More Reed

Twenty factories opened in the ghetto producing goods for German military consumption.

In Feb. 1943, deportations from the Bialystock ghetto to the death camps began and by summer, the ghetto had been liquidated - all its inhabitants had already been exterminated in death camps or were on their way. My mother and her little sister, two years her junior, were shipped to Auschwitz with her family.

During the period of ghettoization, it is estimated that at least half a million Jews died from hunger, disease and random terror.

The transportations to the concentration camps and death camps were, in themselves, nightmares. The German Railway Commission charged the S.S. for the use of the trains to ship Jews and others to the camps. The S.S., in turn, charged the Jews for the journey. This further aided the Nazis in their lies about relocation. Surely, if you were paying for the journey, it must be worth taking.

The box cars which transported the Jews were about half the size of a regular classroom. Into this space were herded some 100 or more people - with tiny slits for windows, no water, food or bathrooms for days, sometimes weeks. Already weakened from years in the ghettos, many, particularly the elderly and the very young, did not survive the journey.

On arrival in Auschwitz, any illusions about the nature of the place to which they had been transported vanished. My mother and her sister were immediately separated from their parents and grandparents. They were never to see them again.

Then, everything was taken from them - clothes stripped off their backs, gold fillings or teeth torn out of their heads, eyeglasses, shoes, everything. My mother and her sister were young, innocent girls. They had never been naked in front of a man before, much less in front of a crowd. They were humiliated to their core. But there did not end their humiliation. They were shaved - all-over - by Nazi soldiers, men. Why? To further dehumanize them. And they were tattooed - to further dehumanize them.

They were unrecognizable as the lively, sweet, fun-loving girls of just a few years before. They were no longer children. Their childhood, their innocent, loving faith in God and the world had been snatched away from them. They were adults now; they knew the face of fear and nothing would ever restore that innocence to them. And so they were given clothes - taken from people now dead.

And what were they given? My mother received a lacy negligee; my aunt an evening gown. These two half-starved, bald teenage girls took one look at each other and burst into gales of laughter. They laughed until they cried. Well, perhaps a spark of the spirit of childhood still remained. And perhaps it was that very spark that helped them survive the horrors which were yet to confront them.

My father was to be in Auschwitz twice - each time only briefly. On his first arrival, he faced the infamous doctor death - Joseph Mengele. The men and women were separated and he watched his mother and little sister be selected with all the old and very young. His sister had polio when she was a little girl and had a withered arm. She was immediately selected for death - and his mother would not let her go alone.

My father's heroism in rescuing his mother from the hospital the year before had been to no avail - she died in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. His father stood in line in front of him. His father was pointed to the right. My father went to go with him. Mengele stopped him, and said, "First you go to work. You will die anyhow," and pushed my father to the left. He never saw his father, mother or sister again.

He searched, too, for his brother who had been deported to Auschwitz some two weeks earlier with his new bride who he had married in the ghetto. He never found him.

Alone, and almost devoid of hope, he as awakened in the middle of the night by a man for whom he had done a favor years before in the ghetto. This man remembered and returned the favor. "Get up, quickly," he told my father. "There is a transport leaving for a coal mine. Get on it. There is no tomorrow in Auschwitz." Undoubtedly, this span saved my father's life.

My father's experience for the next six months was one of being moved from work camp to work camp. He was young, strong and smart and miraculously, stayed healthy enough to work, and so he worked.

One day in Dec. 1944, he was working with a crew repairing lines which were taking supplies to the front. Allied planes flew overhead bombing the railway lines. The prisoners cheered, and then in clearing the rubble afterward, were treated to their first meal in years. The bombs had buried and cooked cans of meat and vegetables. And did those prisoners eat!! My father describes it as the best meal he ever had. Undoubtedly, this too saved his life.

My mother and her sister remained in Auschwitz much longer. They worked - in quarries digging stones needed to build gas chambers and crematoria, making parts for bombs and sewing German uniforms.

While sewing the uniforms, whenever she could, she would sew the lining in the arms to the jacket together, so that when the soldier would attempt to put it on, he would be unable to, but the jacket would look perfectly normal from the outside. This little act of resistance kept her spirit strong. She loved to tell me about that - she was proud of her little victories over the Nazis.

