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This Issue in Brief

Community Service: Toward Program Definition.—Over the past two decades, community service work order programs have been established at various points in the adult and juvenile justice systems. On the basis of detailed study of 14 community service programs, authors Joe Hudson and Burt Galalway describe a detailed community service program model. Key elements of program structure are described, including inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes, along with their linking logic. According to the authors, preparation of this type of program model is a necessary prerequisite for sound management practices, as well as for developing and implementing program evaluation research.

Identifying the Actual and Preferred Goals of Adult Probation.—The field of adult probation has undergone considerable change over the last 10 years, reflecting a perceived public sentiment which emphasizes enforcement and community protection. As a result, the goals of probation have shifted. Based on a survey of adult probation professionals in two midwestern states, author Thomas Ellsworth confirms the existence of a dual goal structure in probation, encompassing both rehabilitation and enforcement. Further, the study results reveal that probation professionals prefer a dual goal structure in administering probation services.

Sharing the Credit, Sharing the Blame: Managing Political Risks in Electronically Monitored House Arrest.—For the last several years, electronically monitored house arrest has been the topic of extensive commentary in the literature. Scant attention, however, has been paid to the political environment in which such programs must exist. Using a brief case study of one county in Ohio, author James L. Walker suggests a four-part implementation strategy aimed at reducing the risks to the political actors involved in these programs. He concludes that only if political considerations are properly managed will efficient and legitimate use of electronic monitoring programs be likely.

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Prison Escapes and Community Consequences: Results of A Case Study*

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Introduction

YEARS OF some effort and much rhetoric about rehabilitation and reform have had little effect on the central functions most Americans expect from prisons; security and control continue to dominate these expectations and, accordingly, continue to dominate the practices of correctional professionals. The significance of this prevailing ideology is seldom more apparent than in the expression of fears and reassurances that accompany siting of a new prison. Siting decisions invariably provoke public questions about numbers of escapes and usual escapee behaviors. These, along with other concerns about crime rates, inmate families, and community image and lifestyle, become the issues that corrections officials must address to attain community acceptance of the facility.

This scenario of concern and response is increasingly common under today's conditions of expanded prison construction. Nineteen eighty-eight was the 14th consecutive year in which the number of state and Federal prisoners reached a new high, a trend the Bureau of Justice Statistics claims ". . .translates into a nationwide need for 800 new prison beds per week (1989, p.1)." With most states engaged in the building or the planning of new facilities (Camp & Camp, 1987), the questions raised by residents of potential prison sites heighten the focus on corrections and its community impacts. Also, while many communities are now actually seeking out prisons, these open doors are always contingent on reassurance of minimal risks to community security and comfort (Pagel, 1988; Baumbach, 1984).

Data from a variety of sources, including several recent studies on prison impact, is available to rebut most concerns and reinforce positive expectations of prison effects (Lidman, 1988; Abrams et al., 1987; Rogers & Haimes, 1987; Smykla, 1984; Zarchikoff et al., 1981). The dominant finding of all these studies is that the most notable effect of prisons on communities is their contributions to the local economy; most commonly feared negative consequences either do not occur or appear to be minimal. Breaches of institutional security through escapes are relatively uncommon except in minimum security facilities, with little or no local crime attributable to escapees. This supports the conclusion of Abrams and her associates about prison impact that "risk to residents in the communities surrounding the facilities from inmates or escapees is small (1987, p. 172)."

Elsewhere I have argued that opposition to prisons can best be understood as objection to undesirable community and lifestyle change which prisons seem likely to bring to communities (Carlson, 1988a). These effects are most notable when the potential site is small and rural, conditions that fit the majority of prison locales (Carlson, 1987). Escapes and their consequences are thought to lead to such changes and other negatives and thus serve as ready illustrations of how life will be different with a prison. Prison opponents use arguments about prison security and risk to safety to express their worries about how the facility might alter their own personal security and increase their sense of risk in their community. For opponents, these lifestyle changes are more significant than potential prison-induced improvements in the local economy.

