

## CFSC launches *Are We Done Fighting?*

By Keira Mann

I recently had the chance to chat with Canadian Friends Service Committee's peace program coordinator Matt Legge about the new book he's written for CFSC.

**Keira: What is *Are We Done Fighting?***

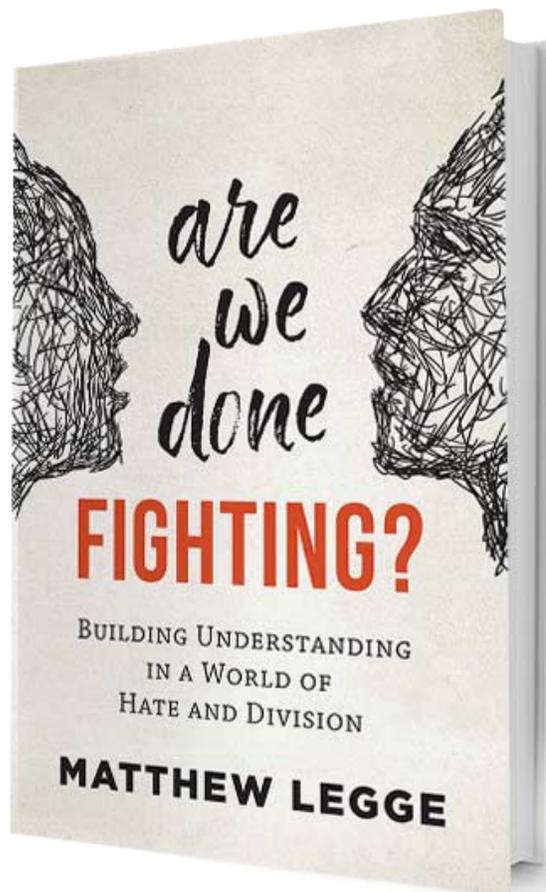
**Matt:** It's a book that collects and shares a lot of surprising stories and research directly relevant to many different problems in the world right now – polarization, extremism, the rise of hate movements... Readers will learn about important topics like why we hold fast to false beliefs, when punishments work and when they don't, and why we often seem to act against our own interests. I wanted to critically interrogate my own assumptions about peace and how we build it within ourselves, our families, and beyond.

**What makes your book unique?**

This book is written with one goal: to be useful. Of course my ego might love it if you read this and think, "Oh he's so clever," but honestly the book isn't at all about offering clever arguments or theories. The aim is simply to be immediately useful to the reader.

It's not an academic book, although it could certainly be used in classroom settings. It has around 750 citations, and a lot of those are peer-reviewed studies, so there's definitely a lot of research informing the book, but it's not written to be complicated or dry. What I did want to do was make sure it wasn't just opinions, and to bring in findings from different fields that don't usually interact with each other. I think that's one thing that makes the book unique.

It uses a simple and conversational tone with short chapters, each ending with helpful tips. Since my goal was to identify what each of us can readily and realistically do, I chose not to focus on activism or international scale issues as much, although they certainly are discussed. But first and foremost this is meant for use in your personal life and whatever type of difficult interactions you might be having with your partner, with your co-worker, family members... I wanted to keep it very accessible to people of different political stripes, different faith and cultural backgrounds. So it's an easy read and almost fun to read, maybe, hopefully, although it's dealing with challenging topics!



The book also includes group activities. Incredibly rich learning opportunities await if you use these! There's an appendix on how to facilitate the activities and anyone can do this. But if you'd like, CFSC is also available to help facilitate. I'd love to help your group with this. I'm sure we'll each gain a lot from it!

