

# VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Published monthly by The Vermont Natural Resources Council, a non-profit citizens' conservation organization supported by membership dues and contributions. 26 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802) 223-2328 Chairman, Jonathan Brownell Executive Director, Seward Weber, Editor, Arthur Williams

June, 1975, Number 40

## IN THE STATE, IN NEW ENGLAND: ENERGY PLANNING INTENSIFIES

Much is happening in the realm of short and long-range energy planning in the state and in the New England region.

In the State: In late April, the State Energy Office, with the approval of Governor Salmon, released a seven-page document describing the goals of a Vermont State Energy Policy. That policy has already drawn fire from the Board of Directors of the Vermont State Chamber of Commerce. Board member Fred Cook, who is also a lobbyist for the Vermont Petroleum Association and the American Petroleum Institute, had this to say about the new state policy: "When I see a state policy formulated by the governor saying we should look away from nuclear power, from coal, from oil and from natural gas, I feel we as the business community should point out it's going to take years to develop wood and wind and solar energy."

In another development, members of the Vermont State Energy Committee have met in Montpelier and will meet again in July to consider proposals for creating a new Department of Energy Planning.

In the Region: The six New England governors have been laboring to set forth a New England energy plan. According to a report in the Boston Globe this regional plan will be at odds with the Vermont State Energy Policy in at least one respect: it will place a heavy emphasis on the importance of nuclear power and the need for cooperation between the several states on the siting of nuclear facilities.

The Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has been busy raising just this question, the siting of nuclear facilities. The NRC has sponsored two workshops, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on May 21, 22 and 23 and in Santa Monica, California, on May 28,

29 and 30. The purpose of these workshops was to examine the feasibility of constructing so-called "nuclear energy center sites."

These "nuclear energy center sites" or nuclear parks would be immense. The idea is to gather together in one location as many as 40 nuclear power generating stations with related facilities such as fuel enrichment, fuel reprocessing, and the storage of high-level radioactive wastes. Nuclear parks would occupy an area as large as 75 square miles; the construction of such a park would take 30 years to build and generate a new community of 50,000 people. Rep. Mike McCormack (D. Washington) has introduced a bill (H.R. 3734) that calls for the construction of at least five nuclear parks in the United States. After October 11, 1977, all nuclear fuel cycle elements would be required to locate in these nuclear energy centers.

The New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution has drawn attention to the fact that the NRC eastern workshop in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was open to the participation of invited experts only, although the public was permitted to attend and observe. Public participation has been confined to a meeting in Washington, D. C. starting June 16 at which time the public may present written and verbal comments.

(VNRC members who may wish to submit their views on nuclear parks should write to Mr. S. H. Smiley, Director, Office of Special Studies, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D. C., 20555.)

## VNRC WINS FIGHT WITH IRS

VNRC has just learned that the IRS is no longer considering a change in the tax status of the Council. This means that the Council continues to be tax exempt, that contributions are tax deductible and that the matter is now closed.



### CENSUS BUREAU REPORTS RURAL POPULATION OUTPACING URBAN REGIONS

For the first time in this century and probably for the first time in the history of this Republic a population movement that saw millions of rural Americans leaving the country for the cities appears to be reversing itself.

Census Bureau surveys since 1970 indicate a major shift in population movement away from metropolitan areas and back to rural places. Census Bureau officials are saying that this new development represents something quite different from the exodus from inner cities to suburbs, a population movement that has been going on for some time.

During the survey period, from 1970 - 1973, non-metropolitan counties (those with no population center of at least 50,000 persons) gained 4.2 percent population. During the same period, metropolitan counties gained 2.9 percent. Between March 1970 and March 1974, an estimated 5.9 million persons moved out of metropolitan areas while 4.1 million moved in, a net loss of 1.8 million.

Calvin L. Beale, a demographer in the Department of Agriculture, made a comment on this new trend: "The vast rural to urban migration of people that was a common pattern of United States population movement in the decades after World War II has been halted, and on balance, even reversed. In the eyes of many Americans, the appeal of major urban areas has diminished and the attractiveness of rural and small-town communities has increased."

