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### A Study of Certification Requirements, Teacher Salaries, and Teacher Benefits

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*Ouachita Baptist University*

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A STUDY OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS,  
TEACHER SALARIES, AND TEACHER BENEFITS

Joyce Mason

Ouachita University  
Special Studies  
Secondary Education  
Dr. A. B. Wetherington

May 19, 1969

Box 715 OBU  
Arkadelphia, Arkansas  
May 19, 1969

State Department of Education

Gentlemen

I am a student at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. At the present time, I am engaged in a special study in the Secondary Education Department. (Special Studies is a requirement of students participating in the University's Honors Program). The study I am undertaking deals with the requirements, benefits, and demands for teachers in the various states.

Would you be good enough to answer the following questions for me or send literature relating to the information that I desire.

1. What are the specific requirements for being certified to teach in a secondary school in your state?
2. What types of teacher certificates are granted?
3. What would be the beginning salary, in most schools, for a business teacher with no experience and a bachelor's degree from an accredited school?
4. What type of state tenure or contract provisions is in effect?
5. What extra benefits, such as provisions for leaves of absence, hospitalization, insurance protection, etc., are offered?
6. What is the common method of distributing salaries?
7. What is the current need for business teachers?

I would greatly appreciate your help. Thank you.

Sincerely

Joyce Mason

A STUDY OF TEACHER CERTIFICATION,  
TEACHER SALARIES, AND TEACHER BENEFITS

A copy of the preceding letter was sent to the state department of education in each of the fifty states. This report is based upon the information obtained from the replies received.

In some cases, certain questions were not answered or the answers were not sufficient; therefore, additional information was obtained from educational books dealing with certification requirements, teacher salaries, and teacher benefits.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

In general, a certificate is a teacher's license which enables him to teach in the public schools of the certifying state. Certification of the teaching personnel is a measure designed to foster the growth of a quality system of education. With a few exceptions, certificates are issued by the various state departments of education. "Certification authority reflects the belief that the education interests of the state should be safeguarded by the establishment of requirements which will determine the fitness of applicants to teach in public schools."<sup>1</sup>

In the earliest days of the development of the American public school system there were very few requirements for teachers actually set down in the laws of the various states.

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<sup>1</sup>G. K. Hodenfield and T. M. Stinnett, The Education of Teachers, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), p. 97.

Changes in teacher certification were slow to come after America won its independence. Gradually there came a movement toward state supervision of public schools, but it was not until after the Civil War that the authority to issue a certificate began to move slowly from local and county authorities to the states. Local communities and school officials were reluctant to release their authority for certifying teachers. This accounts largely for the slow progress made in teacher certification.

State certificates were issued on the basis of written examinations, usually without regard to the prospective teacher's own education. It was not until 1907 that the first state required a high school diploma as a condition for certification. Up until this time, only a few ambitious and professionally serious individuals attended what were commonly called normal schools. These schools served essentially the same function as do business schools today.

The years after 1910 brought new rules and regulations in certification. The standards were tightened and graduation from college became more important, even though it was some time before courses in professional education were required.

World War I reversed the trend toward insistence on better teachers and better teaching; but with the depression and general unemployment of the 1930's, there came a surplus of teachers and a continuing rise in standards.

Improvements made during the depression were wiped out with the effects of World War II. Teachers flocked to war industries and the number of students enrolled in teacher education programs dropped

off. A teacher shortage developed which this country has never overcome.

Today, all the states have laws governing certification of teachers in their respective areas. The development of certification requirements in each state has resulted in considerable differences among the states in regard to the amount of training required and the types of certificates granted.

Many requirements, other than those relating to educational requirements, are prescribed by law in a large number of the states:

1. Thirty-two states require that the applicant be a citizen of the United States.
2. Twenty-five states require the signing of an oath of allegiance to the state and the United States.
3. Forty-two states require a recommendation from the college or previously employing official.
4. Eighteen states require no minimum age; twenty-eight states require a minimum age of eighteen.

The minimum educational requirements for secondary teaching certificates in each of the states are listed in Table I.