**What are some examples of the tips at the end of each chapter?**

If you go on the website [AreWeDoneFighting.com](http://AreWeDoneFighting.com) there's a free chapter there, so you can get a sense immediately of what the tips are. I'll just give you one example. People who care the most about fairness are most likely to cheat on tests. Why is that? The answer is ambiguity. We don't clearly define what a term like "fairness" means, so we reinterpret it in each new situation. We make it mean whatever justifies what we want to be doing in that situation! So if I'm the professor writing the

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# KEEPING UP WITH FRIENDS

## CFSC on the CBC

CFSC's criminal justice program coordinator Verena Tan was interviewed on CBC's *The Sunday Edition* at the beginning of April. Verena and host Michael Enright discussed CFSC's research suggesting that judges may not be considering the impacts on children when sentencing parents. With well over a million listeners we hope this interview will help spark national interest. For a link to the interview and the report visit: <https://quakerservice.ca/CBCSundayEdition>

## Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement

Canada is seeking to update the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA). The proposed Agreement includes some commendable features, including chapters on gender, corporate responsibility, labour, and environmental protections. However CIFTA also has some glaring omissions. The 2018 European cooperation agreement with Israel makes it clear that the benefits of the agreement do not extend to goods from Israel's settlements in illegally occupied Palestinian territory. Canada considers the settlements illegal and a serious impediment to peace. Canadian Quakers have collectively encouraged a boycott of settlement goods in keeping with our concern for the wellbeing of all in the region. Therefore, a new joint letter to Senators requests changes to CIFTA to bring it in line with Canada's legal and moral obligations. The letter was signed by UN Special Rapporteur

Michael Lynk, Amnesty International Canada, Independent Jewish Voices, The United Church, Mennonite Central Committee, and CFSC: <https://quakerservice.ca/CIFTA>

## New video on growing up around people in trouble with the law

In a new four minute video interview CFSC member Joy Morris describes some of what she learned from a rather unusual upbringing. Joy explains that she grew up in a household where her mother, Ruth Morris, regularly welcomed people to stay while they were awaiting trial for crimes ranging from petty drug offenses to murder. Watch the video at <https://quakerservice.ca/JoyMorrisInterview>

## Living clothing, bioweapons, and edited twins – synthetic biology 2019

Scientists, technology-enthusiasts, and corporations hope to create novel life forms. They seek to move from evolution through natural selection into a moment of ever more human-conceived and designed life. Once a year we round up and share stories making headlines in this weird world of "synthetic biology." These updates are not technical and don't demand any science background. This year we briefly cover:

- Editing humans: edits of twin babies born last year—the health implications for the twins, and what other human editing may lie on the horizon
- Gene drives: updates on attempts to crash populations of mosquitoes and mice in the wild
- Bioweapons: a virus created with mail-order DNA and US military funded research
- Skin products: yeast-secreted sunscreen and skin products
- Patents: the corporate control of genetic information
- Clothes: plans for clothes that sense and communicate, leather from lab-made human skin
- Plants: claims about the need to genetically edit crops and other plants.

<https://quakerservice.ca/SB2019>

## We're on Instagram

CFSC is pleased to launch its Instagram account. If you're on the platform follow us for behind-the-scenes photos of our work in action. If you're not on Instagram you can still see the photos by visiting <https://quakerservice.ca/Insta>



## Quaker Concern

Canadian Friends Service Committee

**Quaker Concern** is the newsletter of Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers). Published three-times a year, it features articles on CFSC's projects and concerns.

**Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC)** is the peace and social justice agency of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. Since 1931 we've been a small team, mostly volunteers, but we've had a significant impact.

**Donations** are received with gratitude. We rely on the support of individuals to carry out our work. CFSC issues tax receipts for donations over \$10.

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## **Are We Done Fighting?**

test, I think fairness means not cheating on it. But if I'm the student taking the test, I say to myself, "This test is unfair because I couldn't understand the question it was asking, so I deserve to cheat. That's only fair."

A lot of our worst behaviours happen in part when we believe that we're victims of injustice or that we need to act to make the world fair again. Members of hate groups very often think this way. They're not setting out to be evil, they think what they're doing is achieving justice and fairness. They believe their intentions are good.

So there's the tip – when interacting with people, whoever they are, assume that they believe their intentions are good. That shift in mindset can really help you approach difficult encounters in a new light. That tip isn't enough on its own, we need a lot of other skills too, but I don't have the space to go into those here.

