ideas I am developing about how to work with that. Yet I came here because I felt responsible for finding out what it means to be a member of the body of Christ. When I see how Christians have lost their common vision I feel responsible to see what I can do constructively about that, at least in the political arena.

DON: Responsibility is the thing. The reason I came here is that the background I came from was split and I wanted to think through those problems. Here I am getting a basis for assessment.

CHRISTY: I feel like I am learning now how to live. Whether I earn any money with knowing how to live I don't care.



"Being responsible is indeed the key."

To love your neighbour

Olthuis calls for change in economic policy

The third lecture in the Discovery VI series, "Seeking the Abundant Life", was presented during January in all seven Discovery centres by John A. Olthuis, researcher for the Committee for Justice and Liberty. Nancy Vander Plaats, who does independent researching of economic issues in Toronto, covered his speech for Perspective.

"The central love commandment in the Bible 'To love God and your neighbour as yourself' has been reworked so that the central love commandment in our society is 'Love yourself and use your neighbour accordingly'." These are words John Olthuis used to sum up his perception of the religious drive of Western society in his Discovery VI speech, "Economic Growth: Blight or Blessing?"

Olthuis pointed out that both industrial and governmental economic policy derive from decisions made from a wide variety of possible choices. He emphasized that some of these options could lead society in a far different direction. For example, a car-making company learning of a machine which will increase productivity could choose to use the machine with the present number of workers to expand their production to increase profits, or it could decide to use the machine for the same amount of production with fewer workers. The workers no longer needed to produce the same number of cars would then be free to go into social work, or art or music. In order to support and carry out such a decision by industry and the workers involved, the government also must make alternative choices of which projects receive public funds. Government choices play a crucial role in the determination of how increased pro-

ductive capacity will be used. If the government says: We will not build more roads and parking lots, we will build an adequate public transportation system; and we will give substantial grants to artists and social workers, then extra productive capacity will go into art and social work and not more cars.

But, unfortunately, the opposite pattern of choices has been made by both government and industry since the time of the Industrial Revolution, Olthuis said. This pattern has had its effects on all other areas of human life, distorting the family and education to serve greater economic growth. "The human wreckage surrounds us. People are crying for meaning. We have a society of human loneliness and despair surrounded by the glitter of plastic and metal."



Olthuis: Our day-to-day decisions can change an economic system

Briefly tracing the development of economic institutions from a single factory producing a single product to today's huge multi-product, multi-national corporations, John showed that the workers, shareholders, consumers and raw materials are all conceived narrowly as mere economic units rather than human or physical creatures of the Lord. They are controlled by professional money managers who serve on dozens of corporate boards, determining the economic options available to society.

The power of this corporate elite is ensured by its symbiotic relationship with government. The many examples of this relationship that John gave included the large number of influential business people in government (Rockefeller!) and on government commissions; the frequent financial contributions of corporations to political parties; use of government power to overthrow other legitimate governments unfavorable to the multi-nationals; and the whole system of tax loopholes for businesses.

"The role of the state as a protector of vested economic interests goes even further", John stressed. "It is behind the government's pattern of decision-making to finance and encourage via tax support and other means only those educational systems, media groups, publications, and artistic efforts that favour [the dominant] principle of life. Accordingly, it denies to Christians and people of other faith communities the right to fully participate in a pluralized way in our society."

This distorted structure has led to profound crisis: ecological destruction, depletion of resources, inflation, recession. Change is needed, but change is fought by the vested interests of the corporate controllers. Olthuis gave some interesting examples to show that one of their strong tools is advertisements to manipulate people's minds.

Yet he feels the present system is vulnerable at the same time, for men and women can still make decisions which disrupt the corporations' long-range plans, threatening their very existence. People acting responsibly in community can make different choices in their family, business, and political structures. We can change consumption patterns (buy a musical instrument instead of a color T.V.!), put the welfare of consumer and

worker ahead of profit-making, and use political pressure to challenge government policy.

"Our day-to-day decision making based on our belief in the redemptive and restorative power of Jesus Christ", Olthuis concluded, "can make all things new. Yes, can even change an economic system from being a plague to being a blessing".