The perception of risks, whether from a prison or a nuclear power plant or some other "hazardous" facility, is ultimately a judgment based on cultural values (Gross & Rayner, 1985; Slovic et al., 1979). Calculating the significance of such risks is not a simple matter of rationally computing objectively probable harm or loss against counter-balancing benefits; the weighing of these items is not standard, and differing evaluations of their importance will lead to differing conclusions. Slovic and his associates point out that hard evidence about the probability of hazard does not eliminate varying assessments, since people ". . . respond not just to numbers but also to qualitative aspects of hazards (1979, p. 38)." The claim therefore, that two or three or five escapees who promptly leave town are not worthy of anxiety is

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ultimately itself a matter of perspective. Risk evaluation cannot take place without some prior judgments about what matters and how much.

Such judgments continue to be made even after the prison is in place. There is indication that despite the objective findings of prison benefits, some residents of extant prison communities experience prison effects as largely negative (Carlson, 1988b; Maxim & Plecas, 1983; Zarchikoff et al., 1981). Worries about personal safety and perceptions of a loss of security are significant aspects of such unfavorable assessments, whether or not these are empirically founded: Zarchikoff notes that residents of the Canadian prison community he and his associates studied were more worried about personal safety than residents of a comparison town, despite lower crime rates (1981).

Before a prison is sited and after it is in place, community residents are engaged in a process of evaluating its costs and its benefits. During siting, these effects are abstract and unexperienced. Their implications are judged according to the values individuals assign to them. Once the prison is operational, people have actual events and experiences to include in their equation making, but these are still filtered through the relative values assigned to each. Thus, experiences and their relative significance continue to be subject to interpretation.

This article is an account of a single new prison community and the various ways its residents have responded to the security issues brought by their prison. It provides case data on several prison escapes and their community consequences, information not usually cited when escapes are discussed. It also is an exploration of how pre-prison concerns coincide with post-prison happenings to yield quite divergent responses, and finally, the article suggests how resident attitudes might change over time to enable those living in a prison town to be more satisfied with the institution's presence.

The Study

Information for this article was collected during the course of a multi-year National Institute of Justice-funded study of a new 500 bed medium security prison in Washington State. Research started in 1985, before the facility opened, and concluded in 1989 after it had operated for 1 year as a 99 bed minimum security institution and over 2 years as medium security. Data were collected through participant observation in the community, interviews with community residents, and several surveys. Three of these surveys are referenced in this article: 1986 and 1988 community surveys of all households, and a 1988 survey of all local students in grades 5 through 12.[1]

The Clallam Bay Corrections Center is located in the unincorporated community of Clallam Bay, current population, 1,200. This is an increase over the 1985 population of 1,000, due to new residents arriving since the Clallam Bay Corrections Center opened; it is below the 1980 census figure of 1,398.[2] Clallam Bay is a place notable for its remoteness. The community is bounded to the north by the Strait of Juan de Fuca, to the south by forested hills, and is served by a single two-laned highway which dead ends 20 miles to the west at the Pacific Ocean. The area's population and commercial center (population 17,350) lies 50 miles south.

The Clallam Bay Corrections Center was located in Clallam Bay due to the recruitment efforts of several of the community's leading businessmen. Clallam Bay had been the site for a small minimum security camp (inmate population 64) from 1956 to 1969, and this was remembered generally as a positive contribution to the town's economy and its social life. Facing the prospects of a severe and long lasting economic depression due to the loss of its major employer, a new prison seemed the best available solution to the community's employment and population problems. These characteristics of economic decline and limited alternatives are very similar to those of other new prison locales across the country.

Before Escapes

Also like prison communities elsewhere, Clallam Bay's judgment of the prison as a welcomed industry was not uniformly shared by all residents. There was an organized and, by some accounts, sizeable opposition to the prison. Concerns about institutional security were not the primary thrust of this opposition, but they were part of the objections. Opponents too remembered the honor camp and the experience of road blocks, search parties, and even the confrontation with escapees its location entailed.

During the public hearings that accompanied siting of the prison, questions about institutional security were intermixed with concerns about adverse population and lifestyle impacts and the overall theme of undesirable community change. The security questions raised included reference to the limited response capacity of local law enforcement, the effects of remoteness on escapee

behavior, and the probability of escapes. For all, corrections spokespersons had ready and soothing responses about search and protection procedures, escape rates at comparable facilities, and experiences with escapee behavior. Most citizens of Clallam Bay accepted these assurances of security, including those still uneasy about the consequences of other prison-brought community changes.

