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PRIMALITY OF A CERTAIN CLASS OF INTEGERS

by

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B A L L I S T I C   R E S E A R C H   L A B O R A T O R I E S

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PRIMALITY OF A CERTAIN CLASS OF INTEGERS

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RDT & E Project No. 1P014501A14B

A B E R D E E N   P R O V I N G   G R O U N D ,   M A R Y L A N D

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PRIMALITY OF A CERTAIN CLASS OF INTEGERS

ABSTRACT

This report is concerned with determining the primeness of the members of a class of numbers of the form,  $B_p = \frac{2^p + 1}{3}$ , where  $p$  is an odd prime. This class is similar to the Mersenne and Fermat numbers. A theorem is proven which characterizes the factors of  $B_p$ . This study was conducted using BRLESC, the high-speed digital computer at BRL and a description is given of the program used. Finally, the  $B_p$ 's that were found to be prime as well as the  $B_p$ 's that were found to be composite are tabulated.

The Mersenne numbers, which have the general form  $M_p = 2^p - 1$ , and the family of numbers, the Fermat numbers, which have the form  $F_p = 2^{2^p} + 1$ , have been studied for centuries. Just recently a renewed interest in them has been brought about by the use of the high-speed computers (see, for example, [3]\*).

Since the Fermat numbers cannot be prime unless  $p$  is a power of two (i.e., unless  $p = 2^m$  for some integer  $m$ ), the Fermat numbers have been defined as  $F_m = 2^{2^m} + 1$  and this is the form in which they have been investigated. To see that  $F_p$  is composite when  $p$  is not a power of two, first note that a power of two cannot have any odd factors. Hence, if  $p$  is not a power of two, we can write  $p = rs$ , where  $s > 1$  is odd. Using the fact that when  $m$  is odd

$$x^m + y^m = (x + y)(x^{m-1} - x^{m-2}y + x^{m-3}y^2 - \dots - xy^{m-2} + y^{m-1}) ,$$

we substitute  $x = x^n$ ,  $y = y^n$  obtaining

$$x^{mn} + y^{mn} = (x^n + y^n)(x^{n(m-1)} - x^{n(m-2)}y^n + x^{n(m-3)}y^{2n} - \dots - x^n y^{n(m-2)} + y^{n(m-1)}) .$$

Therefore, we have

$$2^p + 1 = 2^{rs} + 1 = (2^r + 1)(2^{r(s-1)} - 2^{r(s-2)} + 2^{r(s-3)} - \dots - 2^r + 1)$$

which shows that  $F_p$  has a factor of  $2^r + 1$ .

This paper is concerned with the case of  $p$  equal to an odd prime, so that

$$\begin{aligned} 2^p + 1 &= (2 + 1)(2^{p-1} - 2^{p-2} + 2^{p-3} - \dots - 2 + 1) \\ 2^p + 1 &= 3 \left[ (2^{p-1} - 2^{p-2}) + (2^{p-3} - 2^{p-4}) + \dots + (2^2 - 2) + 1 \right] \\ 2^p + 1 &= 3 \left[ 2^{p-2}(2 - 1) + 2^{p-4}(2 - 1) + \dots + 2(2 - 1) + 1 \right] \\ 2^p + 1 &= 3(2^{p-2} + 2^{p-4} + \dots + 2 + 1) . \end{aligned}$$

\* Numbers in brackets refer to references found on page 20.

Clearly,  $F_p$  always has a factor of 3 when  $p$  is an odd prime. This gives rise to the definition of a new family of numbers,  $B_p$ , where  $p$  is an odd prime and

$$B_p = \frac{2^p + 1}{3} .$$

The following two lemmas are used in the proof of theorem I and this result is utilized in determining the primeness of  $B_p$ .

Lemma 1:  $M_p \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ , for any odd prime  $p$ .

Proof: By Fermat's theorem,  $2^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$  or  $2^p \equiv 2 \pmod{p}$ , [2, p. 277]. Subtracting one from both sides, we have  $2^p - 1 \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ .

