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Foreign Trade and National Security Strategies in Nigeria: A Theoretical Perspective.

[1]Imide, I. O.(PhD)[1], Osadume, C. R.(PhD)[2*] and Ikubor, O. J. (PhD)[3]
1Department of Economics, University of Delta, Agbor, Nigeria
[2*]Department. of Marine Economics and Finance, Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Nigeria
[3]Department. of Economics, Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Nigeria
Correspondence: richard.osadume@nmu.edu.ng. Tel: +234 9057475353

Abstract

The study appraised the impact of national Security Strategies on Foreign Trade growth using theoretical perspectives. The gravity theory of trade and David Ricardo's theory of comparative cost advantage provided the relevant theoretical foundations. The study reviewed Nigeria's data relating to security expenditure and foreign trade and agrees that while countries should be encouraged to engage in trade, by exporting cost advantageous goods and services and importing cost disadvantageous products and services that these will only thrive in an environment of peace and safety. The study concludes that peace is a panacea to economic development and foreign trade growth and recommends the rejigging of the country's security apparatus and architecture in line with international best practice and standards; Compliance with relevant World trade Organization agreements; and provision of conducive trading and investment environments.

Key words: Comparative Cost Advantage, Countries, International Trade, Foreign Trade, Crime, Social Security,

1.0

INTRODUCTION

In the world today, no country is an Island as they depend on other Nations. Predominantly, in recent times, nothing can be done without an exchange of some values between countries, which involves money, ideas, products (goods and services) and technology. All these have a direct effect on the economy of any nation, either positively or negatively. Foreign trade is an exchange of capital, goods and services across international borders or territories. In most countries, it represents a significant share of gross domestic product (GDP). Countries of the world adopt the principle of comparative advantage which is a powerful tool for understanding how to choose jobs in which to specialize on such as human capital development and technology transfer, as well as which goods a whole country produces for export. Each Country specializes on things that they are best known for. These Countries need goods and services to

satisfy the wants of their people. Production of goods and services requires resources; every nation has only limited resources. No country can produce all the goods and services that it requires. It has to buy from other countries what they don't produce or can produce in lesser quantities than its requirements. Similarly, it sells to other countries the goods that they have in abundance. Countries such as Chad, Morocco, Libya, and Turkey, have a comparative advantage on manufacturing of military wares, ammunitions, military equipments and arms. Most of these countries equally have legalized the use of weapon handling by individuals as self-defense. Carrying and trading with arms in such countries are legal, which equally serves as a source of income generation for them. It is the linkage of theoretical framework on foreign trade liberalization among the participatory countries. Generally, no country is self sufficient, it has to depend upon other countries for importing those goods and services which are either available or are not available in sufficient quantities; a case study is Nigeria as a nation. Arms proliferation is a big and good business because Nigeria does not produce enough arms needed for the defense of its territorial integrity, but rather depends on other countries that have them in abundance at a lower cost.

Nigeria has comparative advantage in the production of crude oil, solid minerals and is ready to exchange these goods and services, for arms, military hard ware and technical supports. Countries with such foreign trade structures are eligible to partner with Nigeria on bilateral trade policies that are in conformity with both countries' trading pattern. Oftentimes, these bilateral trade agreements are associated with negative consequences, individuals and groups indulge in illicit trades such as arm smuggling, crude oil bunkering, oil theft, illegal mining of solid minerals, as a means of survival, thereby sabotaging the country's economic activities for their selfish reasons. The consequences are loss of revenue, depletion of foreign exchange reserves, encouragement of criminality and threat to national security. Most of the smuggled weapons are found in the hands of private individual for criminal activities such as kidnapping, banditry, terrorism (particularly, Boko Haram insurgencies) and other vices. The above negative vices have been responsible for the rise in criminal activities in geometrical proportion in Sub-Sahara regions of the African continent. Although, no country is absolutely crime free, the level of crime in any country is determined by the level of check and balances amongst its citizens and their leaders in government. Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources, with vast area of lands and forest, with diverse religion and culture, these diversities are expected to be the strength of a nation, but rather it is a weakness to the growth. These wide disparities among its member states have resulted in unhealthy economic crisis leading to high level of criminal activities which

in no small measure had affected the co-operative existence of the country as a nation.