Editor reviews AACS chapter history

When the founding fathers of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARSS) drew up the Constitution more than 14 years ago, they included in the by-laws a section on Chapters. They wanted to provide some organized means for Association members scattered across North America to work together for their common purpose. That ultimate goal was "to equip men and women to bring the Word of God in all its power to bear upon the whole of life".

Although that goal has remained the same, the history of the AACS Chapters since their formation in 1961 shows a number of changes over the years. Most of these changes came about naturally as the organization grew in numbers, personnel and outreach. Some changes occurred despite organized efforts in another direction, so perhaps it would be helpful to review the history of the AACS Chapters.

It was probably in the days when Dr. Paul Schrottenboer, as sole officer of the Association, was working half-time as Executive Director that the Chapters first functioned officially. Wherever there were ten or more Christians in a given area who had joined the ARSS and were committed to the establishment of a Christian university, a Chapter could be formed.

I get the impression these early members were concerned foremost with the need to prepare leaders for many of the recently immigrated Reformed communities in Canada. They felt that a Christian university was vital for educating leaders who could help guide these communities in scriptural ways of living. They saw the Association as the organized means to set up such a university.

The Chapters were the locally organized means of supporting the Association. In each locality a Chapter board was formed, the constitution adopted and officers elected to plan local educational activities and other means of aiding the objectives of the Association. The most common educational activity organized was the study group, at which Chapter members met to study some publication, such as the Christian Perspective Series from the early Unionville conferences. Several Chapters began by studying the Educational Creed from the Constitution and discussing its implications point by point. Members were finding ways to grow in their knowledge of the basic confession of the Association.

The most direct aid by the early Chapters to the organization in Toronto was the collection of membership dues. Chapter volunteers con-

tacted local members and sent all but a small fraction of the sum of the dues in to the head-office, located at first in the basement of Dr. Schrotenboer's house. The fraction retained by the Chapters went into the Chapter treasury to help fund their local activities.

As the Association has developed over the years, rather than an increase in Chapter activity, there appears to be a decrease. In a number of Chapters who once had active boards and officers, many of the members are not even aware of the existence of a Chapter in their area. Few of the 53 Chapters today have a local bank account. Few have study groups or sponsor local AACS activities. Many of the newer Chapters have never begun a move to organize.

There doubtless are a number of negative reasons for this decrease, such as loss of commitment or the busy pace of life; but I think too often the positive factors causing this decrease are overlooked. I think it would be encouraging to take note of these.

The major development over the years has been the opening of the Institute for Christian Studies in 1967. It has become increasingly understood that the foundational research of the Institute is a time-consuming, ongoing process and that the preparation of community leaders as its first fruits will not give a bountiful yield at first in numbers. The fact that few members were discouraged by that realization is a positive sign. The need for educating all members of the community was becoming clearer.

Certainly the expansion of Association-sponsored conferences and Discovery lectures also changed the function and demands of the Chapters. Rather than independently sponsoring local activities, the older Chapters came to concentrate their time on carrying out the Association-sponsored programs. They had been studying basic confessional literature; now they were concerned to receive further guidance in various fields of scholarship. The emphasis on educating all members of the community, not only future leaders, was growing.



Wedge publications helped
in community education

As many of the educational events became centrally sponsored by the whole Association, the need for local bank accounts decreased. Also, around 1968 the collection of dues could be centralized from the main office because of more office personnel and better facilities for communications.

Another set of positive factors may also have contributed to this decrease in local organization. Since the beginnings of the AACS a number of additional Christian organizations have been formed, while other existing ones have grown considerably in their outreach. The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), the Committee for Justice and Liberty Foundation (CJL), Wedge Publishing Foundation, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Christian Counselling Services, and Patmos Art Gallery are some that are familiar in the

Toronto area. I have heard of additional ones in other areas and their existence indicates to me a relatively widespread united way of looking at the opportunities and responsibilities of the Christian community. Many of these organizations offer educational services which overlap with those of the AACS. Therefore solely AACS sponsored activities decreased. Cooperative support rather than competition, however, is most desirable. So as long as Christians of this common vision are finding avenues to promote Christ's Rule in each community, it doesn't matter whether it is done under the organizational name of the AACS.