Census Bureau officials offer many explanations for this reversal of population movement: the decentralization of light industry; the inclination of rural people to stay where they are; the growth of recreational and retirement communities; the environmental movement; the growing disenchantment with life in urban places; and the surge of young people from the cities determined to make a life on the land, in crafts, or from part-time jobs.

If this new trend is the beginning of a long-term development, then the repercussions

on a rural state such as Vermont could be enormous. The population of Vermont was 390,000 people in 1960; 444,732 in 1970; and 463,000 in 1972. The state's population was growing at a rate of 1.6 percent per year and increasing from 1970-1972 faster than every other state in New England with the exception of New Hampshire. At such a rate, the State Planning Office estimates that the population could be as much as 525,000 by 1980.

If the Census surveys are right in suggesting that the attraction of urban places is declining, then Vermont is vulnerable. To the north is the Montreal area with a rapidly-expanding population of 2.5 million; to the west is Albany, New York, with a population of 115,781; to the south is the great northeast corridor from Boston to Washington, D. C. with a total population of forty million people.

### NATHANIEL FROTHINGHAM NAMED EDITOR OF VER

Nathaniel Frothingham of Randolph became Editor of the VER beginning with the April issue. Frothingham was an English Literature major at Harvard, Class of 1961. He served overseas in East Africa as a teacher of English from 1961-1964. He has been active in environmental affairs. He was a student at the Center for Population Studies at Harvard and the Carolina Population Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In the summer of 1969 he led an educational research project to England and Wales to examine the merits of environmental field teaching as it was being conducted by the (British) Field Studies Council. In Vermont he has been active in organizing workshops on nuclear power and alternative sources of energy. Frothingham was an unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic Party nomination to the U. S. Senate in September, 1974.

### FACT SHEET ON PULP MILL AVAILABLE

Students at Dartmouth College have put together a four-page fact sheet giving most of the important facts and figures on the proposed Parsons and Whittemore pulp mill. VNRC still has a number of copies available and persons interested in this proposal should contact the Montpelier office.



PARSONS AND WHITTEMORE PULP MILL: A  
QUESTION OF TIMING

On May 27th, Seward Weber, along with representatives from the Connecticut River Watershed Council and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, met with EPA Regional Administrator, John McGlennon and his staff. (EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers will play an extensive role in the review of the Parsons and Whittemore (P&W) project and the issuance of the required permits.)

The following are notes from that meeting under two headings: (1) Water Quality and (2) Air Quality.

(1) Water Quality

EPA's national standards for "bleached-kraft" pulp mills are expected to be promulgated this fall. The timing of these standards is all-important to the kinds of requirements that will be imposed on the P&W project.

If the publication of these new standards in the Federal Register precedes "substantial construction" of the Connecticut River facility, the P&W plant will be considered a "new source" of effluent. Under these circumstances its waste treatment system will have to be of the "best available demonstrated technology," and under these circumstances a formal environmental impact statement (EIS) will be required with the usual opportunities for public comment and hearing.

If, however, construction of the plant begins prior to the publication of new effluent standards, the P&W operation would not be considered a new source of effluent. Under these circumstances EPA would insist upon less stringent requirements; it would ask not for the "best available" but for the "best practical control technology currently available." It would then go ahead and grant an effluent "discharge permit" based on this best practical control technology. This permit would remain in effect until 1983 when it would be subject to revision to the "no discharge goal," a goal that is part of the national water pollution control legislation.

The question of an EIS is more subtle. If the construction begins before publication of the new standards, no EIS is legally required; but such a statement could still be required at the discretion of the EPA Regional Administrator.

Nor is the EPA the sole federal body concerned with the waters of the Connecticut River; the Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over construction in navigable waters.

The Army Corps of Engineers must issue a permit to P&W for the construction of intake and outfall structures on the Connecticut River. Even should the Regional Administrator choose not to ask for an EIS, or if no such statement is legally required, the Corps is obliged to issue one in connection with permit regulations for these structures. If an EIS is required it is likely that the Corps would collaborate with EPA in producing such an EIS.