TABLE I  
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION FOR  
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

<u>State</u>	<u>Degree or No. of Semester hours</u>	<u>Professional Education Required, Semester hours</u>	<u>Student Teaching Required, Semester hours</u>
Alabama	B	21	6
Alaska	B	18	3
Arizona	5	22	6
Arkansas	B	18	6
California	5	15	6
Colorado	B	AC	AC
Connecticut	B	18	6
Delaware	B	18	6

## CONTINUED-

<u>State</u>	<u>Degree or No. of Semester hours</u>	<u>Professional Education Required, Semester hours</u>	<u>Student Teaching Required, Semester hours</u>
Florida	B	20	6
Georgia	B	18	6
Hawaii	5	18	AC
Idaho	116	20	6
Illinois	B	16	5
Indiana	B	24	6
Iowa	B	20	5
Kansas	B	20	5
Kentucky	B	17	8
Louisiana	B	18	4
Maine	B	18	6
Maryland	B	18	6
Massachusetts	B	12	2
Michigan	B	20	5
Minnesota	B	18	4
Mississippi	B	18	6
Missouri	B	20	5
Montana	B	16	AC
Nebraska	B	AC	AC
Nevada	B	20	6
New Hampshire	B	12	6
New Jersey	B	15	150 CH
New Mexico	B	18	6
New York	B	12	6
North Carolina <sup>9</sup>	B	24	90-150 CH
North Dakota	B	16	6
Ohio	B	17	6
Oklahoma	B	21	6
Oregon	B	12	6
Pennsylvania	B	18	6
Rhode Island	B	18	6
South Carolina	B	18	6
South Dakota	B	20	6
Tennessee	B	24	4
Texas	B	12	6
Utah	B	21	8
Vermont	B	18	6
Virginia	B	15	6
Washington	B	AC	AC
West Virginia	B	20	6
Wisconsin	B	18	5
Wyoming	B	20	AC

\*AC means approved curriculum, B means bachelor's degree, 5 means bachelor's degree plus a fifth year of appropriate preparation, CH means clock hours

It is nice to think of the day when all states will have the same number and kind of certificates and the same standards for acquiring them. "But until states agree on common goals and the pathways to these goals, national certification will remain a dream-like Utopian thing--always out of reach."<sup>2</sup>

#### TYPES OF TEACHER CERTIFICATES

In the early days of public education and teacher certification, it was common practice to grant "blanket" certificates to teachers. These permitted them to teach virtually all subjects in all grades. Today, a definite distinction is made between the certificates granted to elementary and secondary school teachers. Certificates are awarded in accordance with the levels or subjects to be taught or the specialized professional practice for which the individual has prepared.

Certificates may be divided into three basic groups--temporary professional certificates, advanced professional certificates, and life-time or permanent professional certificates. In addition, most states grant a variety of temporary or provisional teaching permits to individuals who do not qualify for regular certification. The temporary professional certificate is usually granted to beginning teachers. It usually specifies a limited period of validity. After this time, it may be renewed or exchanged for a higher type. Many states grant the permanent certificate upon evidence of a specified number of years of successful teaching and additional professional work. This certificate remains valid only so long as the holder