So perhaps the AACS in its attempts to stimulate Chapter activity should be guided by that realization. At least with some Canadian Chapters, the emphasis should be shifted to organization only when necessary to assist interaction with other community educational endeavors.

Reply to Editor's inquiry

The editor recently requested a report from each AACS Chapter on their local activities. Although I didn't receive enough news to write a series of articles featuring Chapter activities in Perspective I have decided to print the response from the Edmonton Chapter. Their letter helped to clarify my understanding of the newest direction some Chapters can take.

"Dear Linda,

I would like to give you the following information in answer to your request for a report on the activities of this Chapter.

Frankly, this Chapter has not organized any local activities during the past year or so, except, of course, for supporting activities such as organization of Discovery lectures and the summer conferences. This has been deliberate, rather than inadvertent. The Board of the Edmonton Chapter thought that since there are a number of other, highly active Christian organizations or Chapters of organizations in our City, it would be superfluous for us to organize anything on our own. This is the reason why most activities such as seminars which are organized in Edmonton are announced as joint efforts of A.A.C.S., C.J.L., C.L.A., C.F.F., or as the case may be.



Gerry Clements, John Sneepe
of Edmonton Chapter board

It may be interesting to you to see what our community has been "up to" in the recent past. For brevity's sake, I will give you these activities in point form.

1. Recently Jim Visser and the writer organized a meeting of delegates

of just about all organizations in which Christian Reformed people are active. The purpose of this meeting was to better coordinate the various activities taking place and to have a discussion of the methods which we should use in attempting to attract people from other denominations. It was decided to publish a monthly sheet, perhaps as an insert to the monthly Church newspaper, The Bridge, which would outline all the activities scheduled for the next month but which would also contain at least one feature article on one of the organizations involved.

2. An organization by the name of Pulse has been showing movies and conducting discussions of those movies afterwards.
3. "Eye of the Fish", a cable T.V. program has recently featured programs such as the following:
 - a) A discussion between Drs. Purdell-Lewis and Greidanus on medical ethics, particularly focussing on such issues as abortion and euthanasia.
 - b) Gerald Vandezande
 - c) Edmonton Report
 - d) Christian Education and private schools in general.
 - e) Jack Vanderwal, a local Christian artist.
4. A mini conference was sponsored by C.J.L., C.L.A., and C.F.F., featuring Gerald Vandezande on problems of food distribution.
5. We have good contacts with and coverage by the Edmonton Report, a local magazine of Time format, published by, mainly, Anglicans.
6. We have also had good cooperation from the local radio station, C.J.U.A., which has broadcast several of the Discovery lectures.

Yours sincerely,

G. W. Clements

LOANS:

The AACCS frequently has need of large sums of money to capitalize certain projects which cannot be raised as gifts. Because of the high bank interest rates (still 11%), we continue to welcome loans from friends. Please write to Harry Houtman for details.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

The ICS would again like to offer several scholarships to students. We now have 12 new full-time students registered for 1975-76, but have not yet determined our full scholarship needs. Although full information on this need will be presented in the next PERSPECTIVE, interested persons are urged to begin contributing to the ICS Scholarship Fund now.

The Institute for Christian Studies,

A response to the secular university

This is the first in a series of articles proposed by the staff of the AACCS. We begin this series with the hope that many will gain a better understanding of the learning and research being done at the Institute for Christian Studies. This first article by Dr. R. VanderVennen, Executive Director of the AACCS, explains both the need for and the value of the Institute as an alternative to the secular university. Each consecutive article will picture a particular field of study at the ICS. Those articles will focus on the topics currently being researched by Senior and Junior Members within each field.

We call this a secular age. This means that society and our leaders have rejected Christian ways of dealing with major issues. They have pushed Christ out of consideration as the one who holds the key to the mysteries of our lives. Secularization has been taking place for some time, and is still continuing. It has pushed farthest in the big cities, and in education and business centers.