Lemma 2:  $B_p \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ , for any prime  $p > 3$ .

Proof: Adding  $2^p \equiv 2 \pmod{p}$  and  $1 \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ , we obtain  $2^p + 1 \equiv 3 \pmod{p}$ . Since  $2^p + 1$  has a factor of 3 and the greatest common divisor of  $p$  and 3 is 1 whenever  $p > 3$  and  $p$  is prime, it follows that

$$B_p = \frac{2^p + 1}{3} \equiv 1 \pmod{p}, [2, p. 223] .$$

Theorem I. If  $B_p$  is composite with prime factor  $q$  and  $p$  is a prime greater than 3, then  $q$  must be of the form  $q = 2kp + 1$  for some  $k = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ .

Proof: By D. H. Lehmer's Law of Apparition, it follows that  $p$  is some divisor of  $q - \sigma\epsilon$ , where  $B_p \equiv \epsilon \pmod{p}$  and  $M_p \equiv \sigma \pmod{p}$ , see [1]. By the previous lemmas,  $\epsilon = \sigma = 1$ . Therefore,  $q - 1 = k'p$  for some  $k'$ . Since  $B_p$  is odd,  $q$  must also be odd. Consequently,  $k'p$  is even; and since  $p$  is an odd prime,  $k'$  must be even. We can therefore set  $k' = 2k$  for some integer  $k$  and hence  $q$  is of the form  $q = 2kp + 1$ .

Theorem II. If  $k$  in theorem I is odd, then  $q$  is of the form  $q = 8n + 3$ ; and if  $k$  is even, then  $q$  is of the form  $q = 8n + 1$ , for some integer  $n$ .

Proof: Since  $q = 2kp + 1$ ,

$$\frac{q-1}{2} = k p .$$

Euler's Criterion states that if  $2^{\frac{q-1}{2}} \equiv 1 \pmod{q}$ , then 2 is a quadratic residue of a prime  $q$ ; and if  $2^{\frac{q-1}{2}} \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$ , then 2 is a non-residue of a prime  $q$ , [4, p. 203].

Case A.  $k$  is even. In this case,

$$2^{\frac{q-1}{2}} = 2^{kp} = (2^p)^k \equiv (-1)^k \equiv 1 \pmod{q} .$$

Hence by Euler's Criterion, 2 is a quadratic residue of  $q$ . By induction,  $q = 8n + 1$  or  $q = 8n + 7$ , see [4, p. 278]. Since, by theorem I, we know  $q = 2kp + 1$ ,  $q \neq 8n + 7$  for any  $n$ . Therefore,  $q = 8n + 1$  for some integer  $n$ .

Case B.  $k$  is odd. Now,  $(-1)^k = -1$  and hence

$$2^{\frac{q-1}{2}} = 2^{kp} = (2^p)^k \equiv (-1)^k \equiv -1 \pmod{q} .$$

2 is therefore a non-residue of a prime  $q$ . By induction,  $q = 8n + 3$  or  $q = 8n + 5$  for some integer  $n$ , [4, p. 278]. Again, since  $q = 2kp + 1$ ,  $q \neq 8n + 5$  for any  $n$ . Hence  $q = 8n + 3$  for some  $n$ .

Using BRLESC, the high-speed digital computer of the Ballistic Research Laboratories, a program was written to determine the primeness of  $B_p$  for odd prime numbers  $p$ . This was accomplished by dividing by all possible divisors of the form  $q = 2kp + 1$ .  $B_p$  was first examined for all odd primes less than 61, since this is the maximum word length of BRLESC. The results were that  $B_p$  is prime for  $p = 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 31, 43$ . For  $p = 29, 37, 41, 47, 53, 59$ ,  $B_p$  is composite with factors 59, 1777, 83, 283, 107, 2833 respectively.

