

# The Debs Foundation Newsletter

P.O. BOX 843, TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47808



Spring, 1990

## Tilford Dudley Dies At Age 82

For persons like Tilford Dudley, death always seems premature and untimely. Coming to mind is who will replace him, who has vision to lead and energy to get things done? The Debs Foundation is only one of the organizations impacted by Tilford's life and saddened at his passing. *The New York Times* headlined his obituary with "New Deal Labor Aide Dies." (Jan. 22, 1990) *The Washington Post* article said that he was "head of D.C. Democrats." (Jan. 23, 1990)



*Tilford Speaking, 1964*

A native of Charleston, Illinois, Tilford achieved prominence for his work as a trial examiner for the National Labor Relations Board in the late 1930's and as a union official from the mid-1940's to the late 1960's. After graduation from Harvard Law School in 1931, he practiced law for three years in Aurora, Illinois, then moved to Washington to work in the Roosevelt administration. From 1934 to 1944, he held five positions in that administration. His most controversial post was that of a trial examiner with the NLRB. He issued findings on charges of unfair labor practices in cases that involved Ford Motor Company, Fansteel, and *The New York Times*.

Leaving government work in 1944, Tilford went to work for the United Meat Packinghouse Workers of America and for the CIO, thus beginning 25 years of service with organized labor. After the AFL-CIO merger, he was head of the federation's speakers bureau, and it was from that vantage point that his major contributions to the fledgling Eugene V. Debs Foundation were made.

Tilford had visited Terre Haute numerous times by 1962, had talked about the sad fate of Debs' home with such equally concerned professors at Indiana State University as Bob Constantine, Woody Creason, and Howard Hamilton. So in 1962, he said: "Fellows, it's now or never if the house is to be saved." That day Tilford negotiated a deal with the contractor who owned the property, put up \$100 of the required \$200 earnest money, and set about raising the \$2,000 for the down payment. He used his legal skills to write the articles of incorporation, and he and such others as Dallas Sells went out beating the bushes to raise money for the \$9,000 purchase price and the extensive restoration work which was necessary.

Tilford continued his constructive participation as a Foundation officer and one of the Trustees of the Foundation's Endowment Fund. In 1985, we honored him with the Theodore Debs Distinguished Service Award. He last attended our annual award banquet in 1987, our 25th anniversary year. Since then health problems related to cancer prevented his travel to Terre Haute. Last November he moved from D.C. to Bellingham, Washington, so that his son, Rick, could give him the attention that his deteriorating health necessitated.

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## Plaque Unveilings Set For April 28

What could be more appropriate for the year of the Debs Homes' 100th anniversary than to dedicate plaques honoring several pioneers of the labor movement who were contemporaries of Eugene Debs? Ceremonies are planned April 28 for plaques memorializing Peter J. McGuire and Patrick J. Quinlan. Others are in planning stages for the fall.

The Memorial Gardens for labor pioneers were dedicated in 1977, and plaque number six, for Joseph Beirne, was added last fall. The two to be added this spring will complete the originally planned eight plaques for the south half of the wall, so those added this fall will go on the north section.

Both McGuire and Quinlan were contemporaries of Debs, in craft unions which at that time were skeptical of the

*continued on page 6*

### APRIL EVENTS

#### Earth Day 1990

April 19, 7:30 p.m., Lecture,  
"Think Globally—Act Locally,"  
ISU Holmstedt Hall 102  
April 22, 3:00 p.m., To Plant A  
Tree, Debs Home

#### Plaque Dedication Day

April 28, 9:00 a.m., "Labor  
Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow,"  
ISU Holmstedt Hall 102  
11:00 a.m., Reception, Debs Home  
11:30 a.m., Plaque Unveiling,  
Debs Home  
2:00 p.m., Business Meeting

# An Anniversary To Celebrate The Debs Home Turns 100

We Americans are not noted for building things to last. Ours has been a throw-away society, because of the way we build and care for our cars, our toys, containers, and even our houses. Not many residences in a city like Terre Haute reach age 100. The house has to be built right in the first place, it needs a bit of luck along the way to stand up to the whims and vicissitudes of nature, and requires more than a little commitment to preservation on the part of owners from generation to generation.