THE PROCESS OF SECULARIZATION

The church used to be a focus of society, a center to which people turned for answers to the big questions of life. Now the university has taken over that place. People used to look to the minister and theologian for insight and guidance; now they turn to the university professor for the answers.

Science and technology, too, have turned our eyes away from God and the church. We have been able to control so many physical forces in the world that we seem to depend more on understanding the mechanism of how things work, than on the God who is constantly at work. We used to pray for good crops, but now we use fertilizer and scientific farming. We used to exclaim, "God did it," but now we are no longer amazed and thankful. Now we have scientific answers.

Such secularity has become so commonplace in our lives that we are hardly aware of it. Recently my wife and I visited the Royal Ontario Museum and saw the exhibit on Vertebrate Fossils. The museum has a beautiful and detailed reconstruction of the development of animals from prehistoric times. But nowhere in that entire exhibit were we led to think that God had anything to do with the way the animals had lived and developed, or even that He existed at the time those animals were there. It seems that God isn't needed.

Our society has indeed turned secular. To understand how and why this happened, we must examine the idea centre of society--the university. How did the university become secular and why does it no longer have any place for God in its operations and decisions?

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE

The answer is that the university has followed the rise of the scientific attitude. The scientific way of solving a problem is to be carefully logical and to look at only one aspect of a problem at a time. By breaking down the complicated problem into various parts and dealing with each part separately, then finding out how the parts relate to each other, you can often get a very clear inside picture of the problem. This is a good way, for example, to figure out why a car isn't running properly. It is a powerful and effective way of solving many complicated kinds of problems.

Medical research scientists have used this method in finding out how our bodies work so they can help us when there is some breakdown of the chemical and biological system. By this means scientists at the University of Toronto have discovered that if we have diabetes we should regularly take insulin. Surgeons have used the scientific approach to focus on one part of our body at a time to perform operations.

But you can carry a thing too far. If the surgeon who is taking out an appendix does not give attention to whether the patient is still breathing, he may successfully take out the appendix but find that the patient has died. Such bad side effects are less obvious, however, in most areas of science than they are in surgery.

In science we don't have such clear ways of knowing whether the overall result is good. The strength of the scientific attitude is that it has enabled us to identify and understand small parts of a complex whole. But while we have been giving such close attention to the parts and pieces, we have lost our sight of the whole. Scientists understand chemical and biological mechanisms, but have lost sight of the work of God through these mechanisms. It seems to many scientists that God has nothing to do with these mechanisms. And this is now the situation of our society as a whole. Scientific study has led us to the point where we say, "We no longer need you, God."

THE BASIC PROBLEM OF THE UNIVERSITY

It is specialized scientific study that has set the pattern for the university. The modern university is a patchwork or collage of departments (faculties) each of which is quite independent of the other, presided over by administrators operating along pragmatic lines. It is normal in the university that people in one department do not even know what those in another department are doing. There is even less chance that the university specialist will understand how the findings of one department can relate to and assist his own study and research.

A large stack of bricks is not a building. A foundation is needed and the bricks must be firmly connected by mortar. The university today is a building whose bricks have lost their mortar. Administrators often prefer to call their institutions "multi-versities" to show that they are diversified in almost unlimited ways. But this diversity has no unifying center. Modern scholars have lost sight of the God who created the world a unity.

Failure to see the unity shows up in secular education. University study lacks interconnections and foundations. University scholars find great problems with connecting the various academic disciplines together, because to do this you need a unified viewpoint on the nature of reality. They have the same

difficulty with all fundamental or foundational questions, such as: What assumptions does all learning rest on, and, What are your presuppositions in your specialized research? These are religious and philosophical questions. University scientists usually deny that such questions are important and that answers to them exist.