It appears now as if an EIS will probably be required. This means that the public will be able to comment and respond. In any case, the "B" classification of the Connecticut River will have to be maintained.

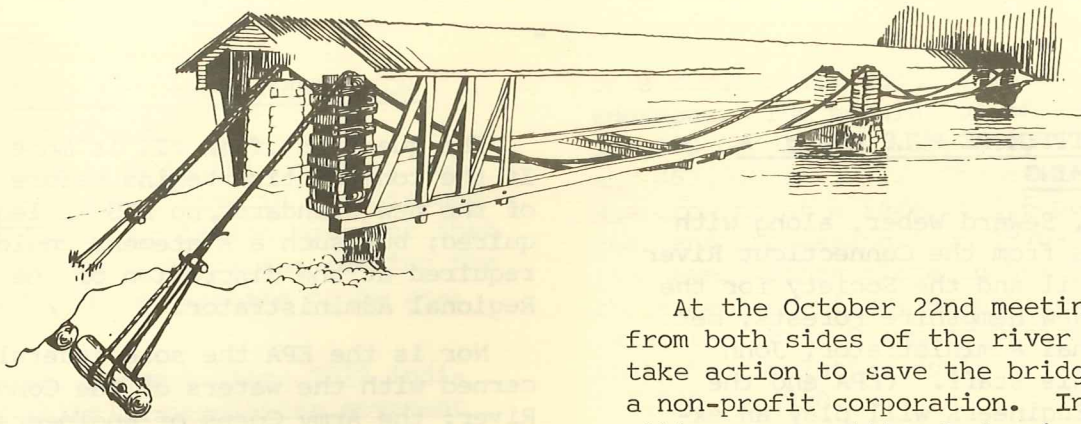
(2) Air Quality

Here again, as in the case of water quality, the applicable federal standards are contingent on the date of construction. The federal new source performance standards for air quality will be published quite soon, by early summer. It is, therefore, less likely that the new pulp mill will escape such new source designation.

If this is true, then EPA will require the use of the best available control technology. P&W will be subject to "non-degradation" requirements. These requirements limit the amount of pollutants that may be added to "clean air" and this limit cannot exceed the federal primary and secondary ambient standards.

At the present time, all air-quality districts have been arbitrarily placed in "Class II." This means that deterioration of air quality will only be tolerated up to a point described as a situation of "moderate, well-controlled growth."

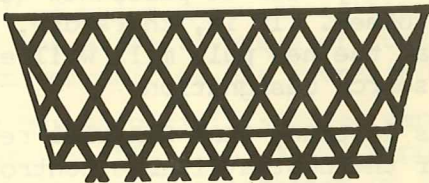




### CITIZENS ARE SAVING COVERED BRIDGE

Citizens in Vermont and New Hampshire have teamed up to form a non-profit organization known as Bedell Covered Bridge, Inc. Members of the organization on both sides of the Connecticut River are working to save the longest two-span bridge of its type in the United States. The Bedell Bridge was built in 1866; it was the fifth and strongest bridge built on the river between Newbury, Vermont and Haverhill, New Hampshire; it has a span of 396 feet; and it is famous for its "Burr Arch" construction.

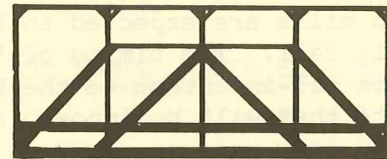
The Bedell Bridge was in active service until 1958 when it was closed to traffic. In 1967 the Towns of Haverhill and Newbury voted to deed their rights in the bridge to the State of New Hampshire with the understanding that the State would repair it and create a wayside park on the New Hampshire side of the river. In 1970 the New Hampshire Legislature voted money for this purpose but these funds were diverted.



**TOWN LATTICE TRUSS**

Then came the floods of June and July of 1973. Water rose to a level of two feet above the floor of the old structure and seriously weakened the bridge. The New Hampshire Highway Department feared that the bridge would collapse. In the fall of 1973 the State of New Hampshire entered into an agreement with HUD to demolish the bridge with federal flood-relief assistance. This was the state of affairs when a public hearing was called on October 22, 1973.