$B_{61}$  was tested by determining whether or not the congruence  $2^{61} \equiv -1 \pmod{122k + 1}$  held for some  $k$ . For  $k \leq 51,365$  this congruence was not satisfied; and hence, if  $B_{61}$  has a factor, it must be between  $6,266,531$  and  $\sqrt{(2^{61} + 1)/3}$ .

Similarly,  $B_{67}$  was tested and found to have no factors less than or equal to  $4,365,319$  ( $k = 32,577$ ). Time did not permit these to be extended further.

When the program became too time consuming, a new program was written to determine the set of  $B_p$ 's that were not prime. The following method was used. A prime number  $q$  greater than three was generated. Then the smallest integer  $n > 0$  was found such that  $2^n \equiv 1 \pmod{q}$  or  $2^n \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$ . If  $2^n \equiv 1 \pmod{q}$ , then  $2^{n+1} \equiv 2 \pmod{q}$  and the system of residues is cyclic with order  $n$ . Therefore,  $2^n \not\equiv -1 \pmod{q}$  for all  $n$ , so that  $q$  is a factor of  $B_p$  for no  $p$ . Also, if  $2^n \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$  and  $n$  is not a prime, then we can conclude that  $q$  is a factor of  $B_p$  for no  $p$ . To see this, assume there does exist some prime integer  $m$  such that  $m > n$  and  $2^m \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$ . Since  $2^n \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$  implies  $2^{2n} \equiv 1 \pmod{q}$ , we know by the above argument the system of residues is cyclic with order  $2n$ . Therefore,  $n < m < 2n$ . By the algebra of congruences,  $2^m - 2^n \equiv [(-1) - (-1)] \pmod{q}$  or  $2^m - 2^n \equiv 0 \pmod{q}$ . Since  $2^m - 2^n = 2^n(2^{m-n} - 1)$  and  $q$  divides  $(2^m - 2^n)$  but not  $2^n$ , it follows that  $q$  divides  $2^{m-n} - 1$ . But this implies  $2^{m-n} \equiv 1 \pmod{q}$ . Since  $m - n < n$ , this result contradicts the assertion that  $n$  is the least integer such that  $2^n \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{q}$ . Hence,  $q$  is a factor of  $B_p$  for no  $p$ . Finally, when  $2^n \equiv -1 \pmod{q}$  and  $n$  is prime, we have that  $q$  is a factor of  $2^n + 1$ . Since  $q > 3$ ,  $q$  is, therefore, a factor of  $B_n$ .

This program has the advantage that, given a prime  $q$ , one can readily find the  $p$  such that  $q$  divides  $B_p$ , if such a  $p$  exists. Hence, a systematic check with each prime  $q$  will discover all  $p$  such that  $B_p$  has a factor in the group of integers with prime factors less than or equal to  $q$ .

It took BRLESC almost 22 hours to compute all primes  $q$ ,  $q \leq 299,087$ , find an  $n$  such that  $2^n \equiv 1$  or  $-1 \pmod{q}$  and then determine whether or not  $n$  was prime. Of the 25,959 prime numbers less than or equal to 299,087, we found 1330  $B_p$ 's that were composite. Of these, 1262  $B_p$ 's had only one factor less than 299,087; 59  $B_p$ 's had two factors less than 299,087; 7 had three factors less than 299,087; and 2 had four factors less than 299,087. In examining 25,959 prime numbers, 5.4% turned out to be factors of the  $B_p$ 's.

Finally, on the basis of these results, it would seem that prime  $B_p$  are more frequent than prime  $M_p$ . From the first 16 odd primes, there are 7 prime  $M_p$  compared with 10 prime  $B_p$ .



Below is a complete table giving all  $p$  such that  $B_p$  has a factor  $q$ ,  
 $q \leq 299,087$ . Printed beside the  $p$  is the corresponding  $k$  such that  $q = 2kp + 1$   
is a factor of  $B_p$ .