It is a pity that none of the fine homes once owned by the neighbors of Kate and Eugene Debs have been preserved. A large number of persons had to be involved, especially in the late 1960's, to preserve the Debs Home. Tens of thousands of dollars were spent to purchase and restore the residence, and the expenses continue. In just the last five years a number of major maintenance and preservation costs have been incurred, some reflecting the cycles related to the durability and wear-life of materials and equipment. The biggest expense was \$25,000 to replace the slate shingles and copper trim on the roof. \$4,000 went to replace the guttering and downspouts, \$2,000 to replace the air conditioner, and an equal amount for the furnace. \$3,000 for new storm windows, \$800 to reshingle the porch roof, and \$50 here, \$20 there to replace worn locks, faucets, tank valves, etc. A big ticket item facing us now—close to \$4,000—is the replacement of the security system which provides burglar and fire alarm service. This equipment is absolutely essential for hazard protection and for making the property insurable, and is another case where equipment seems to have gone through a life cycle. A house's 100th anniversary should not pass unnoticed, and several activities are planned to call attention to the vintage of the Debs Home. Several fall activities will be announced in the next newsletter. Spring activities are planned for two weekends in late April, the schedule of which is listed on page 1 of this newsletter.

## To Plant a Tree

A tree is a marvelous thing, adding color to our drab concrete jungles, providing cooling shade, a sound barrier against the snarl and rumble of our engines, and habitat for some of nature's most charming creatures. The rustle and whisper of wind through trees is one of the sweetest of nature's lullabies.

Trees are environmental wonders. They remove carbon dioxide from the air, help to control erosion, and serve as wind breaks. Urban forestry is an act you can join. Plant a tree and help save our environment.

## DEBS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Spring

1990

Published by

The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

Box 843

Terre Haute, IN 47808

Foundation Officers:

Jack Sheinkman, *President*

Noel Beasley, *Executive Vice President*

Charles King, *Secretary*

Woodrow Creason, *Treasurer*

The *Debs Foundation Newsletter* will be published twice yearly for distribution to members and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum and shrine to labor, and carries on educational and informational programs which aim to honor and promote the goals for which Debs struggled: industrial unionism, social justice, and peace. For those wishing to become members, an application form is provided elsewhere in this issue.

## Highlights of the 1989 Banquet

As usual, the award banquet was the highpoint of activities last year. Held on November 4, it missed falling on the birthday of Eugene Debs by one calendar day. An added feature, and one to be repeated several times this year, was the unveiling of a plaque memorializing the founder of one of the country's great labor organizations, Joseph Beirne, of the Communications Workers of America.

Morton Bahr was a worthy recipient of the 1989 Debs Award, a warm and appreciative honored guest, and participant in a number of activities of the day, including the plaque unveiling for Joseph Beirne, founder of CWA.

A pleasant thing about the annual banquet is the opportunity to see persons who are regulars at our activities and have over the years become friends. Just as rewarding is to meet new people, and to know that they have for the first time had the opportunity to visit the Debs Home and to participate in one of our banquets. We know that they are not likely to forget the experience. Perhaps a larger than usual number of "first-timers" were in attendance, some being brought by the added attraction for CWA members of the plaque unveiling.

An extra this year was for the recipient of the Bryant Spann Memorial Prize for literature to be in attendance. Major Carlos Wilson shared with us information from his experience and work, concerning the United States' involvement in Morocco's savage war against the people of the Western Sahara. We were pleased also to be able to recognize at the banquet the workers who replaced the roof on the Debs Home.

Work and planning are already underway for this year's banquet, of course, and announcement will be made regarding some of these plans at the spring business meeting.

Photos from the banquet are featured on page 3.