At the October 22nd meeting citizens from both sides of the river decided to take action to save the bridge. They formed a non-profit corporation. In one week a citizens' committee had raised \$60,000. This was enough money to give legal assurances to the State of New Hampshire that repairs would go forward on a fixed timetable, that the state would be protected against liability, and that, should the project fail at any point, the cost of demolition would be borne by the citizens' group.

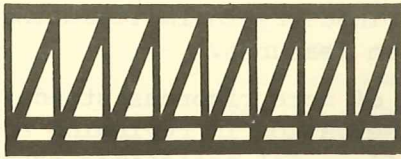


**QUEEN POST TRUSS**

Graton Associates of Ashland, New Hampshire, is repairing the bridge. This firm specializes in heavy rigging, building moving and bridge reconstruction. Milton Graton, who is leading the reconstruction effort has devised a bold plan for lifting the sagging bridge. Ordinarily a bridge is repaired by crib work erected in the river, but the Connecticut River between Newbury and Haverhill is deep and fast-running, so Graton decided to suspend the bridge from steel slings in order to allow work to be performed on its many parts. It is as if a "saving suspension bridge" had been erected within the shell of the old structure.

Stephen Wellington, President of Bedell Covered Bridge, Inc., reports an active response to appeals. The State of Vermont has contributed \$10,000. The Towns of Newbury and Haverhill have chipped in \$500 apiece, and the Town of Newbury recently voted another \$500. Membership in the non-profit organization is over 1000 members and 890 of these have contributed \$5 or more.

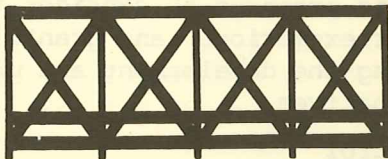




**HAUPT TRUSS**

An estimated \$200,000 will be needed before the bridge is ready to be reopened to pedestrians and bicycles with a park on the New Hampshire side. Wellington hopes that the bridge can be opened in time for the Bicentennial celebration in July of 1976.

Wellington emphasized the need for further contributions. At the same time the non-profit citizens' group is looking for help from the State of New Hampshire. A bill filed in the New Hampshire Legislature would commit \$48,000 to build the park and contribute to the cost of repair. The State of New Hampshire has asked that the bridge be entered on the National Register of Historic Sites. The bridge reconstruction project might then qualify for some of the \$90,000 of federal funds set aside for historic preservation in New Hampshire. If this happens, Wellington is confident that Bedell Covered Bridge, Inc. can raise the rest.



**BURR TRUSS**

(VNRC members wishing to contribute to the reconstruction project should make checks payable to BEDELL COVERED BRIDGE, INC., care of Mrs. Isobel Whitney, Treasurer, Box 37, Haverhill, New Hampshire, 03765.)

#### ENVIRONMENTAL LEAFLET SERIES CONTINUES

Dr. Hubert Vogelmann has written the latest of a continuing "environmental leaflet series," VERMONT MOUNTAIN LANDS: A Critical Resource, which is enclosed with this issue.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL LEAFLETS (cont.)

VNRC appeals to its members who would like to sponsor a leaflet. The cost of writing, printing and distributing 3,000 copies of each leaflet is approximately \$300.00.

#### VERMONT BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION AWARDS GRANTS FOR TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

The Vermont Bicentennial Commission has awarded \$52,416 to towns and cities throughout the state for the purpose of townscape improvement projects. This sum includes a 1973 grant of \$6000 to the VNRC for a project to improve the visual landscape of WINDSOR and BELLOWS FALLS, a project that was carried out in association with Vision, Inc. and the Vermont Division of Historic Sites.