These attitudes are shown in the results of the 1986 community survey, conducted shortly after the prison began its minimum security operation and prior to any escapes. Out of a list of 15 expected prison effects, risks from escaped prisoners ranked 9th overall and 6th out of 7 negative effects listed; it was selected by 38 percent of the respondents. Further, while those who identified themselves as opposed to the prison were more likely to expect such risks to occur than proponents, this remained a secondary issue to concerns about increased demands on law enforcement and social services, and other more direct community change issues. Asked to select a word that best characterized prison operations thus far, the dimension of security seemed almost incidental: two persons felt the institution was "dangerous," two felt it was "safe."

During Escapes

Clallam Bay Corrections Center was designed and constructed to be a facility with state-of-the-art security features, readily adaptable to use for maximum security classification should inmate populations so warrant. Its interim operation as a minimum security facility, however, and the reduced security necessarily associated with that, gave residents of Clallam Bay an early opportunity to experience prison escapes.

The institution's first inmate escapes occurred in July 1986. The two escapees were apprehended without incident while trying to hitchhike out of Clallam Bay. Some local residents appeared unworried by the escapees; others expressed anxiety and some anger about implied promises for security not being kept. On the whole, residents were most concerned about delays in communication and procedures for notification that excluded many Clallam Bay homes, most notably, those closest to the prison. Another escape occurred in September, and the inmate was again apprehended quickly. Communication with the community and other law enforcement agencies was more rapid on this occasion, but Clallam Bay residents were still upset about the absence of blanket notification procedures for local citizens. This attitude continued to be predominant during three subsequent escapes.

The prison shifted to medium security operations in January 1987. The community remained somewhat "escape-conscious," however, and a system to provide community notification about prison escapes was selected in July 1987 by a Clallam Bay citizens' committee as one of 10 community projects to receive state-awarded prison impact funds. Seventy households (out of 650 contacted by Clallam Bay Corrections Center) eventually asked to be notified by phone in the event of an escape.

The system was tested while responses were still coming in due to a March 1988 escape by an inmate working outside the institution's walls. This escapee was tracked to and seen in an area of concentrated residential housing. For 3 days, a combined search force of corrections center staff and sheriff's deputies patrolled the area, searched vehicles at road blocks, and on one occasion, went door to door, looking in yards, garages, and houses. Deciding the escapee had left the area, the local search was called off after 5 days. The inmate was recaptured about a month later in another part of the state.

Residents' reactions to this escape ranged from amusement ("It was like the keystone cops!") to flight (at least two women went out of town to stay with friends until the search was over). The area newspaper reported it as Clallam Bay Corrections Center's "first escape of a medium security prisoner," but did not otherwise highlight any threat to residents (*Peninsula Daily News*, March 15, 1988). The majority of Clallam Bay residents responded to the concerted and extended search with some anxiety. Of those answering a June 1988 community survey, 73 percent reported they were concerned about the safety of local residents during the escape, 32 percent very concerned. Many acted on this concern by arming themselves (one local store owner joked about a dramatic rise in gun and ammunition sales), while almost all took some additional security measures with their children, homes, and possessions. This anxiety was shared by corrections and law enforcement, who privately acknowledged that the potential for hostage taking during such an extended search was very high.[3]

The week following the escape, a previously scheduled survey was administered to local students, grades 5 through 12. While most students felt the prison had had a neutral (45 percent), or somewhat beneficial (33 percent), effect on their school, the escape was a common topic of their

written comments. These and followup interviews with classes collected multiple examples of parents curtailing movement and implementing extra safety precautions while the inmate was being looked for. "I wish it would go away," one young person wrote about the prison. "When a prisoner escapes (which is often), I am not allowed to go home by myself."

Perhaps most tellingly, students' attitudes towards whether the prison was more dangerous or more safe (as measured by a five point semantic differential scale) were clustered closer to dangerous: 52 percent felt the prison was dangerous, 32 percent placed it half way between dangerous and safe. These feelings were most marked for students who did not have family members working at Clallam Bay Corrections Center.