### **Is there something you discovered in your research that really surprised you?**

There is a lot that surprised me! I kept seeing in so many different cases how whatever it is that I consider positive – empathy for instance – can be abused and can end up getting pushed in very negative directions if taken too far to an extreme. The example I just gave about caring about fairness sometimes leading to great harms was a surprise for me.

Another huge surprise was how little I really knew about power. I discovered incredible stories of people I would've thought of as being in impossibly vulnerable situations but who had great power, in one example given in the book even stopping an imminent civil war! These stories aren't told that often in mass media. Instead we get stories that dramatize and glorify the hero using superior physical force to win, so our ideas can be quite warped and unrealistic.

### **Why do you think people struggle so much with achieving and maintaining peace?**

There are a lot of factors. It's really important to highlight that there is no one formula. We love being told, "This is the one area we need to work on." A psychologist named Peter Coleman did a literature review and found that various experts were each claiming they had identified the principle cause of entrenched conflict. When he added these up there were 57 different principle causes!

So there is no one single cause. Large scale conflicts are complex and emergent. Now, if you're only going to work on one area, probably communication is the skill that most of us could improve on. We're taught how to communicate poorly

and how to deal with conflicts in such a way that they are highly likely to become entrenched rather than to constructively transform. I would suggest that communication and conflict transformation skills are useful for everyone. That can be taught in schools. In the book there's an example of kids as young as three years old learning these skills.

### **Why does this matter to Friends?**

This book is continuing a way of thinking that has been there in various forms since the beginning of the Religious Society of Friends: looking at taking away the occasions for war. So, reflecting on the deeper causes rather than the symptoms. This book continues that approach, exploring what each of us can do to live out our deepest values. For CFSC, helping people to gain new skills to live out their peace aspirations is central to our work as the peace and social justice agency of Quakers in Canada.

### **How did this book come about?**

We met in March of 2017 and CFSC members asked me to draft a 50 page document. Little did I know this would turn into a full book based on thousands of hours of research and writing both by myself and other staff and volunteers of CFSC! I'm extremely grateful to CFSC members and associates for their enthusiasm and support as this project evolved.

Even before I started writing I had all of these resources from the various email lists I'm on and from talking with Quakers in Canada, the US, Britain, D.R. Congo... I had a lot of great opportunities to learn about methods that I know some Friends use, but that they don't always systematically collect and communicate to a broader audience. My hope was to help those messages reach people who haven't already heard them.

I want to be clear that, although I'm listed as the author, these aren't my original ideas. This is the collective wisdom that I've learned from many remarkable people, both Friends and non-Friends, and that wisdom is tested against and informed by cutting-edge knowledge from many academic disciplines. It's no exaggeration to say that pulling all this together has been by far the biggest undertaking of my life. Now I'm really excited for people to take this resource up and use it. I'd very much welcome any feedback from folks who do!

*This interview was edited. Keira Mann is CFSC's Program Assistant. Are We Done Fighting? Building Understanding in a World of Hate and Division is published by New Society Publishers and is available internationally. Find out more and order the book via [AreWeDoneFighting.com](http://AreWeDoneFighting.com). Proceeds CFSC receives from sales go directly to our peace and justice work. Contact us about Matt giving a brief presentation or facilitating a longer workshop for your group.*

# Church Delegation Visits Senate to Support Bill C-262



Church delegation meets with Senator Harder, March, 2019

By Keira Mann

Churches and faith bodies play an important role in the reconciliation process. It is with this in mind that I took a delegation of national church leaders to Ottawa to meet with senators to discuss Bill C-262: *An Act to Ensure that the Laws of Canada are in Harmony with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Bill C-262 is currently being reviewed by the Senate. The Bill has to be approved to be studied by a Senate Standing Committee (most likely the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples). The Committee will then study it, hear from witnesses, hear any proposals for amendments, and report back to the full Senate for consideration and a vote at third reading. The problem is that, in order for the Bill to be passed and become law in Canada, this all has to happen before the House of Commons rises for the summer!

Given the urgency of this Bill and its importance to not only Indigenous peoples, but Canadians as a whole, Canadian Friends Service Committee has worked to meet with senators to show that faith bodies in Canada support this Bill.