THE UNIVERSITY'S WAY TO TRUTH

The basic model for university learning is some form of positivism. Positivism says there is only one way to truth and valid knowledge. Start your scientific investigation with a clean page, with your mind blank, free from bias and preconceptions. Write down what you see happening in the laboratory, the results of the experiments you devise. Make logical summaries and interconnections between those observations. When you have done this you have begun to know scientifically. Keep out all beliefs and anything that you cannot prove.

It can be shown that this approach has its own logical problems. No one can altogether keep out everything that cannot be proved. But even if you can't, say scientists, come as close as you can to this ideal. By having various people at various times in various parts of the world doing the same kinds of experiments and getting closely similar kinds of results, personal factors of bias and unproven assumptions will be minimized.

But what has this secular scientific positivism gained for us? True, it has resulted in an enormous increase in our knowledge, but it has dropped God out of sight. It has produced major crises right now in almost every scientific area of study.

In addition it has caused the student activism of the last ten years. Students have experienced that learning for its own sake without a meaningful context and foundation is sterile, irrelevant. The Marxists have capitalized on this, and have correctly said that commitment to some kind of a philosophical standpoint is essential. Today you can find little optimism and idealism on the university campus. Students are mostly interested in an education that will get them a good secure job.

University leaders have analyzed, have broken down, to the nth degree. They have taken the world and its complexity apart, have broken it into unbelievably small pieces. But they can't put the pieces back together again. That takes religious insight.

THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Scientific positivism has dethroned Christ but the throne is still there and it will certainly be occupied. Right now secular learning has put man and human achievements on the throne. Have faith in man, we are told, and in his ability to be perfected through education. If you can't believe in man because of the defects of human nature, then at least have faith in man's power of rational thought and the systems of knowledge and science that man creates.

Such belief in man is called humanism. This secular religion now dominates the philosophy teaching, religious studies, history, sociology, and education courses in almost every college and university in North America. Tragically, the university has chosen a path that leads to meaninglessness.

What is now to become of a society that gets its life breath from secular learning that follows a false god? What is the Christian student to do when he is absorbed in this secular, humanistic atmosphere in the big university?

THE OPTIONS FOR A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

If the Christian student does not simply flee from university education, then he can respond in one of three ways: with an individual witness, with a dualistic vision, or united with other Christians in communal responses.

Individual Christians on a university campus are usually isolated from other Christians. They witness for Christ as best they can, by doing their work with integrity. The bolder ones will speak up and identify themselves as Christians among people they find hostile to the Christian faith. But Christian students and professors at the university lack the tools to witness for Christ deep inside the subject matter, where the real steps toward the false god have been taken. They are uncomfortable with the attitudes that go along with secular evolution, with behavior conditioning, with Marxist history. But they can't attack these ideas where it counts. They are forced to say simply, "Christ and the Bible can give the right answers". That is true, but it won't get through to a non-Christian professor or roommate.

The sensitive Christian who chooses this response at the university soon develops scars and a shell to protect himself. If we ask him how he

witnesses in his studies, or how he understands his studies in a Christian way, he will become defensive. He doesn't want to consider that his actions and ways of thinking about his favorite studies might just be following the crowd away from Christ.

Secondly, the Christian at the secular university can hold to the idea that the secular system is right and good. He can say that religion does not belong in science, that research cannot freely lead to truth if it is bound by religion. He chooses to live in two worlds, the everyday secular academic world and the Christian world of Sunday worship.

A third kind of Christian response to the secular university is not individualistic nor dualistic. It is a communal response. Christian people need to work together to strengthen each other, to witness together, to help each other have a Christian influence on the university. Examples of this are campus pastors helping students with personal problems and evangelistic witness. Also helpful are Inter-Varsity, Campus Crusade and similar ministries. These organizations help a Christian student to survive on the secular campus.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE UNIVERSITY

The response of the Institute for Christian Studies is another kind of communal response. It tries to get at the roots of the secularization problem. Our response is not to live within the system but to be a reforming Christian witness as an alternative system parallel to the university.

We are saying that basic features of the secular university are wrong. Scientific studies and organizational structures should not arise from following the false god of secular humanism, but from the revelation of Jehovah God who created and upholds everything. The cornerstone of our work is that there is no religious neutrality in learning. God has created everything, and all that exists is under his sovereign rule. No scrap of learning or human activity is secular, has meaning in itself without reference to Christ. "In Him all things consist."