These are projects that have been assisted by the Vermont Bicentennial Commission:

CHESTER, \$3000, park and townscape improvement; CASTLETON, \$2000, townscape study conducted by Vision, Inc.; BENNINGTON, \$5000, downtown improvement project; MONTPELIER, \$2500, trees, shrubs, annuals; BURLINGTON, \$7000, city mall; BRADFORD, \$2416, townscape improvement; BROWNINGTON, \$300, townscape improvement; HARDWICK, \$1000, townscape improvement; LYNDONVILLE, \$1500, restoring fountain in the middle of town; MANCHESTER, \$1500, constructing footpath along the Battenkill River; ST. ALBANS, \$5000, restoration and improvement of Taylor Park; WAITSFIELD, \$5000, creating a village green; ROCKINGHAM, \$7000, improvement of canal and downtown area; WEST RUTLAND, \$500, downtown improvement; WEST WINDSOR, \$700, downtown improvement; WINDSOR, \$2000, architectural assistance.

These awards were part of the Community Bicentennial Program of the Vermont Bicentennial Program of the Vermont Bicentennial Commission. They were grants of money made to Town Bicentennial Committees. According to Mrs. Nancy Knox, Assistant Director of the VBC, the Commission is not permitted to make grants to individuals.



## VERMONT STATE ENERGY POLICY: CONSERVATION, ALTERNATIVE SOURCES AND PUBLIC CONTROL

The Vermont State Energy Policy emphasizes three major points: energy conservation; the use of renewable alternative sources of energy; and the public stake in the development of any energy resource, including the exploration and development of off-shore oil.

### Energy Conservation

The following programs have begun and will continue:

- (1) Speed restrictions on highways with strict enforcement.
- (2) Prohibition of utility company advertising designed to stimulate consumer demand for power.
- (3) Restrictions of heating temperatures in appropriate public buildings and a campaign to urge the public to set thermostats at 68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night.
- (4) The building of commuter parking lots to encourage car pooling.
- (5) A home insulation program to assist low-income people.
- (6) Support for utility company experimental programs to shift consumer demand for electricity to off-peak hours.

The State of Vermont will support the adoption of the following energy conservation measures:

- (1) Use of the state's taxing power to reduce consumer demand for scarce petroleum supplies.

(The state recognizes the inequities of such a program and would extend "compensation" or "relief" to members of society who were hardest hit by such a measure.)

- (2) (If the Federal Government fails to act,) a system of tax incentives or penalties to encourage the use of efficient, energy-saving vehicles.

- (3) Development of mass transit facilities where these might be feasible in a rural state.

- (4) Tax credits and other incentives to encourage better insulation and reduce the waste of heat.

- (5) Technical assistance to small businesses and industry in implementing energy conservation measures.

- (6) Use of more rigorous standards of energy conservation in reviewing applications for financial assistance from business and industry.

- (7) Application of more rigorous standards of energy conservation in the construction of state-aided buildings, particularly schools.

### Alternative Sources of Energy

The State of Vermont does not accept coal as a solution to its energy problems. There are difficulties with the transportation of coal, with pollution, and with the impact of coal mining on the environment. In the short term, certain utilities presently using oil may be converted to coal providing air quality standards are not compromised.

While nuclear power is not rejected, the state does not accept the proposition that nuclear power is the most feasible choice open to it.

The state does intend to encourage the use of renewable alternative sources of energy: wood, water, solar energy and wind. The state is prepared to consider tax incentives or exemptions and grants as ways of promoting the development and use of such alternatives.

### Public Control

The state does not favor any widening of federal authority in the control of matters that have traditionally been the responsibility of bodies such as the Vermont Public Service Board.

The state does not wish to see the development of future supplies of electricity retarded because of a lack of funds. The state will explore additional methods of financing the anticipated needs of utility companies and corporations.

The State of Vermont shares a concern with coastal states about the impact of off-shore oil development on the shoreland areas of northeastern United States. Vermont believes that the exploration of off-shore resources should be separated from the development of these resources.



## VERMONT STATE ENERGY POLICY (Cont.)

"Vermont regards Outer Continental Shelf resources as public resources and should decisions be made to develop such resources, adequate provisions should be made to insure equitable distribution of supplies in accord with the public need. The state does not support the contention that availability of the resource should be left to traditional marketplace forces."

VNRC is studying the Vermont State Energy Policy and has raised a number of questions with the State Energy Office in an effort to develop a formal reaction to the policy statement.