## Transitions: Debs 100 Years Ago

It is natural that the vignettes appearing on this page which chronicle the life of Eugene Debs should focus largely on major events in his public life. Last spring's newsletter described some of the trial-and-error which occurred as Debs' career with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen was drawing to a close and it was not clear what would follow. In 1890, thirty-five-year-old Debs was to serve as Grand Secretary of BLF for another year, and as editor of its magazine for a couple more, but he increasingly was frustrated by the divisiveness within the house of labor, and its ineffectiveness in dealing with management and the government.

Every person has both a public and a private life, and 1890 was transitional for Debs in both. This was the year the Debs' ceased being renters and bought a house, one built to Eugene's specifications on a lot at 451 North 8th Street. It was an expensive house in a very nice neighborhood, and was to be home to Gene Debs until his death in 1926, and Kate's a decade later. For Kate, it was a large, impressive residence which she could decorate and arrange to express the housewife's refined tastes and social standing. For Eugene, it was home and an adequate place to entertain such occasional prominent guests as Robert Ingersoll and the more frequent visitor, James Whitcomb Riley.

We do not know the exact date when the Debs moved into the new house, but it was prior to April 1, 1890, for on that date Eugene wrote the following letter to the famous Hoosier poet.

My Dear Riley:

I write to ask if it will be agreeable for you to be here Tuesday evening the 8th to participate in an entertain-

ment to be given for the benefit of the families of the Indianapolis firemen who recently perished at their post. The undertaking is a most laudable one and **all Terre Haute** (*emphasis his*) wants to see you.

Besides, I want you as my guest for a day or two, or as much longer as you can stay—We have **lately moved into our new home** (*emphasis added*) and nothing would afford us more pleasure than to have you visit us—Mrs. Debs joins me cordially in extending this invitation. The visit will do you good and we will enjoy ourselves together—Please answer soon as I leave on Thursday night for the East, returning on Tuesday.

Yours always,

E.V. Debs (*signed*)

This personal correspondence from Debs to Riley dates the house's occupancy as prior to April 1, 1890, and it brings out several facets of his lifestyle. There was the social side. Eugene was a genial conversationalist, and it is alleged that both he and Riley were at their social "best" with a bottle of wine to lighten the occasion. There was the preoccupation with causes, this one involving the families of Indianapolis firemen who died in the line of duty. And there was travel, day in, day out, as he worked tirelessly for important causes. There is no question but that his work kept Debs away from home more nights than he was able to sleep there from 1890 until his death, but he often wrote while he was away of his desire to be home in Terre Haute. When he did return, for an interlude in his overly demanding schedule, it often was to recuperate and then prepare for the next campaign, speaking tour, or labor rally, but Kate was always there to make it more than a house, it was home.



Johnson, Mann and Bahr (left to right)



Bahr Presented Award by Sheinkman



# The Endowment Fund Experiences Growth and Change



*Don Moll Retires*

The Foundation's Endowment Fund was created in 1963 to provide a secure financial base from which to operate. The goal was for a fund of \$250,000, the current value of which would be close to three times that amount. It was initially planned that none of the income from the fund would be used for operating expenses, and would be used solely for research and educational programs. In 1974, however, a resolution was passed instructing that each year half of the income from the fund would be available to meet the rising costs of operation of the Debs Home. For three years, in spite of major expenses related to maintenance and repair, money has been transferred into the fund rather than taken out, this made possible through income from dues payments and banquet-related income. Then the big boost came when \$80,000 from the estate of Oscar Edelman was added. The amount in the fund was \$108,503 at the end of 1987, \$120,303 at the end of 1988, and \$219,575 at the end of 1989. This is a neat sum, no matter how you look

at it, and represents encouraging growth. But as was mentioned in the last newsletter, it is less than one-half what would be needed to produce enough income annually to support the hiring of a full-time museum director/curator.

Changes are upcoming in leadership of the fund. The three Endowment Fund Trustees have been Don Moll, Dallas Sells, and Tilford Dudley, who happened to be the Foundation's principal fundraisers, Dudley and Sells, and the accountant who did the book work, Don Moll. The death of Tilford has left one position open, and Don Moll has retired from his position with UAW, and has requested that he be relieved of his trustee duties. The Foundation is deeply grateful to Mr. Moll and to his union for the invaluable services rendered over the years, but of course we must accede to his wishes to be relieved of these responsibilities at this stage in his career.