But, brushes with death were many. My aunt had a disagreement with a "kapo" - head of the barracks. When my mother intervened, they were both punished, and made to kneel in the snow, holding bricks above their heads. Of course, it was not too long before my mother dropped one. The kapo picked up the brick and threw it at my mother's head. She was deaf for many weeks and never regained the hearing in her right ear. As a little girl, whispering in my mother's ear, as little girls do, she would so often say, "Other ear, sweetheart, other ear."

At one point, my aunt developed a boil under her arm. Of course, there was no medical treatment - any sign of illness was rewarded with the gas chamber. My mother lanced this boil with a sharp stick and used urine to sterilize it. How she, still a slip of a girl, could summon the courage to do this, I still to this day do not know. But I am sure she saved her sister's life.

My mother came from a large, close family. Everyone, except she and her sister, were murdered in Auschwitz.

Early in 1945, my parents, through different routes, were sent to Bergen Belsen. While not a death camp with gas chambers and crematoria, it was a dumping ground for tens of thousands of Jews whose fate had not yet been sealed. A chaotic place of death, there were few buildings, and fewer facilities. Disease was rampant: typhus and typhoid were everywhere. Hundreds died every day, and were left where they lay.

My father developed typhus - a disease caused by the fleas that live on rats. Everyone was covered with flea bites, lice bites, sores. Little food, contaminated water. It is no wonder that when, on April 15, 1945, British and Scottish troops liberated Bergen Belsen, they found nearly 20,000 dead bodies - unburied. The soldiers were unprepared for what they found. Of the 52,000 prisoners found alive, 13,000 perished in the days following liberation. They were too far gone.

My father, 22 years old and weighing only 58 pounds, too weak to walk, was carried to a makeshift hospital set up several miles from the camp. He was also too weak to eat; he could barely sip broth, but this, too, undoubtedly saved his life. For what did these heartbroken, heart sick soldiers do with these starving people? They fed them - with whatever they had.

After years and years of starvation, the prisoners emaciated bodies could not handle the canned beef, potatoes, loaves of bread. Many died from the kindness of the soldiers. In an effort of untold pain and difficulty, the Allied troops moved the prisoners to a Displaced Persons' camp several miles away and the soldiers burnt Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp to the ground in an effort to control the disease.

My mother, who had been working in the kitchens was, on the whole, relatively strong. She helped out in the hospital, and there, she met my father. They married in Dec. 1945. No long courtships for the survivors. What they needed more than food, more than medical care, more than anything in the world, was a family.

They had lost everything and everyone. Their only means of continued survival was to look forward. If they looked back, if they dared stare at the mirror to see some strange, half-starved human being they didn't recognize, they would surely go mad. And the guilt felt by survivors whose whole families had not survived, would be too much to bare, and it was for many. Many died of broken hearts, every bit as much as they died from lack of food.

Jacob and Sara Zylberstein arrived in Australia with their one-year-old daughter, Mina, in 1950. I was born in Melbourne in 1955. My parents worked and saved and bought a little fruit and vegetable store. Mina and I worked in it on Saturday mornings. We went to the library every Thursday night; we took ballet lessons, went on summer camps, and to Holocaust commemorations every year. My parents went to the movies or a party every Saturday night and I would sit on my mother's knee as she got ready to go out, marvelling at how pretty she was.

They helped us with our homework, went to parent-teacher nights; they were passionate about us receiving an education and making something of ourselves. When my mother got her high school diploma the year after I did; we were all so proud, I thought we would burst. We were an ordinary family like any other, and yet not so ordinary at all.

My father believed, from the bottom of his heart, that he survived in order to bear witness. The question is, how does one bear witness? Elie Wiesel, Nobel prize winner, said, "If all the Heavens were parchments, if all the trees were pens, if all the seas were ink, we still could not even begin. To write or speak is impossible, but to be silent is forbidden." By bearing witness to the monstrous murder of the six million, we can prevent their second death. For the Nazi enemy can kill twice: first by the killing, and second by erasing their memory.

My father told me over and over, "It can never happen again to me. It is your task now to see that it never happens to you and your children." And how do I do this? In my search for answers, I remember that, as the philosophers say, "If you do not learn your history, you are destined to repeat it."