### TWO STUDIES ON WOOD POTENTIAL WILL BE COMPLETED BY END OF SUMMER

Two separate studies are currently being conducted on the potential of wood as a source of energy: one by the Governor's Task Force on Wood as a Source of Energy and a second by JPR Associates who are working under a \$19,000 contract administered by the Department of Forests and Parks.

Rep. Samuel Lloyd (D. Weston) is Chairman of the Governor's Task Force, basically a group of distinguished citizens. Rep. Lloyd has indicated a probable delay in the submission of the Task Force report; it was originally due on June 30th. Rep. Lloyd explained the importance of coordinating findings from the two studies so that recommendations can represent the work of both panels. It will probably be the end of the summer before these reports are completed.

The Governor's Task Force has broken into five subcommittees for the purpose of its investigations. These committees are studying: (1) timber supplies; (2) the technical problems of burning wood efficiently; (3) the economic impact of using wood more widely; (4) the environmental impact of such use; and (5) the harvesting systems that are currently available.

A recent U. S. Forest Service report entitled, "A Preview of Vermont's Forest Resource," provides data from a 1973 inventory of the state's woodlands. This report indicates that forest land occupies 75 percent of the total land area in Vermont. Not so encouraging is the discovery that "Vermont's forest lands have lower annual net growth than those in the rest of New England." This situation stems from the fact that our forest stands need a major program of timber stand improvement.

There is too much junk wood and not enough growing stock in our forests. The two reports that will be released at the end of this summer will have more to say on this subject along with specific recommendations.

### CORRECTION

In the May issue of the VER it was stated that amendments to the "Bottle Bill" take effect in 1976; this is incorrect; these amendments will take effect on January 1, 1977.

### VNRC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclosed are my dues of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 1975  
VNRC membership. ( ) New ( ) Renewal

Student	\$ 5.00	Non-profit Org.	\$15.00
Individual	7.50	Associate	25.00
Family	10.00	Business	50.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please accept my additional contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for VNRC projects.

The following persons would be interested in learning of the Council's activities. (Please Print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

You may use my name: ( ) Yes ( ) No



LEGISLATION IN U. S. HOUSE AND SENATE WILL  
NOT AFFECT CONSTRUCTION OF ROUTE 7

Recent reports in the press suggest that there is considerable confusion over what a number of proposals to amend the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would or would not do to the construction of the "Super 7" highway or the Bennington belt-line. It is widely believed that a bill recently passed by the U. S. House and since amended by the Senate would, if enacted, allow continued construction of Route 7. This is erroneous.

Various legislative proposals came about as a result of a decision by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in the Conservation Society of Southern Vermont case last December. In that case, the Court enjoined further construction of Route 7 on two grounds: first, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), not the Vermont Highway Department, must prepare the "environmental impact statement" (EIS) on the project; and second, an EIS must be prepared for the entire Route 7 corridor, and not merely one portion of it.

The House-passed bill, H.R. 3130, deals only with the first of these two grounds. The FHWA claimed that it did not have enough personnel to prepare impact statements for every highway project throughout the country. This argument apparently carried the day in the House. In the House version of the bill

the FHWA would be required not only to participate in the preparation of an EIS, but also to conduct an independent review.

The Senate version of the bill differs in two important respects from that of the House: first, the circumstances in which a federal agency may delegate preparation of an EIS are more limited and second, if a highway project would have effects beyond the boundaries of a single state then the FHWA must prepare an environmental impact statement.

Under the Senate version, then, the FHWA would still have to prepare an EIS for the proposed Route 7 that runs from Connecticut to Burlington, Vermont. Nor can the Bennington Beltline or other portions of Route 7 be built under either the House or the Senate bill. The Second Circuit Court injunction still remains in effect and would remain in effect until an adequate EIS is prepared for the entire Route 7 corridor.

MRS. BURNHAM OFFERS A SUGGESTION

Mrs. Bernice Burnham of Waterbury (an active member and past Treasurer of VNRC), suggests that it would be helpful to recycle magazines such as National Wildlife and the Sierra Club Bulletin by donating them to schools, libraries, hospitals and nursing homes.

**VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL  
26 STATE STREET  
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