So there is growth and change to report for the fund. Things are looking good, but there is work to be done!

## TILFORD DUDLEY *continued from page 1...*

Tilford Dudley will be remembered as a person deeply involved in many issues of social concern, evidenced in his work for labor and his voluntary work for the Democratic Party, his church, and many progressive causes. In 1968, as head of the D.C. Democratic Party, he ran afoul of Lyndon Johnson for his outspoken opposition to the Vietnam War. When the Foundation's newsletter was started, Tilford called me to offer congratulations on the product and he singled out his pleasure that the word, "peace," was included in the masthead, along with organized labor and social justice, as cornerstones of the Debsian tradition.

A fitting way to conclude this article is to repeat the tribute which was shared with the guests at the memorial service held in Washington, D.C. at Tilford's church, the Cleveland Park Congregational Church.

"Tilford Dudley was a charter member of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, founded in 1962, and he played a decisive role in the Foundation's life virtually until his passing. He drew up the charter and did the legal work for incorporation, and provided leadership in fundraising and the setting of directions for the organization. Always dignified, always calm but forceful, he was a man of great vision. We shared common goals: progressive unionism, social justice, and peace. Driven by such commitments, he helped make the world a better place. The Foundation honored Tilford with the Theodore Debs Distinguished Service Award in 1985."

## 1989

### Financial Report Eugene V. Debs Foundation

#### Disbursements

Terre Haute Postmaster .....	\$ 836.61	Indiana Dept. of Revenue .....	28.71
Public Service Indiana .....	1,143.97	Indiana Secretary of State .....	20.00
Terre Haute Gas Corp. ....	1,043.36	Ace Washer (for A/C) .....	696.74
General Telephone Co. ....	683.46	Eula Bringham (lecture) .....	1,000.00
U.S. Sprint .....	565.48	Certificate of Deposit .....	2,000.00
Indiana-American Water Co. ..	210.91	Macmillan Publishing .....	143.56
City of Terre Haute Sewage ...	99.00	Tim King .....	53.00
Jewett Printing .....	7,316.31	MAB Paints .....	41.04
Illiana Pest Control .....	225.00	Tribune-Star .....	48.00
Video of Terre Haute .....	40.00	Heinl's Floral .....	50.00
ISU Library .....	1,000.00	ISU Hulman Center .....	505.00
Hanna-Debs Scholarships .....	800.00	Hemminghouse Signs .....	243.00
ISU Division of Printing .....	145.25	Conservatory of Music .....	75.00
ISU Audio Visual Center .....	72.50	Azar Catering .....	2,930.65
Laughrey Bros. Roofing .....	28,213.27	Spring Dinner (Creason) .....	178.80
Supreme Heating & Cooling .....	57.66	Total .....	\$144,753.46
Debs Foundation			
Endowment Fund .....	88,000.00		
Michael Bailey (labor) .....	60.00		
Markle Insurance .....	1,077.00		
Mr. Emblem (t-shirts) .....	1,535.00		
Labor News			
(Indiana AFL-CIO) .....	78.00		
Meier Johan-Wengler, Inc. ....	871.99		
Spann Award			
(Sherrill & Wilson) .....	1,000.00		
Pell Studio .....	267.60		
Terre Haute Housing NOW .....	100.00		
Lumber & Supplies (King) .....	181.04		
Powell-Stephenson .....	45.93		
City Plumbing & Heating .....	68.76		
Merchants National Bank .....	14.00		
Radio Shack .....	94.85		
Walls .....	135.00		
Gorham Bronze .....	27.02		
Mike Lanke .....	5.00		

#### Receipts

Membership Dues .....	\$ 5,350.00
Certificate of Deposit .....	4,300.00
Ads in Dinner Program .....	7,660.00
Dinner Tickets .....	5,900.00
Hilton Hanna Family .....	400.00
Sales at House .....	1,252.19
Oscar K. Edelman Estate .....	112,495.98
Garden Plaque (CWA) .....	2,000.00
Contribution .....	2,220.01
Ed Spann .....	1,000.00
Total Receipts .....	142,578.18
Balance as of	
Jan. 1, 1989 .....	6,496.68
Grand Total .....	149,674.85
Less Disbursements .....	144,753.46
Balance as of	
Jan. 1, 1990 .....	4,921.39
Savings Account .....	820.10