Conversely, the issue of national security strategy could exert negative consequences on foreign trade, especially when we view National security as the major part of the foundation for the development of any nation (Otto and Ukpere, 2012; Jackson et al, 2007; McKenna, 2005); this has made it the major focus of any government determined to succeed. Yet national security has remained the major challenge facing developing nations (Dickson and Presley, 2012; Adebakin and Raimi, 2012), affecting its development from many angles especially economically. Every economic trade partner desires the security of their trade transaction, be it in human or material resources, which is the reason every shroud entrepreneur assesses the security situation wherever they intend to trade (Jackson et al, 2007). While an individual in Nigeria may trade with other country possibly because they are out of options, will the foreign seller or exporter be willing to trade with our country considering the present level of insecurity? Nigeria is not the only country experiencing security challenges, as other countries – developed and the developing as well face their own share of the menace. But the differentiating factor between any of these other countries and Nigeria is the security management system employed by each country (Albinus, 2012; Ayuba, 2013). However, Albinus (2012) argued that social insecurity has so increased in Nigeria recently that it has increased the rate of crime, implying that the security situation in Nigeria has not been adequately handled. What then is the advisable security framework to employ in order to boost foreign trade? These problems among others necessitated the ensuing discussions on this subject. National security has always been a subject of interest, because of its relationship with national development as exemplified above, and the economic growth and development of any nation to a considerable extent depends on the level of security enjoyed in that country.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Issues

Basic concepts as related to this research are discussed below

2.1.1 National Security Strategy

As a general definition, national security strategy is a document prepared by Federal Ministry of defense which is periodically reviewed, it spells out national security issues and how the administration plans to deal with them. It is the art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military and information) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security. Institutions such as Nigerian Defense Academy (NDA), Kaduna, NIPSS, Command and Staff College, Jaji, Nigeria Defense College formerly War college are institutions associated with national security strategies of the country (Aleyomi & Nwagwu, 2020).

2.1.2 **Insecurity and the Economy**

The current situation in the northern axis of Nigeria is a very clear indication of the impact of insecurity on the nation's development in general and on the economy in particular. Lives are lost in the bombings, properties destroyed and businesses collapse as some business men who are not indigenes of the affected states leave and migrate to other states. Even the indigenes are taken to refugee camps leading to increase in government expenditure that doesn't yield anything (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013; HRW, 2015). Chikodiri, and Adaeze (2015) argued that the security situation in Nigeria is having adverse effect on the economy which affects how ready we are to join the league of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2030. This is confirmed by the CBN 2012 report which reported for the 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 fiscal years, that the total expenditure set apart for both internal security and defence in the approved budgets were 292.7 billion, 276.5 billion, 422.9 billion and 563.2 billion respectively (CBN, 2012).

2.1.3 National Security and Trade Growth

Insecurity is costly as it stagnates the growth of trade and the development of any country where it exists (Essien et al, 2015). Dixit (2009) argued that when two countries are into trade relationship, they are less likely to go into war with each other, which inversely applies that if two countries are at war, they are less likely to establish a trade relationship. This argument was adopted from the theory of self-enforcing cooperation in repeated games, which has been confirmed by many researchers who argued on the conflict between countries and its relationship with trade; submitting that more war leads to less trade, less trade leads to more wars (Martin, Mayer & Thoenig, 2008; Long, 2003; Long and Leeds, 2006) . Nevertheless, national security, being the security situation within the borders of the country and its impact on the growth of foreign trade, is not different from what has been observed from the works of the above researchers. Insecurity in Nigeria did not start today, neither is the country a monopoly of it, but the challenge is its rapid growth and sophistication and the recent politicization of even a security situation as serious as terrorism in the case of Boko Haram (Godly & Wilfred, 2012). Insecurity in Nigeria have manifested in different forms which include kidnapping (of especially expatriates) for ransom, pipeline vandalism, Militancy, rape, political violence and terrorism (Eme, 2011). It is the views of (Eme, 2011), that terrorist activities have great effect on international business and according to him, this is evidenced in Nigeria. This assertion has been supported by many other research reports which came out with the conclusion that insecurity in Nigeria has negative effect on trade by scaring away investors, draining economic resources, reducing productive capacity, increasing cost of production, and ultimately taking away lives (Otto, 2008). Apart from lives lost,

infrastructures are destroyed at the wake of terrorism and conflicts which lead to capital loss as well and consequently affect negatively trade behaviours (Gassebner, 2005). It leads to countries and companies withdrawing their trade investments from countries with such security challenges like in Nigeria.