What have I learned from my history? That man's inhumanity to man is boundless? That there is no hope for peace on earth? No, my parents taught me much better than that. They taught me that the future is in my hands to shape and form, that as Elie Wiesel also said, the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. And there is no greater sin than indifference.

For the Holocaust could never have happened without indifference. Hate certainly was in the hearts of the perpetrators, but they could not have murdered six million Jews without the indifference of the millions of bystanders who said and did nothing. In Poland, 90% of Polish Jews, 2,950,000, were murdered. In Denmark, only 10% of Danish Jews were murdered. Why the discrepancy? What did the Danes do differently? They had the courage to care! And were shown the way by a caring leadership.

When the Nazis invaded Denmark and ordered Jews to wear the yellow star, the King of Denmark appeared the next day with a yellow star, and so followed the majority of his people. He and his people had the courage to care. Not everyone could lead with the moral authority and courage of the King of Denmark, but there were many small, quiet rescues by small, quiet people with consciences that would not be silenced. But where were the consciences of the vast majority of people in Europe between 1933 and 1945?

And, where are our consciences in safe, democratic America in 1996? How do we ensure that we, too, will not be bystanders, not if the time comes, but when the time comes? When the time comes? I say to you that the time is here, now, today; that we have our consciences tested every single day.

The 1947 movie, "Gentleman's Agreement" expresses this far better than my words could. In the movie, Gregory Peck, a journalist, in researching a series on anti-Semitism, masquerades as a Jew for eight weeks. He has moved to a new town, called himself Phil Greenberg instead of Green, and lets everyone know he is Jewish. His new fiancee, Cathy, who knows all about the research, is struggling with this, finding herself constantly challenged by her upbringing.

The area is "restricted". There is a "gentleman's agreement" not to sell or rent to Jews. In the piece I am about to show you, Cathy is having a conversation with Dave, to explain to him that she is not anti-Semitic. (At this time Mrs. Reed showed a piece of that film).

How often have we heard a hateful, racist, unkind remark and said nothing? How often have we even talked about it later, like Cathy, to ease our consciences, when our consciences have told us that we ought to speak up and not let this cruelty or ignorance or hate go unchallenged?

It is my fervent belief that every time we keep silent, one of the six million souls cries in the night, that one more drop of evil is unleashed without battle into the world. Evil words are malignant; they grow tumors of hate in our hearts and in the hearts of our children.

But I also believe, even more fervently, that good - good, courageous words, noble deeds and selfless concern - that God is equally contagious. That every time we speak out against injustice and for tolerance and love, we sew seeds that please God, will grow and multiply into the peace and joy for which we pray, for our children.

And it is hard to do. It is terribly hard to stand up at a dinner party and call down the man with the dreadful jokes; to tell a friend not to use the word Jew when he means haggling over a price and light fisted, or to object to any of the other horrible racial and ethnic stereotypes and euphemisms we ascribe to other people. It is not funny, nor is it a joke.

For the institutionalization of those stereotypes, the belief that those stereotypes were the truth not caricatures, and to exaggerate those caricatures into extreme, into evil, was the stuff of which Nazi propaganda was made.

It was not difficult to convince Europe that Jews were the source of all their problems; they had been taught anti-Semitism all their lives in one way or another - through one joke or unkind remark or another. The only protection against another Holocaust is the courage to care, to care enough to follow one's conscience each time it is pricked and to prick the conscience of those who act as though they had none.

My mother died in 1983, my father is 74 years old. Soon, the task will be entirely mine to keep alive the memory of all those whose future was denied, who died without funerals, who have no graves, simply because of who they were.

And such is the task and the duty of the Holocaust Museum in Houston and elsewhere. As one survivor said, "The voices of the victims will never be silenced, never. When we can no longer speak, let the museum speak for us."

And I am so proud and privileged to be associated with this museum. For it is a house of love, which teaches tolerance and humanity. It teaches that when one wounds another, one wounds all mankind, especially oneself. That hatred is the creation of man alone and that only man can limit its progression.

The Study Club theme for this year is "Making a Difference". I pray that the museum has already made and will continue to make a difference in the world. If even only one child has learned that the consequences of hate are another Holocaust, we have changed the world!

But the true heroes are the survivors. To simply have survived is a victory for life over death, goodness over evil and over Hilter. But my parents are not my heroes simply because they survived. My parents, and so many of the survivors, did not simply survive - they overcame.