# Earth Day 1990: A Greening for America

Earth Day was observed across America first in 1970 and annually since. Centered mainly on university campuses, but taken up also by other organizations, the event was to educate and mobilize the public to the grave dangers facing Planet Earth, threats caused by too many people being too reckless and unconcerned about what their lifestyles do to our planet, to its resources, and to its air and water.

A couple of years ago, I was furious when I heard a member of the Reagan administration express the opinion that were a trade-off necessary between a higher material standard of living and a couple of years less in life span, a vast majority of Americans would go for the higher lifestyle. On second thought, I hoped he was wrong, but was not certain. One thing I do know, there is a lot of educating to be done if we as Americans are to make intelligent, tough decisions on energy policy, waste disposal, chemicals used in agriculture, recycling, and a host of other environmental issues.

In 1970, Charles Reich wrote a book on *The Greening of America*. Reich thought that a new breed of young Americans was going to take charge and change things as regarded war and peace, the population problem, and environmental pollution. His evidence was the activism of college students opposing the war in Vietnam and rebelling against the extravagant materialism of our lifestyle.

The greening of America has had its ebb and flow in the past 20 years. While our administration was advocating more studies and assuring us that we can be selfish and enjoy our materialism, because science and technology will find ways around the environmental hazards our consumerism causes, in Europe the so-called "Green Movement" was becoming a force to be reckoned with. Many in America know of the "Greens" in Western Europe mainly for their anti-nuclear and peace stance. As a matter of fact, their party name comes from their focus on envi-

ronmental issues. About five years ago I visited a friend in the beautiful Black Forest area of Germany, and he expressed the Greens' concern for the environment when he said: "It is a good thing that you have come to see the Black Forest now. In ten years it may be dead, due to acid rain." Not brought out in the news coverage of the exciting recent changes in Eastern Europe is the role which the Green Party played in the overthrow of governments, both in grass roots tactics and in promoting the environment as a protest issue.

The accomplishments of the "greening" of Europe can at this point in time easily be over-estimated. In many regards they are still catching up to the United States in facing up to environmental problems. There is some basis for predicting that the decade of the 1990's will be the environmental decade. It better be! Our waste dumps are full, acid rain falls from our skies, and we are over 50% dependent on imported oil. George Bush ran for office promising to be the environmental president. He said this in Boston harbor, remember?

Some labor organizations have been trying to educate on the problem. The United Automobile Workers, for example, has since 1970 been encouraging its locals to promote Earth Day activities. Environmental issues have been discussed by such progressive political groups as the Socialist Party USA.

Were Gene Debs alive, he likely would be out front on this one as he was on so many fundamental issues of his day. It is appropriate for the Debs Foundation to join with Indiana State University in promoting Earth Day 1990.

The Earth Day theme is "Think Globally—Act Locally." We will do this with a public address by an expert on the environment, and by planting a tree on the Debs museum property.

*"Think Globally—Act Locally," an address by Larry Gordon, expert on environmental health. Holmstedt Hall 102, ISU, April 19, 7:30 p.m.*

**One Thing  
You Can Do...  
Pass Your Newsletter On  
or  
Place It  
in a Reading Room**

***Are Your 1990  
Dues Paid?***

## Membership Dues: The Eugene V. Debs Foundation

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \$ 5.00 - Student Member ☐ \$100.00 - Sustaining Member  
☐ \$10.00 - Regular Member ☐ \$250.00 - Life Member  
☐ \$25.00 - Supporting Member ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount

Enclose remittance. Make checks payable to the Debs Foundation.

The Debs Foundation  
P.O. Box 843  
Terre Haute, IN 47808

Your dues and contributions are tax deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Debs Home and offers several educational and cultural programs. We are a voluntary organization with no paid staff.