We wanted to continue our work with our ecumenical partners, including those who are parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, to show our collective commitment to reconciliation. Our delegation was made up of eight: Michael Thompson (the General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada), Irene Barbeau (a Cree leader from Eastmain, Quebec,

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and a member of the All My Relations Working Group of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa), Rick Cober Bauman (Executive Director of the Mennonite Central Committee), Reverend Daniel Cho (Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Canada), Reverend Maggie Dieter (Indigenous Ministries and Justice Executive Minister of the United Church of Canada), Nora Sanders (General Secretary of the United Church of Canada), Sara Stratton (Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator for the United Church of Canada), and myself on behalf of Canadian Friends Service Committee.

Our message was this:

- the *UN Declaration* has a strong legal foundation within Canada as well as internationally,
- the Bill creates a legislative framework for the federal government to collaborate with Indigenous Peoples, and,
- this Bill is essential to the reconciliation process.

The delegates made it clear that their congregations have taken serious action to create right relationships with Indigenous peoples and that this Bill would be an important next step. They imparted on each senator that moving forward with C-262 is the best way to show Canada's commitment to a more positive relationship with Indigenous peoples.

Our first meeting was with Senator Harder, a non-affiliated senator, the government representative within the Senate, and

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a supporter of Bill C-262. He expressed gratitude for the churches' support and for the nearly 1,500 letters and emails from church-goers across Canada that have flooded senators' offices in recent months to show support for the Bill.

Next, we met with Senator Hartling, an independent senator and supporter of the Bill. She was optimistic about the support that the Bill was receiving among the Independent Senators Group and encouraged the delegation to reach out to more Conservative senators to express their support. Senator Hartling introduced the delegation during the Senate Sitting as we sat in the Senate Gallery.

Another highlight was when we met with Senator Murray Sinclair, an independent senator, the sponsor of the Bill in the Senate, and a former chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Senator Sinclair encouraged the delegation to continue to send letters and emails to senators stating their support.

Our final meeting for that day was with the Director of Parliamentary Affairs for Senator Patterson, a Conservative senator who had not announced his position on the Bill. Senator Patterson is also the conservative critic for C-262. Senator Patterson's staff person informed the delegation that he would "waive his right of reply," which essentially meant he would not stop the Bill from moving to the committee stage. She also expressed concern among the Conservative senators about free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). This is perhaps the most frequently noted concern among senators. (See this recent joint open letter for more information about FPIC: <https://quakerservice.ca/FPIC>).

Some senators fear that establishing a process for consultation and consent will give Indigenous Peoples the ability to veto decisions. The delegation attempted to relay the fact that veto and consent are very different and that C-262 does not set out what the process for consent is, but rather it states that there needs to be a process for the full implementation of the UN

### *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

We had a meeting the next morning with Senator Marshall, also a Conservative senator who had not stated her position on the Bill. Senator Marshall informed the delegation that she had not yet decided on this matter and welcomed our perspective.

The delegation worked hard to bring the human element to the senators. We wanted them to know that people want this Bill to move forward, and that people of faith in Canada support Indigenous Peoples' human rights. We went there not as experts on the law or Indigenous' rights, but as Canadians who support what this Bill will achieve if passed.

Our original plan was to have the delegation meet with Conservative senators, as some have shown less support for the Bill. This proved to be an almost impossible task. After dozens of phone calls and emails to arrange meetings, I had little to show for my efforts. Unfortunately, many of these same senators we were unable to secure meetings with later acted to stall the Bill, causing concerned groups, including CFSC, to issue a joint news release *Conservative senators jeopardize crucial human rights legislation* (<https://quakerservice.ca/SenatorsJeopardizeC262>).

Our delegation's meetings with senators were a continuation of work already started by Church leaders in Canada to support Bill C-262. Last month, ten faith bodies came together to release a letter to all senators expressing their support for the Bill and urging senators to do the same (<https://quakerservice.ca/SupportC262>).