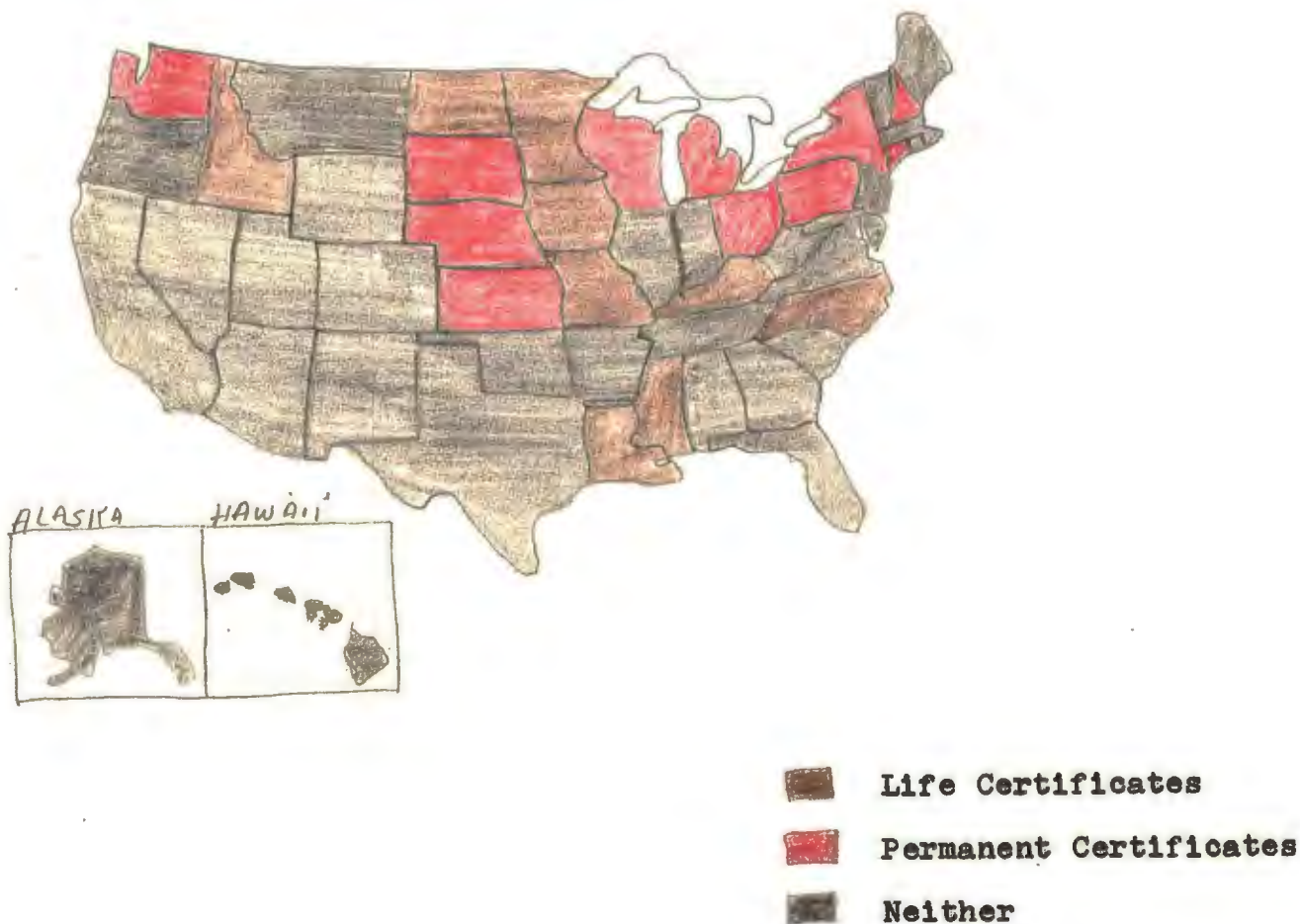
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<sup>2</sup>George Cressman and Harold Benda, Public Education in America, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1961), p. 106.



teaches continuously or is not out of teaching beyond a specified number of years. There is a current trend away from granting life certificates. Table II gives a general idea of the number of states which indicated that they still issued life certificates or that they issued permanent certificates.

TABLE II  
STATES GRANTING LIFE OR PERMANENT CERTIFICATES



## T E A C H E R   S A L A R I E S

The salary status of teachers, especially since World War II, has been a matter of increasing concern both nationally and locally. Since teachers require the same basic necessities of life and have the same desires as all normal people, it is not possible for them to render maximum service, regardless of ability and preparation, if their income is not sufficient for them to feel economically secure.

In recent years, professional organizations, such as the NEA and state associations, have provided leadership in movements for providing better salaries for teachers. "In resolutions adopted in 1966, the NEA expressed the belief that teachers' salaries should compare favorably with income in other professions."<sup>3</sup>

Such leadership has led to wide acceptance of salary schedules. Practically all states have salary schedules today. The tendency is toward the single salary schedule that provides the same salary for equal work where the preparation and qualifications are the same, regardless of sex, dependents, or whether the position is in a high school or elementary school.