2.1.2 Foreign Trade

Foreign Trade is the mutual exchange of services or goods between international regions and borders. There are varieties such as import and export. They are important concepts for the national economy. Countries set goals based on these concepts. It could be defined as the exchange of capital goods, and services across international borders or territories (Osadume & Sunday, 2019).

2.2 THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

There are several theories supporting international trade, however, the two undermentioned theories are most profound in advancing the arguments in favour of our study;

Gravity Theory of Trade

In attempts to globalize trade, Jan Tinbergen (1962) stressed that the size of bilateral trade glows between two countries can be approximated by employing the gravity equation derived from Newton's theory of gravity. While planets are attracted to each other in proportion to their sizes and proximity, so too are countries. Relative size is determined by current gross domestic product (GDP) and economic proximity is determined by trade costs - the more economically distant the greater the trade costs.

The gravity model suggests that relative economic size attracts countries to trade with each other, while greater distance weakens the attractiveness. This theory came after comparative cost advantage and Hecksher-Ohlin theories. The gravity theory of trade explains pattern of trade between two countries with small size and proximity. The Richardian model, explains trade patterns in term of difference in the distribution of technology, and the Heckscher-Ohlin Model relies on differences in factor endowments among countries as the basis for trade. In these pre-gravity models, the size of an economy was not considered significant. This is the main focus of the gravity theory.

The gravity model is now seen as the workhouse of trade theory, and especially in terms of forecasting the impact of changes in terms of trade policy on trade costs. The model is flexible in the distance between countries which includes a range of relevant variables such as cultural and political differences between trading nations.

The gravity model has provided the underlying theoretical framework for forecasting the effects on trade flows such as the effect of United Kingdom (UK) leaving the EU and Nigeria trade

pattern among its neighboring countries including Niger, Togo, Republic of Benin, Ghana, etc. The significance of this theory to our study is that it points to the reasons why countries are attracted to trade with each other; hence, countries tend to gravitate towards each other or away from each other, in trading relations based on their gross domestic product sizes and proximity to each other.

Comparative Cost Advantage Theory of Trade

This theory was propounded by David Ricardo (1772 -1823) Ricardo's main concern was the distribution of wealth among nations contrary to Adam Smith school of thought. His primary concern was to propound the law which regulates the distribution of the produce of the earth into rent, wages and profits. The shift from investigating the nature and causes of wealth to its distribution was due to Ricardo's love for abstract reasoning. Further, economic conditions of the British had undergone changes and the immediate concern was not the acceleration of economic growth but the distribution of the fruits of economic growth in a proper manner. The theory of comparative cost is the major contribution of Ricardo to the theory of foreign trade. It states that every country will produce those goods in the production of which it is favorably placed on account of its climate, the qualities of its other natural resources, the characteristics of its people etc. By concentrating on those goods in which it has special advantages, a country produces more than it requires for its own needs and exchanges the surplus with other countries for goods and services which it cannot produce. In other words, every country produces and exports goods in which it has cost advantages and imports those goods and services in which it has cost disadvantage.

The implication of this theory for our study is that countries will engage in trading activities with each other, when they perceive the existence of peace in their trading partner's country and such trade commodities have cost advantages to their mutual economies; this will engender the safety of their investments and trade returns (Essien et al, 2015).