This account of resident unease has an interesting footnote due to another medium security escape in May 1989. This escapee scaled the prison's double row of razor-wire topped fences and disappeared into the woods. The man stole a vehicle from an isolated house while its residents were sleeping and was captured the following day in a city several hundred miles away. The search this time was more muted (he was not thought to be in any populous areas) and considerably briefer. Residents' reactions were similarly subdued.

People did, as with the previous escape, alter their behavior during the period the man was thought to be in the area—staying inside, restricting children, loading guns, and so on—but there was a sense of unconcern, even routine, about their reports of their reactions. Some individuals who were most distressed during the previous escape again expressed considerable fear and anxiety, but even they modified these expressions with resignation and acceptance. Their level of upset seemed reduced several notches by a sense that such experiences were inevitable with the prison as co-resident. Theirs is an uncomfortable acceptance, as shown in the following comment from a woman who described herself as "of course upset" by another escape: "It's not right to have to live where both kids are in bed with you and your guns are loaded at night because you're afraid. . .We probably will stay here and we're going to have to live with that, but it's awful, it's just awful."

After Escapes

Clallam Bay's accumulated experience with escapes has had consequences for its residents. Respondents to a 1988 community survey were asked if they had changed any of their regular behavior because of prison escapes: 37 percent indicated they had. Most (65 percent) such changes involved increased home security, such as locking doors, windows, and cars, leaving lights on, and similar cautions. For urban residents, these behaviors are routine, but in Clallam Bay, they represent a change from the more casual procedures followed previously: "This used to be a community where you didn't need to lock your doors or take the keys out of your car. Now you dare not do otherwise," laments one woman. "My husband has been a lifetime resident here and now has to sleep with a loaded gun by the bed."

Like this woman's husband, many Clallam Bay residents now keep a weapon ready for their defense. Both 1986 and 1988 community surveys included a question about whether a loaded weapon was kept in the home (with hunting one of Clallam Bay's principal recreation pursuits, simply owning guns is very high). In 1986, 32 percent of the respondents maintained a loaded weapon; in 1988, 45 percent did so. Those who reported keeping a loaded weapon were significantly more concerned about their safety during the 1988 escape than those who did not, and a majority acknowledged this arming was a response to the presence of the prison. "We keep weapons in the house, when we never did before," noted one, a sentiment echoed by another: "We keep 4 loaded handguns in various locations of our home. We never had them loaded prior to the prison being constructed here."

Concerns for security also have contributed to a heightened mistrust of strangers: "I don't pick up anyone walking on the highway or stop for anyone, even if they are laying in the road," claims a resident. Others report similar uncertainties in extending what previously was nearly automatic neighborliness.

Clearly, escapes have contributed to changes in the way many Clallam Bay residents perceive and respond to their personal security, but escapes are not the only prison impacts to produce these more defensive, less trusting reactions. Residents use the same terms to explain their responses to other consequences of their prison: perceived and actual crime increases, the presence of unknown new residents in the community, and the adverse behaviors of prison visitors, locally resident inmate families, and prison employees themselves. All of these seem to necessitate some greater attention to security; all seem to indicate the loss of a certain lifestyle; and all, together and separately, reveal the changes brought to Clallam Bay by the prison.

Analysis and Discussion

The reactions of Clallam Bay residents to Clallam Bay Corrections Center's first escapes seemed to focus on operational issues around communication with the community. The nearly immediate recapture of the escapees and the concentration of the searches away from people's homes did not lead to residents feeling secure, however. Residents wanted immediate information on escapes so they could take what they felt to be proper security measures. The need for such measures was amply illustrated by the 1988 escape and the subsequent protracted search around and inside residents' homes. Security fears were not generated by these experiences, simply confirmed by them. The circumstances of this escape were atypical, and reactions were accordingly heightened. They were not, on reflection, qualitatively different.

The reduction in community reaction to the most recent escape can be attributed to its following the same less dramatic pattern of the earlier escapes. Residents used their awareness of the escape as a reason to modify their behaviors and increase security, but they were not faced with, and did not need to react to, any indicators of immediate danger. There was an additional factor present in reactions to this escape that was not seen previously. For at least some residents, these behavioral modifications toward greater security were on-going. Escapes had combined with other risks to property and safety to produce a constant state of heightened security consciousness.