Salary schedules vary with the cost of living and wealth of the district and, to some extent, with the size.

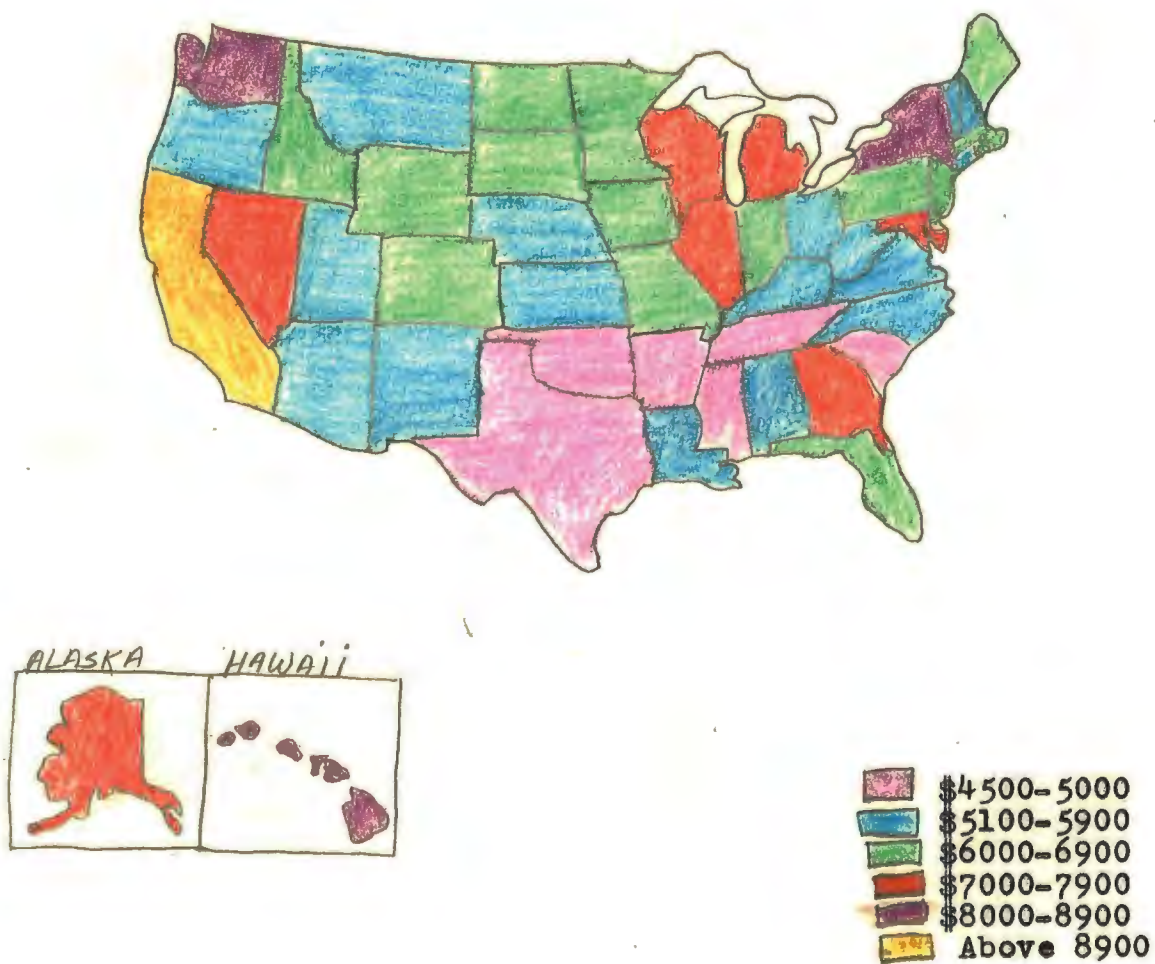
Naturally, the average of salaries paid change from year to year. Table III shows the estimated beginning salary for a business teacher with no experience and a bachelor's degree from an accredited school in the state.

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Richey, Planning For Teaching, (St. Louis: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968), p. 253.