They defeated Hilter in the most powerful way possible - by defeating the evil he stood for in their own heart. For they did not become bitter, twisted, hating people as a result of their torture and their loss - and who would have been surprised had they done so? What else could we expect of people who had been subjected to horrors beyond imaging? No, they did not become like their oppressors. They became positive, productive, loving members of their families, communities and countries - ever striving to better themselves, their children and the world around them.

The Holocaust claimed the lives of six million of Europe's most peace-loving, law-abiding, family-minded productive and educated citizens, including my grandparents, Sara and David Zylberstein and Mina and Josef Schorr, my uncle Simon, my auntie Miriam, all my other relatives and their offspring who never had the chance to be born.

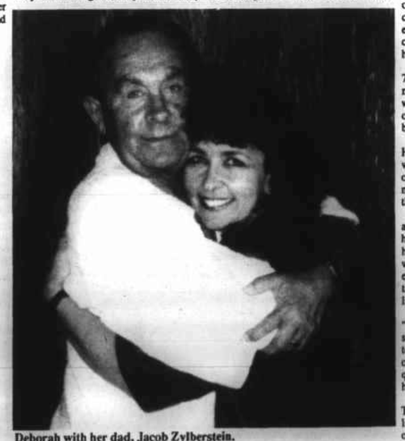
And my parents survived this to become family-minded, productive, loving people who gave me a home filled with joy and security.

Yes, there were heroes.

"You never know what is enough until you know what is more than enough."

—Samuel Blake

Continued from Page 4



Deborah with her dad, Jacob Zylberstein.

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SPORTS

Student athletes recognized at annual banquet

The Rice High School Athletic Banquet was held May 9 in the commons area of the school.

The welcome was given by Rebecca Burrow. After the introduction given by Leigh Jackson and the invocation by Kristen Stienke, a delicious meal of homemade turkey and dressing with all the trimmings and peach cobbler was served by Annie's Catering.

The 1996 Most Outstanding Awards were given to Brandon Mathis for senior boy athlete and Rebecca Burrow for senior girl.

The majority of the athletes were present to accept their awards for the past year for the sports in which they had participated in.

Along the awards, the Rice Booster Club presented their scholarship to two deserving athletes. Shelia Mathis, President of the Booster Club, presented the award to Christian Cordova and Brandon Mathis.

Other awards presented were:

1995 Varsity volleyball defensive player award was presented by Coach Jane Laws to Andrea Machac; and the volleyball MVP went to Rebecca Burrow.

For the 1995 varsity football season, Clint Krenek was chosen lineman of the year; defensive most improved player was Kyle Fink and Michael Wiese was chosen the MVP.

The 1995-96 varsity cross country MVP award went to Danny Seay.

In varsity girl's basketball, Coach Laws presented the D-D-D award to Rebecca Burrow and named Naketra Johnson the MVP.

The Fighting Heart Award went to Aundre Hatton for varsity boy's basketball; while Brandon Mathis received the MVP award.

The girls' powerlifting team did well throughout their season. Rachelle Kallina received the MVP award.

The Special Olympics team was also recognized for their accomplishments throughout the year. These kids put a lot of heart in all they do.

The varsity girls' tennis MVP award went to Andrea Machac, while the boys' tennis MVP went to Barrett Thomas.

The girls' golf MVP award was presented to Bridget Baird; Brandon Mathis received the boys' golf MVP.

Lea Ann Spangenberg received the varsity girls' track MVP award, while Danny Seay was named MVP for the boys' team.

The varsity baseball most improved player went to Kyle Fink; and the MVP award was shared by Christian Cordova and Brandon Mathis.

Brandon Mathis was honored by the Rice High School coaching staff as Most Outstanding Senior Boy Athlete during last week's annual Athletic Banquet. Rebecca Burrow was chosen the Most Outstanding Senior Girl Athlete for the 1996 school year. *Headlight Photo by Carol Cardenas*

Rookies split with Clippers

The Rice Rookies traveled to Shiner Saturday, May 11, to face the Clippers in two action-packed ball games.

Troy Holcomb and Damon Massey combined for a good pitching performance in the first game of the doubleheader.

Holcomb started the game and went 2-1/3 innings, allowing four hits, striking out three, and giving up one walk.