Implications of Theory of Comparative Cost Advantage Assumptions Vs. National Security Strategy

i) **Labour is the only productive factor.**

Countries with cheap labour, transfers these labor to other countries that need them the most, China, India are blessed with abundant human resources. They prefer transferring this human capital as expatriates to countries that needs their services. Nigeria as a country is filled with foreigners, Indians; Chinese expatriates are virtually in all the sub-sector of the Nigerian economy including railway transportations, Petrochemical, Pharmaceuticals Products etc. The railway construction project that is being

handled by Chinese is a critical example, Indians indulge in importation of Petrol Chemical Products, Pharmaceutical Products in Nigeria. The Eleme Petroleum chemical industry in Port-Harcourt in River State is fully controlled by Indians and Lebanese foreigners, they have taken over the technical franchise of the company, acquiring major shares. Most of these expatriates will not migrate to Nigeria if they perceive that their peace will be threaten due to security concerns and will invariably affect bilateral trade between the nations.

The acquisitions of these key industrial facilities are because they have comparative cost advantage in the production of this labour force and technical know-how. This cost comparative advantage, has adverse negative consequences on capital flight, importation of fake drugs, product dumping, there by killing the infant indigenous industries in Nigeria. The long run negative effect on this bilateral trade agreement is the over exposure of third world countries to illicit foreign trade transaction because of the comparative advantage in terms of cost and human capital, such illicit businesses as arm smuggling and military hardware transactions, which ends up in the hands of criminals, kidnappers, terrorists, banditry, Bako Haram having negative national security implications in Nigeria.

ii) **Production is Subject to the Law of Constant Returns.**

As each country continues to produce more of the goods that is best known in production, overtime the aftermath effect of the negative homogenous effect is diminishing marginal utility, the best option is to find out countries that need these products more and has high cost of comparative disadvantage to ally with on bilateral trade transactions. Often time, this is the easiest route for arm smuggling, crude oil theft, piracy and other negative security implication to the nation.

iii) **Factors of production are assumed to be mobile within a country but immobile between Countries.**

Abundant human resources in a country have made factors of production mobile within the country and technology transfer inevitable. These technology transfers have positive consequent, which result to economic growth to the countries involved. It is assumed that the positive effect will out-weight the negative effect to the country, often time this is not always the case, Nigeria as a country is a case in point.

iv) **Barrier to International Trade.**

Ricardo advocates for free foreign trade movement, this was enriched on, African Union, ECOWAS trade agreement treaty, member country are expected to have free movement of goods and service among its member countries. Not quite clear.

V) T**wo Countries and Two Commodities**

Ricardo theory was formulated on the principles of two countries and two commodities in exchange, in order to minimize the unhealthy rivalry among the competing and exchanging nations. This unhealthy rivalry had affected the economic negatively, with its adverse effect on national security strategies.

3.0 Risk and Cost Implication of Trade on National Security Strategy.

Strategists must consider risks as they design their strategies, risk entails the probability and severity of loss linked to hazards. With respect to strategy, risks are elements that could go wrong. Comparative cost advantage on foreign trade has its risk implication on national security strategy. As the general definition states, the severity of a risk is determined by both the likelihood of the occurrence and the magnitude of damage that would ensue if the risk become manifest (Onuoha & Ogbonanya, 2020). The manifestations are explicitly, empirically reviewed in line with the recent happenings in Nigeria.

Economic Implication on National Security Strategy

According to Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) Economic Report, dollar deposit by Nigerians in banks, at hand has exceeded the 30 per cent threshold approved by international monetary fund (Yusuf & Ekundayo, 2018) The CBN economists said Nigerians have been accumulating foreign currencies to protect their wealth from naira volatility and surging inflation. The Bureau De Change, are very good in receiving dollars and pounds in exchange for naira, but not ready to exchange naira for dollars and pounds. (Yusuf & Ekundayo, 2018).

Federal government is set to arraign about 400 suspected sponsors and financiers of Boko Haram, ISWAP terrorists who were arrested by security operatives last month. The businessmen included Bureau De Change operators and were arrested in Abuja, Adamawa, Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Lagos, Sokoto and Zamfara. If the suspects are properly tried and found guilty, it will be a major success because they will help in cutting off the funds Boko Haram, ISWAP gets from these alleged sponsors and financiers and on the long run, reduce their activities to the barest minimum. (THE PUNCH, Newspaper, 5th May, 2021). Huge amount of monies are paid as ransom in Naira, and taken into the money market for conversion, as dollars and pounds relatively, which translates that more monies are in foreign currency, than Naira value, weakening the exchange value of the country's currency. The porous monetary transmission mechanism has made these illicit transactions very perfect and it has weakened the financial system of the country. These criminal activities are very