We're running out of time to see this Bill become a reality in Canadian law. Showing our support is essential to helping senators understand that Canadians want this to move forward.

Please considering writing, even if you have already done so. A handwritten letter is powerful, or you can use this online tool developed by Mennonite Central Committee Canada: <http://bit.ly/SenatorC262>

*Keira Mann is CFSC's program assistant.*



*"We get by on very little but I've always thought it's important to support what you believe in. Sometimes you can make a big difference in little ways. I'm not a Quaker but I've always been impressed by Quakers. As far as I can tell, for the little funding you get, you definitely make a difference. That's why I'm including CFSC in my will."*

*– David Rothkop*

Contact Tasmin at 416-920-5213 or [tasmin@quakerservice.ca](mailto:tasmin@quakerservice.ca) to discuss leaving a legacy of support for your values by making a gift to CFSC in your will.

# Why I Stand Up for Respectful Dialogue



Keira Mann

Dialogue about the children of incarcerated parents, Friends House, Toronto.

By *Daisie Auty*

Children are humans. They have human rights. On the international stage, Canada has agreed to uphold these human rights. Yet we are concerned that Canada is not currently protecting children's rights with integrity.

A major focus of CFSC's work is the human rights of children whose parents have been incarcerated. CFSC works to promote international standards and practices that uphold the "best interests of the child" in Canada, including standards enshrined in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders* (Bangkok Rules), and the *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (1955) and revised *Mandela Rules*. These laws and standards protect the human rights of children and their parents in custody.

In January, we hosted a dialogue with experts in a variety of disciplines, each sharing a concern for the children of parents

in trouble with the law – children who are often invisible to the public. I attended that dialogue, listened to the conversation, and spoke to others working on this issue. I asked myself, "What can I do as a non-expert in this? How do I make sense of the dialogue experience and what do I take away from it that could be useful?"

At times it felt overwhelming. New to the specific issues myself, I was shocked by how far from our integrity we are in the Canadian criminal justice system. Our criminal justice system predates the human rights agreements we have signed onto, and needs to be updated.

Really, it was the stories about lived experience that made the two days so emotionally intense. Looking back on it, that's probably the reason the dialogue seemed overwhelming at the time. There were times that the emotion felt thick in the room: grief, sadness, shame, rage, assertive anger...

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A passionate advocate told the story of a woman who gave birth in prison. I had spoken to this advocate earlier and admired the work she was doing. I listened with interest and increasing horror as she recounted this woman's experience of going into labour in prison, being told to be quiet when she cried out in pain, and then being ignored. It wasn't until the baby's leg emerged that her need for urgent medical help was recognised. The baby died. I had no words. I felt a sense of helpless rage imagining what that must have been like for her. Human rights violations like this one are acts of domination that trigger intense shame and its companion, shame-rage.

Because of my job as a therapist, I make sense of my experiences by understanding emotion and the brain. Empathising with this story triggered the fight, flight or freeze part of my brain. I was ready to fight and I noticed myself looking for a "bad guy" in the situation. I noticed others doing this too. It's what we do. Our brain senses danger and suddenly everyone is either "with us or against us." As a mother, I naturally empathized with the woman in the situation. Then I considered the right of the baby to have proper medical care during its birth and a fair chance at survival. However, what I didn't imagine until I sat down to write this article was the perspective of the prison staff.

Prison staff are public employees. I imagine the vast majority have good intentions and are doing the best they can under difficult circumstances. I don't know their perspectives in this case. They may have been mentioned, but I was too deep in fear-mode to hear it. Did the prison staff know this woman was in labour? How might the staff on duty at the time have felt afterwards, when they realised what had happened? I wonder how many individuals silently shoulder the guilt of systemic problems.

What I realise from my response to this story is this: we need our emotions to alert us to threat, but we can't let that part of our brain be in charge when it's not needed. If we want things to be different, we need to engage the reasonable, competent part of ourselves – the part that knows how to seek first to understand and engage in respectful dialogue. Only then will we be able to arrive at shared goals and a plan to work toward them.

