

Notebook Of An Agitator

Farewell To A Socialist Pioneer

An old socialist pioneer died in Rosedale, Kansas, the other day at the age of 89, and I went home to his funeral. I was bound to him personally by many different ties and indebted to him for many things of value beyond computation. He was the first to explain to me that truth and justice are important, and he proved to me, by his life-long example, that he meant what he said. He really believed in freedom, equality and the brotherhood of man, and thought these things attainable and worth striving for. That was his "principle," and he lived up to it.

It was from him that I first learned about socialism; he took me into the movement, 36 years ago, and thus shaped my life in a pattern which has never been changed. Remembering and reliving all that on the long train ride to the old man's funeral, I thought of him not only as a friend and counsellor, but also as a true and worthy representative of that noble generation of pioneer socialists who went before us and prepared the way for us. We are here because they were there. We should never forget that.

His socialism—the predominant mid-western American socialism of his time—inspired by the great spirit and burning eloquence of Debs, was broadly humanitarian, more ethical, perhaps, than scientific, and putting more emphasis on the goal than the road to it. But it was right in the essence of the matter, and there was a great driving force of conviction and inspiration behind it. In my opinion, the modern movement, with its more precise analysis and its necessary concentration on the struggle, would do well to infuse its propaganda with more of the old emphasis on the ultimate meaning of the struggle; speak out, as the old pioneers did, for human rights and human dignity, for freedom and equality and abundance for all. That is what we are really fighting for when we fight for socialism.

Ben Hanford, the great socialist agitator of an earlier day, once wrote an encomium of a collective comrade whom he called Jimmy Higgins—the man in the ranks who bustles himself without ostentation, recognition or reward to do all the innumerable little and unnoticed things which have to be done to keep the "movement" going and keep the torch burning. Such was the old man. He was an old-timer from away back—a "labor man" from the days of the Knights of Labor and the eight-hour movement; a Debs' man from the A.R.U. strike of '94 on; and a socialist activist all through the twenty-year rise of the Socialist Party after the turn of the century. He earnestly sympathized with me in all my work and struggles, and gave all the prac-

tical help he could, up to the recent years when he was too old and tired to do any more.

An account of his quiet and sustained activity for socialism could stand, with only a few unimportant changes, as a composite biography of the whole fraternity of anonymous activists whose unrecognized labors and sacrifices, freely given with unflinching faith, transformed an idea and a hope into a movement which lives after them and will yet prevail.

He was no "leader," but a simple rank and file man who "talked socialism" to all who would listen; hustled the subscriptions for the papers; arranged the meetings, rented the hall and drummed up the crowd for the speaker; and always had his hand in his pocket for a contribution he couldn't afford, to help make up the deficit. In addition, he could always be counted on to "put up" a traveling agitator at his home and thus save the party expenses, although his own financial means were all too narrow.

The old man was the friend and partisan of all good causes, always ready to circulate a petition, help out a collection or get up a protest meeting to demand that wrongs be righted. The good causes, then as now, were mostly the unpopular ones, and he nearly always found himself in the minority, on the side of the underdogs who couldn't do him any good in the tough game of making money and getting ahead. He had to pay for that, and his family had to pay, but it couldn't be helped. The old man was made that way, and I don't think it ever once entered his head to do otherwise or live otherwise than he did.

That's just about all there is to tell of him. But I thought, as I looked at him in his coffin for the last time, that's a great deal. Carl Sandburg said it this way: "These are heroes then—among the plain people—Heroes, did you say? And why not? They give all they've got and ask no questions and take what comes and what more do you want?"

That devoted band of pioneer socialists who lived and worked unselfishly for socialism, who did what they could for the "movement" and kept it alive so that a new generation coming along would not have to begin at the beginning, did not live in vain. They were far more important for the future of America and the world than they, with their modesty and their renunciation, could possibly realize. The old man was one of them, and I say farewell to him with gratitude and love. His name was John Cannon. He was my father.

—J. P. C.

Joint Labor Victory In Oakland Election Points Road For Workers In Other Cities

By Ed Davis

OAKLAND, Calif., June 2—The recent election campaign, in which the labor-backed Oakland Voters League won four of the five City Council seats being contested, merits the close examination of union militants throughout the country. While it is true that there were some special circumstances in Oakland—a general strike last December, and a working unity between the AFL, CIO and Railroad Brotherhoods—conditions of this kind will appear elsewhere as the labor party movement develops.

Political action was the next step obviously indicated after the general strike. The retail clerks' strike, which led to the general strike when the city administration gave police protection to professional strikebreakers, resulted in a stalemate. The picket lines were expensive, and even more important, labor could not feel secure in the East Bay.