A second factor apparent in reactions to the two medium security escapes was the way in which residents evaluated their implications. Events associated with the prison, especially those as marked and direct as escapes, seemed always to generate such evaluations. They are the indicators residents use to compute a cost-benefits equation on the prison, a computation that is as important to community residents as it is to economists. For residents, assessing prison impacts is not only a way of confirming or disconfirming their hopes and fears and thereby justifying or not their pre-prison position. It is also an essential part of deciding whether the pluses outweigh the minuses; of determining whether Clallam Bay is still a place where they want to or are able to live.

Early in the prison's tenure the limited number of effects available to make this computation led to heightened significance of those few at hand. Thus many residents rated the prison as "disappointing" in the 1986 survey because its construction and interim operation had produced few jobs for locals. This was a tentative evaluation however, and for most, hope for future benefits under full operation served to balance the equation. Similarly, the escapes during minimum security operations could also be viewed as interim and their risks discounted by the expectation that things would soon change.

Regular medium security operation and full staffing of the facility was completed largely by the fall of 1987. By the 1988 escape, then, Clallam Bay residents were in a position to judge the effects of the prison on the basis of its actual contributions or detractions. Respondents to the 1988 community survey gave the prison's medium security operation mixed reviews: 28 percent rated its effect on the community as somewhat or very beneficial (6 percent); 39 percent evaluated these effects as neutral; and 33 percent rated them as somewhat or very negative (9 percent). A similar question in the 1986 survey on the effects of the prison's minimum security operation resulted in 60 percent selecting "neutral."

Respondents in 1986 and 1988 were more similar in their attitudes about how they would feel if the decision to build the prison were being made today: 51 percent of 1988 respondents said they would be somewhat or very opposed (35 percent), 35 percent somewhat or very supportive (22 percent), and 13 percent neutral. The 1986 survey found 51 percent opposed, 16 percent neutral, and 33 percent supportive.

Supportive attitudes were significantly correlated with a positive evaluation of Clallam Bay Corrections Center's effects, opposing attitudes with a negative evaluation. Prison employees or family members of these employees were both more supportive and more likely to see the institution's effects as beneficial than those who had no employment association with Clallam Bay Corrections Center: Non-employees were more likely to see the effects more negatively and to be opposed if the institution were built today. Respondents who rated the prison's effects on the community as negative were significantly more concerned about escapes than those who saw the prison as beneficial.

This should not be taken to mean that prison supporters felt unthreatened by escapes. According to the 1988 survey results and to comments after both medium security escapes, the great majority of all residents view escapes with considerable concern and back up these beliefs with some degree of protective measures. Those who do

not react in this way generally do so because they view their residence as outside any probable danger zone, not because they see escapes as without risks. Only a very few residents profess to find escapes of no import. Not surprisingly, these persons gauge the impacts of the prison to be nearly uniformly positive.

The prevalent attitude in Clallam Bay is one which gives credence to the notion of escapes as risky, but finds that these risks and other negatives are outweighed by prison benefits. These residents do not ignore adverse impacts and may even be found among the leaders of movements to improve services, reduce crime, or otherwise ameliorate various negative prison effects. They do, however, value more highly the good things, such as jobs, an improved economy, and a restored population that the prison has brought. In their equation, the risks and other negatives are regrettable but acceptable. This is also, it is important to note, a reaction which allows one to make the best of a done deal. The prison is in place. This balancing of positives over negatives is a way of coming to terms with it. "I was opposed to the prison," writes a resident, "but as long as it's here, we might as well learn to live with it. And I think they're trying to learn to live with us."

There are, in addition, some number of residents who do not find the negative effects outweighed by the positives. For these persons, the prison effects equation comes out with a minus sign. These residents, too, see both sides of the equation, acknowledging the benefits as does this woman: "That's right. There are jobs. And it's true that the town is better off than it was. But it's also harder to live here than it was; it's also scarier than it was." With one-third of the school's students living with a family member employed by the prison, Clallam Bay's young people also were trying to balance gains against losses from the prison in their assessment of its effects, an effort reflected in this comment: "It helps Clallam Bay, I know, but people keep escaping and that's dangerous, and I hate to sleep at night wondering who will escape." Some residents who judge the effects of the prison to be disproportionately negative will leave Clallam Bay; some already have.