Massey pitched the remainder of the game. He gave up three hits, allowed three bases on balls and struck out seven Clippers.

Rookies pitchers combined for a total of seven hits, resulting in six runs for the 9-6 win.

The Rookies bats were alive on Saturday night. Tweet Ford led off the game with a ground-rule double over the right field fence.

Ford scored on an RBI single off the bat of Aaron Machac. Shane Lechler followed with another single, but was stranded on base on an inning-ending ground-out to second base.

Rice was unable to muster much offense in their half of the second frame with only one single by Joel Grigar. They scored in the third when Greg Carrera had a double, Machac walked and both scored on a two RBI single by Matt Faldyn.

Ford walked in the fourth with two already out to start a two-run rally. Carrera and Machac followed with singles, scoring Ford. Carrera also scored on a wild pitch.

In the fifth, the Rookie rally delivered their hardest blow.

With one out, Kevin Gage began the charge with a single. Grigar followed with a two RBI dinger over the left-field wall. Phillip Krampitz then ripped a double and scored on an RBI single by Jeremy Gohlke.

Ford reached on a fielder's choice, stole second, advanced to third on a passed ball and scored on a wild pitch.

The Rookies were unable to score in the sixth or seventh, but managed to hold on for the 9-6 win.

Although Lechler pitched well enough to win, the outcome of the second game did not favor the Rookies. Lechler once again showed great command of his curve ball, allowing the Clippers only nine scattered hits in seven innings, with few in succession. Costly errors dictated the outcome of the 6-5 Rookie loss.

Lechler struck out four and walked only two in seven innings.

The Rookies scored their five runs on just five hits. Their few hits were also scattered throughout the contest. Ford, Carerra and Faldyn had singles in the first inning; all scored with the help of an error by the Clipper defense.

They were unable to provide any other offense until the fifth inning when Lechler reached on an error, stole second then third and scored on an RBI single by Carerra.

The lone last run was scored in the sixth when Faldyn and Grigar reached on errors, with Faldyn advancing all the way to third. Faldyn then scored on a double steal. Grigar was left stranded and the Rookies were unable to score in the seventh.

Other hits for the Rookies were a

(See Rookies, Page 10)

Past week in Little League

This past week was a high-scoring one in Eagle Lake Little League - on all levels. On Tuesday, May 7, T-ball got underway with a match between the Lake Motors Tigers and Delgado Wrecker Service Red Hots.

The evening ended with the Garwood Red Darlings shutting out Video 2 Go Red Sox in a girls' softball game.

Another T-ball night was Wednesday, May 8, with three games keeping the field busy. The first game saw the CCLEA Shockers of Sheridan take on the Schaeffer Oil Sharks. Following this exciting game, the Garwood Tigers met the Eagle Concrete Raiders. The last action-packed game of the evening was between the Garwood Bucs and the Delgado Wrecker Service Red Hots.

Thursday, May 9, saw two high-scoring boys' minor league games. The Eagle Lake Rice Dryer Astros beat the Sandy Creek Drive-In Rangers of Sheridan by a score of 12-9.

To close the evening, the First National Bank Da Boys topped the Garwood Blue Jays, 10-4.

Only two games were played Friday, May 10, with the Schaeffer Oil Sharks and Eagle Concrete Raiders getting things underway with an exciting T-ball game.

The week's schedule ended with a boys' major league game in which the Trafco Rockies beat the Eagle Lake Dental Clinic Rangers, 15-0.

The Rice Little League schedule for Wednesday, May 15, through Tuesday, May 21, follows. Please mark your calendars and come out and support our Rice Little League teams!!

Wednesday, May 15
5:30: Red Hots vs Raiders-E
5:30: Tigers vs Sharks-E

Thursday, May 16
5:30: Orioles (G) vs Da Boys-E
6:45:Braves vs Astros-E
8:00: Blue Darlings (G) vs Angels-E

Friday, May 17
5:30: Shockers (S) vs Bucs-G
5:30: Red Hots vs Sharks-E
6:30: Bulls (S) vs Blue Jays-G
6:30: White Sox (S) vs Rockies-E
8:00: Dodgers (G) vs Rangers-E

Saturday, May 18
9 a.m: Garwood Opening Ceremonies
9:30: Bucs (G) vs Tigers-G
10:45: Red Sox (EL) vs Red Darlings-G
Noon: Da Boys (EL) vs Blue Jays-G
1:30: Bulls (S) vs Orioles-G
3:00: Spurs (S) vs Blue Darlings-G
5:15: Rockies (EL) vs Dodgers-G

Monday, May 20
5:30: Rangers (S) vs Blue Jays-G
5:30: Raiders vs Tigers-E
6:30: Spurs (S) vs Angels-E
6:45: (Braves vs Orioles-G

(See Schedule, Page 10)

Board

Continued from Page 1

Final policy will be approved following changes recommended to Jackson by the Board.