TABLE III

ESTIMATED BEGINNING SALARIES



## DISTRIBUTION OF SALARIES

The predominant practice in paying teachers has been to distribute their salaries over the period in which the school is in session. Recently the trend has been moving toward paying teachers on a 10-month or 12-month basis. In the majority of the states replying teachers are paid over a 10-month period.

## T E N U R E

The term "teacher tenure" is used in referring to the length of time that a teacher remains in a particular school. In another sense, it refers to the prospects that a competent teacher has of remaining in a position without being dismissed for unjustifiable reasons. "It has probably contributed more to the stability and general health of teaching than any single factor."<sup>4</sup>

Teacher tenure has not always been as strong as it is today. Hiring and firing of teachers in the past depended more upon a school official's liking for a teacher than upon a careful examination of the person's competency for teaching. The teacher's position was often subject to the whims or ignorant motives of persons who had little or no concern for the welfare of children.

Today thirty-seven states have tenure laws. Those states which do not have tenure laws have some kind of tenure provision in the form of annual contracts, continuing contracts or contracts that extend for a definite period of time.

Tenure regulations, like certification regulations, vary in details from state to state; but a teacher usually has tenure after

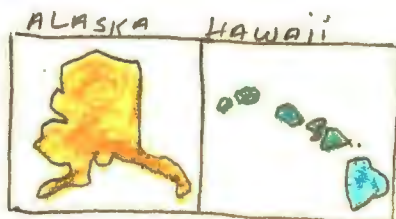
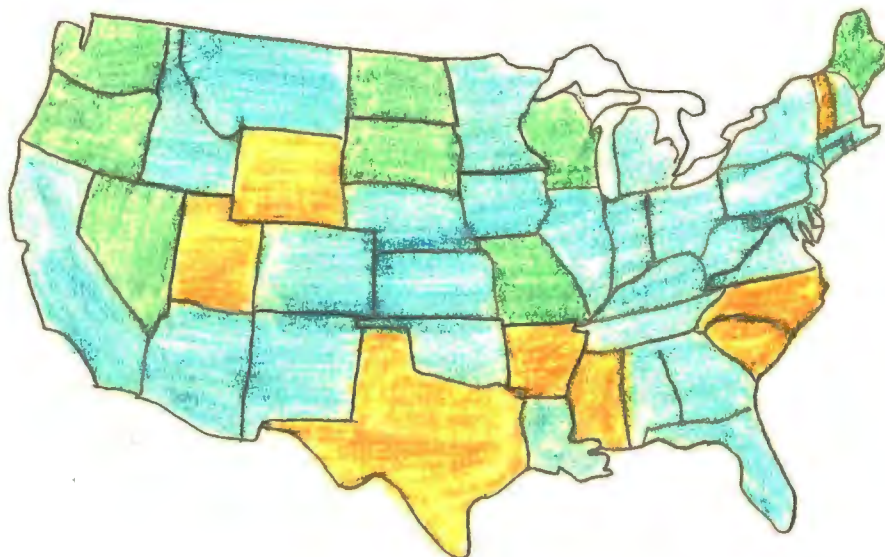
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<sup>4</sup>James Stone and Frederick Schneider, Foundations of Education, (New York: Thomas Crowell Co., 1965), p. 308.

three years of teaching in the state. Table IV gives a picture of the status of tenure in each of the fifty states.

TABLE IV

## STATUS OF TEACHER TENURE



## T E A C H E R   B E N E F I T S

"With the widespread and increasing concern for the welfare of the employee and the recognition of the practical value of this concern to the employer, there has been a marked increase in teacher benefits, such as groups insurance, hospitalization, medical-surgical plans, and the like."<sup>5</sup>

Retirement. Today, the span of life has so significantly increased that it is only normal for us to be concerned about financial provisions for old age.

Retirement systems have been set up for some time. Some were not altogether sound in the beginning, but revisions were made and systems reconstructed so that these programs have been strengthened.