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NUMERICAL RESULTS

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
29	1	419	7	977	4	1613	12
37	24	421	5	1013	1	1621	9
41	1	443	55	1021	5,9	1669	14
47	3	449	217	1039	75	1699	35
53	1	461	108,120	1049	1	1733	1,40
59	24,315	479	4,40	1103	103	1789	12
73	12	499	164	1151	4,115	1823	3,12
83	3,7,16,936	509	1	1153	12	1889	1
89	1	541	80	1171	11,36	1901	1
97	5,8,164	557	4,112	1181	21,25	1933	72
107	3	569	9	1229	1	1973	1
113	1,216	571	8	1237	8	1987	3
131	4	577	65	1249	17	2027	3
137	4,57	593	1	1283	3	2069	1,7
149	4	607	95	1289	1,9,12	2081	4
157	48	617	4	1291	11	2129	1,4
173	1,12	641	1,25,109	1307	4	2141	1
181	5	653	1	1327	3	2203	3
211	11	659	51,216	1361	4	2221	9
227	655	661	156	1399	12	2239	24
233	1,60	719	24	1409	1	2251	8
241	5	727	8	1439	7	2273	1
251	475	743	15	1451	3	2281	5,21
263	3,175	751	183	1481	1,49	2339	4
271	3	761	1	1499	15	2341	21,48
281	1	769	24	1511	3	2347	3
283	3,111	809	1,9,12	1523	7	2377	29
293	1,45,57	821	4	1531	3	2381	48
311	103	877	17	1559	4	2383	12
331	8	881	13,33,40,85	1567	3	2393	1
337	32	883	12,167	1571	4	2399	7
367	3,27	887	3	1579	11	2447	3,4
373	81	947	4,7	1601	1	2477	9,13,24
397	17	953	1	1609	5	2549	1

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
2551	3	3583	3	4643	7	5867	7
2609	4	3593	1	4657	32	5927	15
2689	5	3631	3	4663	8	5939	4,12
2693	1,13	3643	12	4679	12,27	6011	3
2707	8	3671	3	4703	3	6053	1
2711	3,36	3677	13	4729	12	6079	12
2719	32	3691	3	4733	1	6101	1
2741	1,9	3761	1,4	4783	11	6113	1
2753	1	3769	5	4793	1	6163	3
2767	8	3821	1	4813	5	6173	1
2851	3	3881	9	4817	13	6199	11
2903	3	3917	4	4889	4	6269	4,10
2927	4	3947	7	4967	3	6329	1
2939	16	3967	35	4957	20	6337	17
2957	12	3989	37	5011	23	6367	8
2969	1	4001	4,28	5021	25	6449	1
2999	4	4013	28	5081	1,24	6521	1,16
3037	8	4049	9,12	5113	5,20	6569	4
3061	45	4051	8,11	5147	4	6571	8
3121	9,29	4073	1	5189	25	6581	1
3203	7	4139	7	5309	4	6653	12
3209	4	4201	8	5333	1	6689	21
3221	21	4229	9	5381	4	6691	8,15
3253	20,36	4259	12	5399	15	6709	12
3307	3,23	4327	20	5437	5	6739	4,9
3323	7	4349	1,9	5441	1	6761	1
3329	1	4357	20	5501	1	6793	5
3361	8	4373	1	5569	12	6803	3
3389	1	4391	3,15	5647	8	6823	11
3391	3	4409	1	5669	9	6863	3
3413	1	4421	9	5741	1	6871	8
3449	1	4441	9	5783	7	6883	20
3457	8	4481	1	5813	21	6911	3
3491	3	4513	17	5827	23	6947	7
3533	12	4517	4	5843	3	6961	9
3547	3	4547	3	5849	1	6991	3