Leaving Clallam Bay is not an option for everyone, however, and so most residents, even those whose judgment of the prison yields a negative, must somehow come to terms with the prison and its effects. For some, this can be accomplished by a re-evaluation of their previous judgments. Such a shift is greatly facilitated by the occurrence of "well-mannered" escapes like the most recent one, and even more so if this were the last escape for some time. In combination with improvements in some community services and time to adjust to change, one can see early signs of this accommodation in the reactions to the last escape. Living with escapes may be "awful," but the job and the investment in Clallam Bay will take precedence and eventually, might take evaluative predominance as well. For many this has already occurred. "It's the price we have to pay," they say, accepting the trade-off. Others maintain a more fragile accommodation: "Most of the time I can ignore the prison," said a woman resident, "but when there's an escape, it makes me realize the price the town paid to stay alive. I know we needed jobs, but I think it's really sad the prison was the only way we could get them."

Conclusions

Security and its maintenance are at the core of corrections practice. For communities serving as prison locales, security also is significant, but primarily in terms of the effects its breach has on the community. During siting, concerns about escapes and their risks are raised as issues of undesirable community change; during operation and when actual escapes occur, resident reactions often do lead to these unwanted lifestyle changes.

The way residents weigh the value of various prison effects leads to differences in judgment about whether the local prison is a worthwhile industry. Escapes and their community consequences are important components of this judgment, joined by other negatives and many positives. After the prison was in place in Clallam Bay, and after several escapes, residents' attitudes towards escapes began to show accommodation to the prison's risks. While subject to change if there is a particularly intrusive or violent escape in the future, for the "typical" escape, this accommodation seems to allow people to live with acceptance and even appreciation of their prison.

The message for corrections from the experiences of Clallam Bay is that: (1) escapes *do* matter, regardless of their usually benign statistics; (2) escapes matter in association with other negative prison effects, all of which can lead to personally significant lifestyle changes; (3) some escapes matter more than others; (4) some community residents value aspects of lifestyle over economic improvement and are more adversely affected by *any* escape; and (5) most prison community residents adjust to the consequences of

escapes in a way that allows them to evaluate the prison as largely beneficial and thus tolerable. It is perhaps this evaluation that produces research results from longer-term prison communities of prisons as primarily positive industries. Achieving this conclusion is likely to require some adjustment; in new prison communities like Clallam Bay, this process is still under way.

NOTES

[1]Clallam Bay Surveys: In June 1988, all postal customers within the Clallam Bay and Sekiu mailing area received a questionnaire seeking information about residents' characteristics and service usage and their attitudes toward the community and the Clallam Bay Corrections Center. A total of 624 questionnaires were mailed out, and 226 (36.2 percent) were completed and returned. Results of the 1988 survey are compared with those of a similar survey of the same population conducted in June 1986. In 1986, 237 out of 506 questionnaires were returned, for a response rate of 47 percent. The demographic characteristics of the two surveys are very close to each other and similar to that of the entire adult population of the survey area. In March 1988, all Clallam Bay students in grades 5 through 12 completed a questionnaire on their drug and alcohol use. The questionnaire also collected information on student characteristics and attitudes about the school, the community, and the Clallam Bay Corrections Center. A total of 105 questionnaires were completed.

[2]Clallam Bay Community Census: A house-to-house census was conducted in the Clallam Bay/Sekiu area in April 1988. Information was obtained from 98 percent of the area's households. Results of the 1988 census are compared with those of a previous project census done in October 1985 (covering 94 percent of the area's households).

[3]Heightened security awareness affected the judgments of residents and searchers alike. Two men were mistakenly accosted and spent a terrifying few moments until they could prove their identity; one woman walking on the beach with her daughter saw a "stranger" disappear into the bushes—the arrival of the search party brought the realization that it was her neighbor also out for a walk; missing lunches, articles of clothing, a break-in in the area all were taken as evidence of the escapee's movements, with normal events such as a barking dog reinterpreted as significant and frightening. All of this was not lacking in entertainment value. The disruption in routine, the excitement of the search, even the thrill of possible danger, made the escape exciting if not welcome. Its mention in any setting for weeks following was sure to generate an animated exchange of rumors, "facts," and theories.

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