The critical and test case nature of the clerks' strike was recognized by everyone, as was the need for taking some positive action against the City Councilmen. As a result joint labor ac-

tion was achieved, primarily at the top. Only the Teamsters' leadership remained outside this working unity.

Rank and file unionists began to come out with speeches and resolutions stressing the need for candidates "from the ranks of labor" in the city election. However, the Stalinists and AFL bureaucrats felt that a "straight" labor ticket could not possibly succeed. They felt what was needed was a respectable ticket which could rally support from the middle class.

SLATE AND PROGRAM

As a result the joint labor committee finally set up the Oakland Voters League with a few liberals as top officers, and decided on a "respectable" slate of five candidates. Although four of the five were or had been members of unions, none had ever gained any leading position

in the labor movement.

The program was similarly "respectable." The Voters League came out against the unjust taxation which favored the downtown merchants by low assessments. They came out vaguely for better housing, street improvements, parks, etc. Nothing concrete. On the labor angle, they promised "impartial" statesmanship.

THEIR CHANCE

If ever a "coalition" slate had the chance of garnering in the middle class vote, this slate should have been the one. Not only were the candidates and their program middle class, but in Oakland for almost two decades the middle class has made repeated attempts to unseat the political machine which has run the city in the interests of the Downtown Merchants Association and the United Employers Association.

Yet the campaign was hardly begun before the Joint Committee realized that their coalition slate idea was doomed and that they would have to rely on their own strength. No significant section of the middle class leaders rallied to the support of the slate. With the exception of a handful of PCA people and some fellow-travelers of the CP, the middle class leaders made their choice in favor of the incumbents. It quickly became clear that the entrenched city machine was being challenged, for the first time in two decades, by labor—and labor alone.

Fortunately, the Joint Committee took up the challenge and proceeded to speak more openly in the name of labor—although never going as far as they should have. The candidates added the plank of "no strikebreaking" to their program and began to lay more emphasis on their union affiliations, meager as these were.

SHOT IN THE ARM

The primaries, which the Voters League slate carried by big pluralities, served as a shot in the arm to the whole labor movement. Nothing had so captured the workers' imagination since the beginning of the CIO. Volunteer precinct workers appeared from almost everywhere.

The Voters League had little or no access to the daily press and the important radio stations,

Stalinist Grip On Buffalo UE Shaken By Militant Caucus

BUFFALO, May 31—One of the hottest union election campaigns in the Buffalo area has been concluded at the new Westinghouse plant, which is organized by Local 1581 of the CIO United Electrical Workers.

Although the Rank and File Membership Caucus, whose slate was headed by Tony Marino, lost the election for president by a narrow margin of 20 votes, (430 to 410), it nevertheless succeeded in electing the vice-president and three members of the executive board.

Until now, the Stalinist machine that dominates the UE has been receiving opposition mainly from right-wing dissidents and red-baiters running on a program that does not differ much from that followed by Fitzgerald, Maties and Co. But the election campaign in Local

10,000 Aircraft Workers Threaten Strike In Seattle

By C. Kaye

SEATTLE, May 28—Ten thousand workers at the Boeing Aircraft Corporation's giant Northwest plant here, never before struck, will strike if the company does not revise its present contract offer in the next few days. At a jammed meeting of the Aero Mechanics Union, Local 751, IAM, on May 22, thousands of indignant unionists overwhelmingly voted to reject the bosses' offer.

In a second vote over 94% called for a strike. The union immediately petitioned the Machinists' International in Washington for strike sanction.

The continued arrogance of the bosses after three months of negotiations spurred the union membership to this militant action. All the company's offers are conditioned by their insistence on nullifying the present seniority agreement by excluding any 10% of the working force from seniority coverage. The workers are justly refusing to sacrifice this prime guarantee of their job security in the plant.

Other union demands are a

1581 presented an entirely different picture.

For in this local the Rank and File group opposed the so-called "Unity" slate of the Stalinists on the basis of a clear-cut, militant labor program. In addition to raising various plant issues, the Rank and File program called for vigorous opposition to the anti-labor offensive; a sliding scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living; and the building of an independent labor party based on the trade unions.

The so-called "Unity" slate raised a campaign of vilification and slander against the leading Rank and File candidates, especially Tony Marino. In the last days of the campaign, they issued leaflets branding the Rank and File candidates as "strike-mad" and "disrupters" who "if elected would have a program of nothing but strike—strike—strike."

The Stalinist-dominated slate also stooped to encouraging undercover red-baiting against leading members of the Rank and File caucus, which had taken a clear and principled position against red-baiting as a bosses' weapon for smashing the labor movement.