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
7121	1	8447	12	10589	1	12251	4
7193	1	8513	1	10607	4	12289	5
7219	15	8663	7	10613	1	12301	8
7229	12	8677	5	10709	1	12329	1
7253	13	8693	1	10733	1	12377	4
7333	12	8741	1	10771	3	12487	3
7349	1	8753	16	10781	1	12541	8
7433	1	8779	11	10861	8	12577	8
7541	1	8783	7	10889	9	12601	9
7561	9,8	8969	1	10903	3	12637	9
7573	8	9029	1	10937	12	12653	1
7607	15	9091	3	11159	4	12689	4
7649	1	9221	1	11257	5	12763	3
7703	16,3	9293	1	11273	13	12791	4
7757	4	9419	4	11287	3	12809	9
7841	1	9473	1	11317	5	12821	1
7853	16	9479	4	11321	1	12911	1
7901	1	9587	15	11369	1	12933	12
7963	3	9629	1	11393	1	12983	3
8059	15	9677	4	11437	5	13001	1
8069	1	9689	1	11549	1	13037	4
8087	3	9769	12	11593	5	13049	1
8093	16,1	9923	7	11621	9	13163	3
8101	9	9931	15	11657	4	13183	8
8123	7	10061	1	11743	3	13229	1
8167	3	10243	11	11801	1	13297	5
8179	11	10253	1	11813	1	13313	1
8237	13	10259	4	11821	5	13331	4
8243	3	10271	3	11909	1,4	13381	5
8263	11	10303	3	11953	8	13417	5
8273	1	10313	1	12007	3	13553	1
8291	3	10357	12	12041	1	13591	3,8
8297	13,4	10391	3	12101	1	13649	1
8363	12	10427	4,3	12197	4	13669	5
8431	3	10529	1	12227	3	13721	9

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
13841	4	15401	1	17351	3	19709	1
13873	5	15569	1	17387	3	19739	7
13901	1	15629	1	17449	5	19889	1
13913	1	15647	7	17467	3	19913	1
14009	1	15737	4	17471	3	19919	7
14051	3	15767	3	17491	3	19979	4
14081	1	15773	1	17657	4	20011	3
14153	1	15907	3	17669	1,4	20021	4
14207	3,4,7	15923	3	17681	1	20063	7
14249	1	15937	8	17707	3	20147	7
14281	5	16001	1	17783	3	20249	1
14321	1	16061	9	17827	3	20369	1
14327	4	16127	3	17971	3	20393	1
14423	3	16139	4	17981	1	20441	1
14431	3	16253	1	18041	1	20641	5
14461	5	16301	1	18149	1	20693	1
14489	1	16381	5	18191	3	20743	3
14561	1	16411	3	18233	1	20753	1
14621	1	16421	1	18251	4	20789	1
14657	9	16493	1	18341	1	20807	4
14669	1	16553	1	18461	1	20921	1
14723	3	16573	8	18523	8	21011	3
14741	1	16607	3	18773	1	21013	5
14747	4	16619	4	18911	3	21089	1
14771	4	16673	1	18959	4	21149	1
14869	5	16747	3	19139	4	21179	7
15061	5	16763	7	19183	3	21221	1
15101	1	16931	4	19259	4	21227	3
15107	7	17107	3	19301	1	21341	1
15131	3	17159	4	19373	1	21391	3
15161	1	17183	3	19433	1	21487	3
15173	1	17207	7	19553	1	21563	3
15233	1	17231	3	19597	5	21647	4
15269	1	17321	4	19603	3	21701	1
15391	3	17333	1	19661	1	21713	1