To carry this out in academic study, ICS programs are planned so the studies will be foundational and interconnecting. Our studies deal with the foundations of all learning, the religious foundations. Knowledge at ICS is not a collection of isolated fragments without relation to each other. We deal very much with interconnecting factors, made possible

in the knowledge that creation is a unity in Christ.

THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATION OF ICS

Our religious foundation for learning is unqualified faith in Jesus Christ and acceptance of the full authority of the Bible. With the open Bible we are trying to express the Christian world and life view in the form of Christian philosophical thinking about the creation. You could describe ICS as a Christian philosophical Institute for the study of foundational and interrelational issues of the academic disciplines.

All full-time ICS students are required to take two full-year courses in Foundations of learning. These are required in the first year since later advanced studies build on these Foundations. Both courses are team-taught, that is, various professors share the teaching so the courses will interrelate knowledge from different fields of study.

In the course called Biblical Foundations, Dr. Olthuis first takes the classes to discuss the nature of the Word of God as the revelation of God. Then he deals with confessional hermeneutics, helping students understand how to study and interpret the Bible. Later in the course Dr. Zylstra lectures on Isaiah, Dr. Seerveld on Proverbs-Psalms, and Dr. De Graaff on Minor Prophets. Some advanced ICS students also lead discussions on biblical study insights they have learned in the time they have been at ICS. Students and professors make up a learning community in which each shares with the others the results of his research.

The other Foundations course required by all first year ICS students is called Philosophical-Historical Foundations. In the first part of the course Dr. McIntire gives an overview of a Christian understanding of history and the spirits of an age. Then for three weeks he works with the meaning and process of secularization. In the final weeks he focuses on Jesus Christ as the liberator of history.

Following this historical overview, Dr. Wolters spends nine weeks helping students understand positivism and its key themes: reason, neutrality, scientific method, philosophy, and the nature of facts. He concludes with the impact of positivism and its

historical heirs on society, including its effect on the erosion of values.

Dr. Hart leads the final portion of the Philosophical-Historical Foundations course by discussing key philosophical issues and problems, such as presuppositions, universals and individuals, and subjects and objects in philosophy. He concludes with Christian perspectives on knowledge, truth and thinking.

These two courses give ICS students their introduction to foundational and interrelating study at ICS. In their advanced deeper study into aspects of God's creation, they use these foundations to help develop new insights in the fields of philosophy, history, theology, political theory, aesthetics, psychology and economics.

Following that first year, ICS students are expected to join with a professor in research study that should give new insights into the world as God's creation. This new knowledge should help reform advanced secular learning from its present secular humanistic shape. We hope it will help professors and students at secular universities as they try to keep a Christian perspective in their study. It can help reform society, freeing it from the grip of its false gods and witnessing to the restoring power of Christ. As the results of ICS research discoveries at the theoretical level are applied to the problems of life, ICS can be expected to benefit Christians in their daily walk of life.

Such research is long term work. From the start of a research project to the time its benefits reach the broader community is a period not of months but of decades. But without doubt the direction of society is shaped by the research of its philosophers and other scholars. ICS research has just begun, not more than four or five years ago. One positive sign that already some results are reaching a wide popular audience, both Christian and non-Christian, is the 1975 publication of Dr. Olthuis' book on marriage by Harper and Row, New York. This is a fruit of his research in ethics at ICS.

The Institute for Christian Studies is a Christian response of the mid-1970's to the secular university. It is not the only Christian response being made. But ICS is a particularly powerful response, getting at the root of the problem and working toward a full-orbed solution.

May our Lord find us busy with this when He comes again.