The closeness of the vote all along the line showed that the slanders and red-baiting did not have the full effect intended. With only another 30 votes, the Rank and File caucus would have won a majority of the Executive Board.

Although the Rank and File slate had limited financial resources, it put up a much more active and vigorous campaign than the "Unity" slate, which had the full support of the UE International machine.

I wouldn't budge an inch for a CAMEL!



This poster, issued by the CIO Food, Tobacco, Agricultural & Allied Workers, on strike against the R. J. Reynolds Co., makers of Camel cigarettes, expresses the attitude of union labor on scab products. Copies of the poster are available at FTA headquarters, 20th and Race Sts., Philadelphia, Pa. Federated Pictures

Tri-State Fabricators Resist Fringe Demands In Contract

By Art O'Brien

YOUNGSTOWN, June 1—An unholy alliance between the small steel fabricating companies in a tri-state area in this region appears to have been formed against the union contract terms signed by Big and Little Steel.

These fabricators seem disposed to grant the 12½% increase won from both Big and Little Steel.

But on the questions of retroactive pay, paid vacations and other fringe demands they are stalling in the hopes that an early passage of the proposed anti-labor legislation will give them an injunction club to wield against the union. They are also putting up a solid front against the union shop demand which many union locals in the fabricating part of the industry are making.

The union made a small crack in the anti-union front by defeating three small fabricators Hill-Hubbell, Trim Edge and Mackenzie Muffler recently. But these are very small companies and do not carry very heavy weight.

The larger concerns such as

General Fireproofing, the Youngstown Steel Door and William B. Pollock Co. are holding out. General Fireproofing has a 15 day extension of contract. Youngstown Steel Door is closed down because the union is in a continuous meeting and William B. Pollock Co. is still in negotiations.

A key strike in the area is going on at the F. C. Russell Co. in Columbiana. The spirit of the workers there still remains high despite a court injunction and the dragging out of the strike. This is also a case of the company holding out to see what happens to the other fabricators and what kind of anti-labor legislation will be passed for its benefit.

ENDORSED STAND

Representatives of the local unions of the Amalgamated issued a statement heartily endorsing the stand taken by the CIO union, calling attention to the fact that the two international unions were cooperating in negotiations for wage increases with the major packers, and describing the elimination of jurisdictional differences in Chicago as "another move in the direction for united action."

The UPWA voted at its recent convention to work closely with the AFL union in seeking a 15 cent wage raise. Last week Patrick E. Gorman, international secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated, reported that the AFL union had agreed to this and that no settlement with the packers will be made without agreement by both unions.

Our Program:

- Defend labor's standard of living!**
A sliding scale of wages—an escalator wage clause in all union contracts to provide automatic wage increases to meet the rising cost of living!
Organize mass consumers committees for independent action against profiteering and price-gouging!
Expropriate the food trusts! Operate them under workers' control!
- Full employment and job security for all workers and veterans!**
For the 6-hour day, 30-hour week! A sliding scale of hours—reduce the hours of work with no reduction in pay to prevent layoffs and unemployment!
Government operation of all idle plants under workers' control!
Unemployment insurance equal to trade union wages for workers and veterans during the entire period of unemployment!
- Against all anti-labor laws and government strike-breaking!**
No restrictions on the right to strike and picket!
No injunctions! No compulsory arbitration!
- Build an independent labor party!**
- Tax the rich, not the poor!**
Repeat the payroll tax! No sales taxes!
No taxes on incomes under \$5,000 a year!
- An 18 billion dollar appropriation for government low-rent housing!**
- Full equality for Negroes and national minorities!**
End Jim-Crow! End Anti-Semitism!
- For a veterans' organization sponsored by the trade unions!**
- A working class answer to capitalist militarism and war.**
Take the war-making powers away from Congress! Let the people vote on the question of war or peace!
Against capitalist conscription!
Abolish the officer caste system!
Full democratic rights in the armed forces!
Trade union wages for the armed forces!
Military training of workers, financed by the government, but under control of the trade unions!
- Solidarity with the revolutionary struggles of the workers in all lands!**
For the complete independence of the colonial peoples!
Withdraw all American troops from foreign soil!
- For a Workers' and Farmers' Government!**

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The Truth Will Out

By Theodore Kovalesky

"Truth will out," they say. And they say, "You can't keep a good man down." It sounds good, doesn't it, the idea that "good" must triumph over "evil"? It sounds good, and, believe it or not, it is good. We kind of get the idea that just the opposite is true as we go along seeing all sorts of crooks in politics and in the union movement getting life's gravy while the worker gets the dirty end of the stick. We get the idea that "evil" must win out over "good" and that that is the way of the world.