## UNVEILINGS *continued from page 1...*

merits of trying to organize low-skilled workers into industrial type unions. A lot of strong-willed and courageous men were struggling and often disagreeing more than a little about how to give definition and direction to the labor movement. They still disagree at times, of course, but now often give their differences such a polite term as "jurisdictional disputes." It is another vindication of the progressive stance which Gene Debs took that after a century his courageous pioneering work is held in such high esteem by many in the labor movement that they are pleased to have their founders memorialized at the Debs museum. One of our frustrations until recently has been that there were so few plaques on the memorial wall that many visitors to the home have bypassed the gardens. We sense that visitors now will not want

to miss the garden tour.

Each plaque has a story to tell, each a tribute to the special contributions made by a pioneer labor leader. The plaques for McGuire and Quinlan will join those already placed for Michael Quill, Walter Reuther, Samuel Gompers, William Sylvis, Jerry Wurf, and Joseph Beirne. It will be worth your effort to be here April 28 to join our brothers and sisters from two great labor organizations in the day's activities. Not incidental is that this is the date designated by the AFL-CIO as Labor Memorial Day. The activities scheduled for this day will cause us to reflect in a constructive way on the continuity of past, present, and future of organizations whose members have and continue to struggle for social justice, individual rights, and better, safer places to work and live.



### **PATRICK J. QUINLAN**

**1849 - 1893**

**PRESIDENT**

**UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEMEN AND  
APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND  
PIPEFITTING INDUSTRY OF THE  
UNITED STATES AND CANADA  
1889 - 1892**

A PLUMBER BORN IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, PATRICK J. QUINLAN WAS A MEMBER OF AN INDEPENDENT LOCAL OF PLUMBERS PRIOR TO THE FOUNDING OF THE UA. IN 1889, HE BEGAN CORRESPONDING WITH RICHARD A. O'BRIEN, SECRETARY OF THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR DISTRICT ASSEMBLY 85, AND PHILIP GRACE, EDITOR OF THE PIPE TRADES LABOR JOURNAL, THE RASP, WITH THE INTENTION OF FORMING ONE, UNITED ORGANIZATION IN THE PIPE TRADES.

QUINLAN WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FLEDGLING ORGANIZATION AT THE FOUNDING CONVENTION IN OCTOBER, 1889. WHEN HE DIED IN 1893, HIS OBITUARY READ: "ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATION KNOW THAT IN HIS DEMISE THEY HAVE LOST A SELF-SACRIFICING MEMBER WHO NEVER SHIRKED A DUTY, AND WHO WAS EVER PRESENT WHEN NEEDED."

PRESENTED BY  
THE UNITED ASSOCIATION OF PLUMBERS  
AND PIPEFITTERS - 1990



### **PETER J. McGUIRE**

**1852 - 1906**

**FOUNDER AND GENERAL SECRETARY  
UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND  
JOINERS OF AMERICA  
1881 - 1901**

**FATHER OF LABOR DAY**

PETER J. McGUIRE WAS FOUNDER OF THE UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA IN 1881 AND ITS GENERAL SECRETARY UNTIL 1901, CREATING THE LARGEST CONSTRUCTION/INDUSTRIAL INTERNATIONAL UNION IN NORTH AMERICA.

IN THE YEAR 1881, McGUIRE HELPED TO FOUND THE CONFEDERATION OF AMERICAN TRADE UNIONS WHICH LATER BECAME THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR. HE SERVED AS THE AFL'S FIRST SECRETARY, AND SERVED MANY YEARS ON ITS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

DURING HIS LIFETIME, McGUIRE, THE SON OF IRISH IMMIGRANTS, TRAVELED THROUGHOUT THE LAND FIGHTING FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS, LEADING CAMPAIGNS FOR PROTECTIVE LAWS.

ONE OF HIS OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

HE IS KNOWN AS "THE FATHER OF LABOR DAY."

PRESENTED 1990 BY THE  
UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

## **EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION**

P.O. BOX 843  
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47808

**Address Correction Requested**

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