The antidote to shame is respect; self-respect and respect for others. We earn self-respect when we stand up for ourselves and others without hurting, dominating, or disrespecting anyone else. It gives us the power to transform cultures of domination into cultures of respect.

So I'm on the side of respect. Respect for myself and respect for others. That means I commit to standing up for myself and others without putting anyone else down or thinking less of other people or groups. Even when I don't agree with them.

Even when I'm really worried that the consequences of their actions will be bad for the people or groups I care about. I will seek out the perspectives of people on the "other side" of conflicts and consider that I may not always be right.

I've discovered that doing this takes self-awareness. I turn inward and check if I subtly think I'm better than others or if I dismiss their perspectives. If I do, I'm not respecting them. But it goes both ways. I also check if I think they are better than me or if I devalue my own perspective. If so, I'm not respecting myself.

I think this relates to the needs of children of incarcerated parents because respect is a way to break the shame-blame cycle in order to end social stigma. I want a society where everyone is treated with respect, so I challenge myself to show respect at the times when it's hardest to do so. That means respect for everyone, not just people I agree with. That's why I'm standing up for respectful dialogue.

## The Dialogue

At the dialogue, the participants ranged from academic researchers and policy organisations to direct service providers and grassroots organizations. There were representatives from child welfare, aboriginal legal services, legal aid, and the office of the correctional investigator. There were representatives from provincial child advocates, social policy researchers, non-profit service organisations, and grassroots advocacy groups. Many of those present had lived experience of the impacts of incarceration: they had either personally been incarcerated or a family member had been.

It was the first time that a group sharing a concern for the impacts the criminal justice system has on children had ever come together in Canada, so the issues and recommendations that emerged to start off with were big and high-level. These included the harmful impact of social stigma on children, the need to make links to colonialism and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, and the need to comply with international human rights frameworks. Then, over the course of the dialogue, we unpacked many of these issues and looked for ways forward. A coalition has now formed as a result of the dialogue, and members continue to work together on the next steps for action.

If you are interested to learn more about the dialogue, a report will be published shortly titled *Breaking the Silence: Dialogue on Children of Incarcerated Parents*. Additional information about CFSC's work on children of incarcerated parents is also available on our website.

**Daisie Auty**, Toronto Meeting, is the Clerk of CFSC's criminal justice program committee and a Registered Social Worker, Psychotherapist in private practice.

# FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

CFSC staff **Verena Tan** was in Ottawa for board meetings of the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice. Verena was also joined by CFSC's full criminal justice program committee **Daisie Auty (Toronto Meeting)**, **Dick Cotterill (Halifax Meeting)**, and **Joy Morris (Calgary Meeting)** in Winnipeg for committee meetings and to deliver a Penal Abolition Workshop.

CFSC staff **Jennifer Preston (Hamilton Meeting)** was in northwest British Columbia, including Haida Gwaii, with associate member **Paul Joffe** to do workshops on the *UN Declaration on the*

*Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, in Victoria to present on beginning the journey of reconciliation, in Ottawa for meetings with senators on Bill C-262 and to meet with the federal government to prepare for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and in Winnipeg for a major joint event in support of C-262. Jennifer was joined in Burnaby, BC, by **Barb Everdene (Vancouver Meeting)**, **Manuela Popovici (Ottawa Meeting)**, associate member **Rob Hughes (Vancouver Meeting)**, and CFSC Program Assistant **Keira Mann** for Indigenous rights program committee meetings.

Members of CFSC's peace program committee **Dale Dewar (Prarie Meeting)**, **Linda Taffs (Cowichan Valley Meeting)**, **Bertha Small (Ottawa Meeting)** and staff **Matt Legge** met in Wynyard, Saskatchewan.

CFSC board members **Stephen Bishop (Cowichan Valley Meeting)**, **Graeme Hope (Interior BC Meeting)**, **Carol Dixon (Ottawa Meeting)**, **Jeff Little (Yonge Street Meeting)**, and **Margaret McCaffrey (Yonge Street Meeting)** met in Toronto, to reflect on the work of Service Committee and plan for the year ahead.

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