A new procedure for paying coaches for the 1996-97 school year was approved, which assigns an increment to each job assignment and guarantees no less than a $3,500 increment to high school coaches and no less than a $2,400 increment to junior high coaches or, for the coming year, his or her present coaching increment, whichever is greater.

The procedure is "grandfathered" for one year to ensure that no coach makes less than he or she is presently receiving due to the new job assignment increments.

The "athletic pot" for coaches' salaries totals $77,512 at present, with a chance of an increase when the budget for 1996-97 is prepared.

Trustee Robin Thomas issued a statement clarifying her position on the dissenting vote she cast regarding the school board election canvass of votes.

The 6-1 vote to accept the vote canvass and vote that Glen Sunderman was an ineligible candidate was recorded at a special meeting of the Rice CISD Board on May 6.

"I would like to take a moment regarding the vote. "First, I am very much in favor of the process for appointing board seats as set forth in BBB2 of the district policies and procedures," said Thomas.

"This process has served our district well through the years and has allowed for fair geographic district wide representation on the Board. My concern was that once we allowed a person to file and to be voted on, we could not then retroactively disqualify that candidate after the election.

"I hope that in the future, we will uphold BBB2 by enforcing it at the time that a potential candidate files so that that person may be instructed as to the proper board seat for his or her area.

"I also think that it is important that each of us remember that even though we have been elected from a certain part of the district, we have all been elected by a majority from the entire district and it is our primary duty to serve the educational needs of every student," said Thomas.

The Board accepted resignations from Ruth McCauley, ELMS reading teacher; Sharon Webb, R.N.; Dawn Moore, teacher assistant from Sheridan; and Laurie Broughton, RHS English teacher.

Resignations due to retirement were accepted from Jo Ann Bunge, Garwood; Irene Hagendorf, food service director; Fran Hajosky, Sheridan; and Clara Lobpries, Garwood cafeteria. Hajosky will continue as a half-day teacher.

Margie Cason, Martha Flores and Darrell Quinney were approved as district substitutes.

Contracts were approved for Richard Russell to teach and coach boys' basketball at Rice High School and for Lee Politsch to teach freshman English at RHS.

An agreement between the district and Rice District Community Hospital was discussed for the purpose of the provision of contractual health services for an annual cost of $25,000.

Action on the agreement was postponed, pending a few questions by board members. The district is hoping to reach an agreement before Hospital Administration Jim Buckner leaves in June.

In other business, the Board, approved an agreement between the school district and Garwood-Nada Little League to use the baseball field at the Garwood School.

Foot Facts

By Dr. Eric R. Tepper, Podiatrist

SEEING SPOTS BEFORE YOUR FEET

Most people accept that brown spots appearing on the face and hands (sometimes called "liver spots") are just one of those inevitable, if not exactly nice, parts of aging. When dark brown spots start showing up on or above the feet, however, it could be a sign of a more serious problem. Stasis dermatitis is a condition caused by a buildup of fluid in the legs and feet. Due to the deterioration of arterial function, insufficient amounts of oxygen reach the cells of the skin, resulting in the dark discolorations. The spots themselves are not dangerous, but they may early warning signs of a developing serious circulatory disorder.

If you suspect things are not the way they should be concerning your feet, see your podiatrist for an accurate diagnosis. This is the best way to insure a speedy recovery. We have chosen our staff, office procedures, and podiatric equipment to provide you with the finest quality services in a friendly, caring atmosphere. We treat feet of all ages - call 234-5571, at Rice District Community Hospital, for an appointment on Tuesdays.

P.S. If brown spots are caused by poor circulation, little can be done to remove them, but the circulatory problem must be treated.

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