lucrative, kidnapped citizens of the country pay handsomely to secure the release of their families from the kidnappers. This has attracted illegal immigrations of these rebels, militia into the country, taking full control of abandoned vast forest reserve for the illicit business. Recently, 20th April, 2021, Chadian President was killed in a battle to eradicate militia rebels from the region (Daily Trust, Newspapers, 20/04/21). This ill activity does not contribute to the economic growth of the nations.

Other economic implications include eroding the naira value with continuous appreciation of the US dollar against the naira, this will make value of our trade exports to fall and value of import will be higher. The activities of corrupt politicians and terrorist financiers, will make dollar scarce, cost of importer will go up astronomically and fall in value of trade exports (Osadume & Sunday, 2018).

Educational implication on National Security Strategy.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2019), highlights that 10 states- Bauchi, Niger, Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have eight million out of school children. UNICEF advocated, there should be more engagements with the Northern Governors Forum in addressing the challenges impeding the full implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, as a way of reducing the burden of 10.5 million out of school children (Monguno, 2019). This strategy is a way of preventing the youth from illicit trading, human trafficking, recruitment into Boko Haram sect, kidnapping, banditry activities to mention a few, Contrarily to this strategy, the activities of Boko Haram, kidnapping, Banditry has advanced to the stage of kidnapping of secondary and tertiary institution students at an alarming rate. On 11th December, 2020, Government science secondary school was invaded, over 300 school boys was abducted and taken to a forest in Zamfara.

According to THE PUNCH, Newspaper, Nigeria, 39 students of the Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation, Afaka, Kaduna were kidnapped by bandits in the state. 10 students were earlier released, while two others escaped from captivity, the remaining 29 students were released on 5th May, 2021, after 56 days in captivity. On 20th April, 2021 night, kidnappers invaded Greenfield University and kidnapped some students, 3 out of the undisclosed number kidnapped were shot dead and their remains deposited in a morgue in Kaduna after their bodies were seen at a village bush close to their campus., it will be recalled that, in the kidnap operations a staff of the university was shot dead at the scene of the abduction leaving the students with no choice than to cooperate. The effect of this on foreign trade will include loss of foreign direct investments, foreign developmental aids and grants will be lost, loss of educational

tourism, withdrawal of foreign educational exchange programmes and scholarships (Essien et al, 2015).

Amnesty on Repentant Criminals, its Implication on National Security Strategy

Government gives these criminal offenders the solid landing ground, given amnesty in the name of "repentant militant". Recent report shows that repentant bandits who masterminded Kankara School Girls abduction had return to forest.

Amnesty granted to repentant Boko Haram fighters and bandits in a bid to persuade them to drop arms has proved not to be effective. Instead, it has arguably turned into another avenue to siphon billions of Naira, and also give more funds to these criminals. The government has given amnesty to a good number of Boko Haram fighters and Bandits all on the ground that they have turned a new leaf. But this has often turned out to be a deceit as most of them went back to their old life after the amnesty and has led to increased criminal tendencies and scaring away of potential foreign trade opportunities (Gassebner, 2005).

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND REVIEW

Table 1

NIGERIA FOREIGN TRADE AND SECURITY EXPENDITURE VOLUME (2010-2020)