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
21727	3	23753	1	26189	1	29201	1
21737	4	23831	4	26371	3	29411	3
21893	1	23833	5	26407	3	29453	1
21929	4	23909	1	26501	1	29483	3
21997	5	23911	3	26573	1	29663	3
22003	3	23981	1	26597	4	29873	1
22013	1	24023	3	26633	1	30011	4
22067	3,4	24071	3	26641	5	30187	3
22111	3	24281	1	26729	4	30269	1
22123	3	24469	5	26821	5	30341	4
22133	1	24473	1	26849	1	30389	1
22189	5	24509	1	26927	4	30431	3
22273	5	24527	3	26947	3	30449	1
22343	3	24623	3	26993	1	30467	3
22349	1,4	24631	3	27077	4	30539	4
22409	1	24659	4	27143	3	30677	4
22433	1	24671	4	27197	4	30689	1
22447	3	24691	3	27281	1	30773	1
22469	1	24749	1	27527	4	30911	3
22481	1	24971	3	27581	1	30971	4
22541	1	25073	1	27691	3	31063	3
22787	4	25147	3	27773	1	31181	4
22811	4	25229	1	27809	1	31223	3
22853	1	25247	3	27851	3	31253	1
22861	5	25367	3	27893	1	31327	3
23081	4	25457	4	27947	4	31469	1
23321	1,4	25537	5	27983	3	31649	1
23417	4	25583	3	28001	1	31721	1
23531	4	25601	1	28087	3	31723	3
23561	1	25673	1	28793	1	31793	1
23567	3	25763	3	28901	1	31883	3
23603	3	25841	1	28949	1	32009	1
23669	1	25867	3	28961	1	32141	1
23677	5	25913	1	29021	1	32323	3
23741	4	25951	3	29033	1	32363	3

p	k	p	k	p	k	p	k
32381	1	35081	1	38371	3	42089	1
32443	3	35201	4	38453	1	42221	1
32561	1,4	35327	4	38501	1	42331	3
32573	1	35573	1	38669	1	42473	1
32633	1	35591	4	38783	3	42643	3
32789	1,4	35759	4	38861	1	42703	3
32933	1	35831	3	38873	1	42727	3
32939	4	35863	3	38933	1	42821	1
32957	4	35933	1	39089	1	43013	1
33053	1	35993	1	39163	3	43313	1
33247	3	36263	3	39233	1	43403	3
33329	4	36353	1	39443	3	43411	3
33461	1	36629	1	39511	3	43541	1
33521	1	36691	3	39521	1	43649	1
33569	1	36761	1	39563	3	43661	1
33617	4	36791	3	39569	1	43721	1
33713	1	36821	1	39791	3	43793	1
33749	1	36929	1	39953	1	44129	1
33773	1	36931	3	39989	1	44189	1
33791	3	36943	3	40123	3	44249	1
33809	1	37013	1	40127	3	44263	3
33941	1	37049	1	40193	1	44273	1
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34253	1	37181	1	40853	1	44501	1
34267	3	37253	1	40949	1	44623	3
34327	3	37307	3	41081	1	44729	1
34367	3	37447	3	41381	1	44909	1
34487	3	37643	3	41609	1	44987	3
34603	3	37747	3	41621	1	45053	1
34871	3	37853	1	41669	1	45329	1
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46229	1	52121	1	57773	1	64901	1
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46703	3	52553	1	58049	1	65393	1
46723	3	52733	1	58193	1	65633	1
46751	3	53093	1	58601	1	66029	1
47051	3	53309	1	58889	1	66173	1
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47501	1	53549	1	59369	1	66701	1
47513	1	53849	1	59393	1	66749	1
47609	1	54101	1	59453	1	67121	1
47741	1	54293	1	59513	1	67169	1
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48221	1	54773	1	60149	1	67433	1
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48593	1	55229	1	60449	1	68261	1
48761	1	55469	1	60509	1	68489	1
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49391	3	55721	1	60773	1	69341	1
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75329	1	81701	1	89909	1	96989	1
75353	1	81929	1	90089	1	97001	1
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75689	1	82193	1	90281	1	97829	1
75821	1	82493	1	90641	1	98321	1
75833	1	82529	1	90749	1	98369	1
75941	1	82601	1	90833	1	98453	1
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76421	1	82793	1	91193	1	98573	1
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77261	1	83813	1	91433	1	98669	1
77513	1	83873	1	91529	1	98849	1
77813	1	84401	1	91841	1	98981	1
77847	1	84449	1	92681	1	99041	1
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78233	1	84533	1	92861	1	99173	1
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101921	1	109541	1	118361	1	127541	1
102149	1	109793	1	118589	1	127709	1
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107441	1	115061	1	124529	1	132701	1
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139109	1	149021	1
139313	1	149153	1
139409	1	149213	1
139589	1	149333	1
139721	1	149843	1

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