AACS News

- * Harry Fernhout's Discovery V lecture, "Man: The Image and Glory of God", has been mimeographed on request; copies are available from AACS for \$.50 each.
- * Robert VanderVennen spent four days in February attending a Seminar, entitled "Dynamics of Development", in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He attended 20 lectures on developing financial strength and widespread support for the Christian institution. The Seminar was sponsored by the Development Association for Christian Institutions, which is making a detailed analysis of the AACS Development program.
- * The Discovery VI series, "Seeking the Abundant Life", is now available on video tape. There are eight half-hour programs in this series. For more information, write AACS, 229 College St., Toronto, Ont.

ICS News

- * "The Child Reborn in Modern Dutch Literature" was the topic of a lecture at the Institute on March 14 by Dr. Johan Snapper, Princess Beatrix Professor of Dutch Language, Literature and Culture of the University of California (Berkeley). Dr. Snapper also spoke with Dr. Seerveld's aesthetics class about methods of literary criticism. Professor Snapper has written a series of articles reviewing postwar Dutch literature, collected under the title A Harp Full of Nails, which can be bought from Wedge Publishing Foundation, 229 College St., Toronto.
- * All the Institute Senior Members met with various professors of Westminster Seminary (Philadelphia) on February 28 and March 1 in Syracuse, N.Y. Dr. Seerveld reports:
The Word of God and the relation of Church and Kingdom were talked through at length. Discussion was frank, helpful and edifying. There is good hope we may continue to find one another, to understand and appreciate our differing ministries as Institute and as Seminary as we attempt to deepen a truly Reformed outreach to the world at large.
- * Upon invitation of Inter-Varsity Fellowship, C. Seerveld lectured at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh on February 5. In his lecture entitled, "The Artist Revealed", he tried to show from a Christian viewpoint the interrelating penetration of one's faith perspective with aesthetic theory and principles of literary criticism. Later in the evening Seerveld presented his slide lecture on "The Meaning of Our Nakedness" at the Bellefield Presbyterian Church, which has a large and spirited ministry among students at nearby Pittsburgh University.
- * Harper & Row Publishers (New York) has announced that James Olthuis' I Pledge You My Troth; The biblical view of marriage, family, friend-

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ship will be on sale in bookstores May 1. The hard cover book will also be
available from Wedge Publishing Foundation, 229 College St., Toronto, Ont.
M5T 1R4, and will cost \$7.95.

* The Board of Foreign Missions of the Christian Reformed Church has
translated into Spanish a paper by Harry Vander Velde on the book of
Ruth and have published it in booklet form. Harry wrote the original pa-
per for the ICS Biblical Foundations course in 1972 when he was a student
at the Institute. The Foreign Missions Board plans to use this publica-
tion in their evangelism efforts in South America.

* Bernard Zylstra presented a lecture entitled, "The Roots, Context
and Transmission of Herman Dooyeweerd's Thought", at Calvin College
on March 17. He was invited to speak by the Philosophy Department and
the Religion and Theology Department of the College.

* At the request of several Western Canadian communities, Dr. Al Wolters,
Senior Member in the History of Philosophy at the Institute, will be
making a short speaking tour at the end of April. His speech is entitled,
"The history of 'Guiding Ideas' and the man in the street".

April 28: Lethbridge, Alta./ April 29: Red Deer-Lacombe, Alta./ April
30: Neerlandia, Alta./ May 2: Smithers-Houston, B.C./ May 3: Terrace, B.C.

Summer Institute 1975:

Basic Issues Seminar in Education, July 7 - 18

Led by Dr. Arnold De Graaff, Senior Member in Psychology at
the Institute for Christian Studies and Director of the
Curriculum Development Centre, Toronto.

Location: Toronto District Christian High School, Woodbridge, Ont.

Seminar in the Philosophy of the Physical Sciences, July 28 - August 8

Led by Dr. M.D. Stafleu, a theoretical physicist from Utrecht,
The Netherlands, and Dr. Arie Leegwater, a chemistry professor
at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois.

Location: Institute for Christian Studies, 229 College St.
Toronto, Ontario.

For more details, write: AACS, 229 College St., Toronto, Ontario,
Canada, M5T 1R4. Tel. (416) 923-3921.

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Discovery VI lecture series: Seeking the abundant life: economic growth--Blight or blessing

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