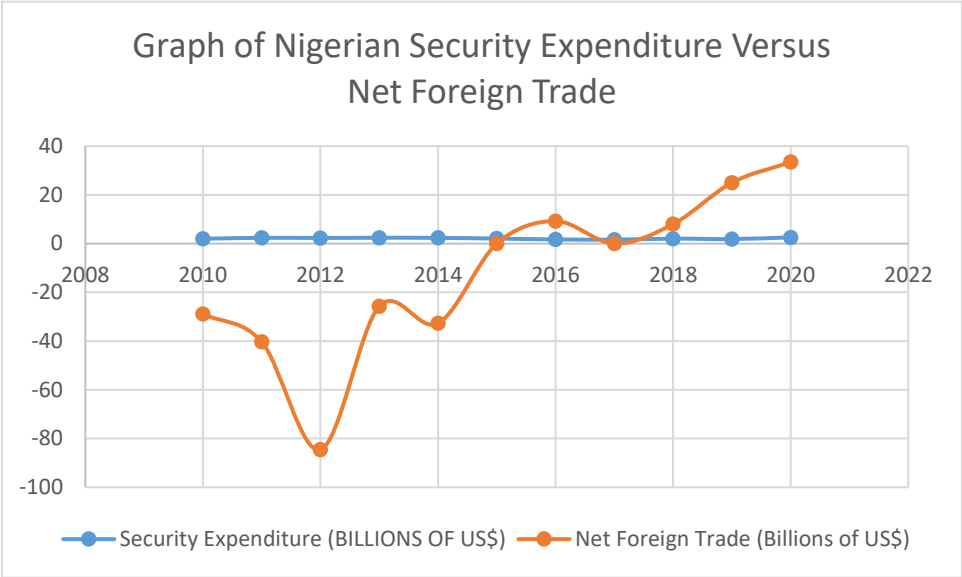
YEAR	Security Expenditure (BN US$)	Net Foreign Trade (BN US$)
2020	2.56	33.46
2019	1.86	25.01
2018	2.04	7.99
2017	1.62	0.01
2016	1.72	9.25
2015	2.07	0
2014	2.35	-32.71
2013	2.41	-25.69
2012	2.31	-84.54
2011	2.38	-40.32
2010	1.99	-28.91

Source: World Bank Group Database (2021)

Table 1 shows the volume of Nigeria's Security expenditure volume measured in billions of US Dollar against the country's Net foreign trade volume between 2010 to 2020. Prior to 2015, the net foreign trade volume was negative implying that imports exceeded export volume for the period under consideration. Within that same period, expenditure on national security was in excess of US$2.3 Billion average per

annum. However, from 2015 to 2020, the net foreign trade value had become positive, with export volume and value exceeding import value and average security expenditure between these periods dropped to US$1.98 Billion, translating to a savings of US$320 million.

Figure 1



Source: Author's statistical computation, 2021

Figure 1 is a translation of table 1 and shows in graphical output, the nature of relationship between Nigeria Security expenditure and Foreign trade, which is an oscillatory relationship in deficit position prior to 2015 from 2015 to 2020, we saw an upward positive relationship between the two variables, which will be quite instructive for further investigation (Essien et al, 2015).

5.0

CONCLUSION

The school of thought on comparative cost advantage and gravity theory of trade on which this study is anchored, providing the theoretical foundations for our discussions as an offshoot of the national security strategy of the government shows that foreign trade will thrive in an environment of peace and security. Foreign trade exchanges will grow and ginger corresponding economic development when foreign trade partners perceive and are assured of a peaceful trading environment and are confident of earning their investment returns. This position is solidly supported by the selected theoretical frameworks.

A further review of the expenditures on security by the government and the corresponding foreign trade receipts, shows that there is a positive correlation between effective security

management and foreign trade growth. The available data reviewed shows that the increasing emphasis of the current democratic administration in Nigeria on security, has contributed positively to foreign trade growth with attendant reduction in security expenditures. The researchers believe that several reasons could have been responsible for this security expenditure reductions including but not limited to reduction in wastages and plugging corruption holes in security expenditures.

The following recommendations arising from this study, are relevant for the government's immediate considerations;

1. The government is admonished to regularly rejig the nation's security apparatus and architecture, to ensure they meet international world best standard and practices at all times. This is important because peace is considered essential for a thriving foreign trade growth and development.
2. The government is admonished that in exercising her national security strategy mandate, must do so with reference to relevant World Trade Organization agreements, to ensure compliance with international rules of trade and tariffs.
3. The national government is urged to provide conducive trade and investment environments at all times to encourage local, foreign and bilateral trade growth.
4. The government should strengthen her various institutions to operate with defined limit of independence, in dealing with national issues of corruption, sectional agitations, terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and other negative vices, capable of disturbing the national peace of the country and destabilizing her foreign trade agenda.

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