Since 1946 all states and territories of the U. S. have had at least one law providing retirement benefits for teachers who have reached a stated age or have served for a stated length of time. There are considerable variations in the provisions of these laws. Currently, there is a trend toward state-wide laws, but most retirement systems are operated by the local school districts.

Attempts are presently being made to increase the retirement allowance to provide a more comfortable living for the teacher during his retirement.

Since the replies to the question pertaining to retirement systems were few, I should like to discuss the retirement systems of Alaska and Washington as examples.

Alaska's Teachers' Retirement System is administered by the State

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<sup>5</sup>Walter Beggs, The Education of Teachers (New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1965), p. 123.

Department of Administration. Membership in the system is a condition of contract for all teachers, except for those whose age and experience are such that they would not be able to complete 15 years of creditable service before July 1 following their 65th birthday. Every eligible teacher is required to contribute 5% of his salary to the Retirement Fund. A teacher may elect to contribute an additional 1% of his salary to the fund in order to participate in the survivor's benefit or spouse's pension program.

Up to 10 years of public school experience outside Alaska are creditable for retirement purposes.

A teacher withdrawing from teaching in the Alaska public school system with two years or less of service in the state, will receive a refund of all his contributions. A teacher withdrawing after completing more than 2 years of service in the state will receive a refund of all his contributions plus interest prescribed in accordance with the Retirement Act. The Alaska Teachers' Retirement Plan contains provisions for disability retirement benefits.

Washington State Teachers' Retirement System is a joint-contributory system, with the members and the state contributing jointly toward a variety of benefits and sharing equally in the operating costs of the system. Earnings on investments accrue to the benefit of the members of the system in a variety of ways and help to meet the state's pension liability.

The program of the Teachers' Retirement System is more than a retirement program, since it offers a variety of benefits for teachers of all ages. The members contributions, in effect, constitute a savings program, to which interest earnings are credited and compounded annually.

In addition to the retirement benefits, there are disability benefits, survivor benefits, and death benefits.

All full-time public school teachers are required to be members of this system. Members contribute 5% of all salaries and wages paid. Contributions are based on gross salary before any reductions. These contributions are credited to the member's annuity fund; and, together with interest earnings on the account, provide an annuity at retirement, a cash refund in the event of death before retirement or termination of service and withdrawal by the member.

#### Leaves of Absence

Various types of leaves are granted by the states. They are usually classified under these three headings: personal and family, professional, and civic.

Sick Leave. The laws of 36 states make statutory provisions for teachers' sick leaves. Most common practices seem to be the granting of sick leaves with full pay for periods of from 5-10 days. Such sick leaves, if not specified in state law, are usually part of the teacher's contract. There is a tendency to make sick leave cumulative from one year to the next.

Sabbatical Leave. The term "sabbatical leave" originated from the practice of granting an extended leave to teachers every seventh year and the seven-year period of service is usually a requirement today for sabbatical leave eligibility. Extended leaves for a semester or full year are often desirable for the improvement of the teacher's services to the school. Probably the most frequent purpose for which leaves of this type are granted is for graduate study or for travel. Sometimes full salary may be paid, but more often it is half salary or thereabout. Sometimes no salary is given; the position is merely



open. A growing number of school systems provide for sabbatical leave. Nineteen states currently have statutory provisions for these leaves.

Answers to this question were also limited. Delaware's provision for sabbatical leave serves as an example.

The Teacher Handbook of Delaware states:

Fully certified professional employees, with 7 years of service, 5 years in the employ of the leave-granting district, are eligible for sabbatical leave. Leaves may be for one semester or a full year. The state will allow a minimum of \$1000 and a maximum of \$2000 for leave.

Other major provisions include:

1. The employee shall not engage in full-time gainful employment while on leave.
2. The employee shall agree to return to service for a period of one year following the leave.
3. The employee shall present evidence of his professional improvement.

#### D E M A N D

The replies to the question regarding demand for the business teacher were too few to determine the real need. Several states replied that they had no need whatsoever; others said that there was a great need in their particular area.

Although there is a tendency to feel that present methods in certification, salaries, and benefits are inadequate or inefficient, the fact that we have made tremendous progress in these fields cannot be overlooked.

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