But look at the case of Rocky Bellotti. He's only one man, and only a few hundred, maybe a thousand, other people in the world have ever heard of him. But he's an example and worth talking about.

Rocky works in a small steel fabrication plant. He's a union man; he's been a union man ever since the USA-CIO was born. He was a strong union man in the days when it was dangerous to be one, and he's a strong union man today.

But the trouble with Rocky was that he was too honest, too courageous, and too blunt. He didn't know how to make deals. He couldn't lie or keep his mouth shut when he figured it was time to sound off about what he deeply felt was good or bad for the union. He couldn't be scared off, and he couldn't be bought off with what is known in the rarified atmosphere of Washington or Tammany Hall as a "political plum."

So Rocky didn't get along any too well in the union movement locally. Of course he was on the organizing committee from the beginning, where he did a wonderful job; and of course he's been a steward for years (and the boys in his department swear by him). But that was about as far, it seemed, as Rocky would ever get. He

The Negro Struggle

Anger Is Not Enough

By William E. Bohannan

Mr. Truman and Mr. Marshall are mad. They claim that the Russians have made a coup in Hungary, that their action isn't democratic, and they aim to do something about it. I'm angry, too. I don't hold any brief for the bureaucratic policies of the Stalinists in Hungary or anywhere else, but I'm angry about something else. I'm angry about things that are happening right here in the USA. Lynch mobs running wild again. Lily white jurists turning self-confessed lynchers scot-free. Shotgun blasts, sadistic knifing and hanging of innocent young Negroes make a mockery out of democracy for 14 million American Negroes. And they make a hypocrite out of Truman or anybody else who yaps about democracy in Europe and doesn't lift a finger to halt lynch murder in the USA.

Those 28 men on trial in Greenville, South Carolina confessed that they took Willie Earle out of jail and into the woods, cut slices of his flesh away with knives, smashed in his head with blow after blow from gun butts. When they had finally vented their sadistic fury, they shot him three times and left his mutilated body lying as a bloody warning to all other Negroes.

When these murdering swine were placed on trial and their confessions made public, a lot of "liberal" editors and professional spouters of "democracy" (Truman-style) began to sound off about the "progress" in the fight against lynching. The South was learning its lesson, you see. The trial was going to stop lynching. But a lily-white jury turned these self-confessed

murderers free to strike again. And a few days later, obviously as a direct result of the South Carolina verdict, another mob tried to lynch Godwin Bush in North Carolina.

What did all the professional "democracy-lovers" have to say about the acquittal of the Earle lynch mob and the new outbreak of lynching? Where is their much-touted "progress"? Their great liberal expectations are bankrupted by events, their present shameful silence is pierced only by the sinister laugh of old Judge Lynch.

The more I read about that trial, the angrier I get. Listen to one of the defense attorneys: "Willie Earle is dead and I wish more like him were dead. If a mad dog were loose in my community, I would shoot the dog, and let them prosecute me... Not a soul in South Carolina would criticize you if you turn these boys loose."

That's plain talk. Plain lynch talk. "Shoot the mad dogs." That is the real voice of the Southern ruling class. And none of the "friends of democracy" and believers in "progress" can or will find an effective answer to these lynch-inciters.

What do the 14 million Negroes think—what does any decent white worker think—when they hear these Southern mobsters say "Shoot the mad dogs"? They get just as angry as I am.

But anger is not enough. We've got to fight for a real anti-lynch law with the death penalty for lynchers. And more than that we've got to forge a fighting alliance with the labor movement, and learn how to defend ourselves from these lynchers, how to deal back blow for blow, and how to put an end to lynching by ending the profit system that incites and breeds it.

The provision of shoes for all of the citizens of these poverty-stricken areas could eliminate the menace of hookworm disease as easily understood from the mode of the transmission of the disease. The hookworm parasite is about half an inch long in its adult stage. From the soil, where they have been deposited in human waste, these parasites enter the body through the skin of the foot. After passing through the blood stream, the lungs and the stomach, the worms finally reach the small intestines of the victim. There they attach themselves by means of hooks to the lining of the intestine and suck the blood. If hundreds of worms are present, the amount of blood lost will be considerable and a severe anemia will develop.

A vivid characterization of the havoc wrought in the South by hookworm disease has been given by Dr. Victor Heiser, a former member of the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission, which made an intensive study of the problem. In An American Doctor's Odyssey, Dr. Heiser says: "Any people who have to feed a collection of intestinal worms as well as themselves are bound to lose the race against those not so handicapped. By dwarfing their bodies, inhibiting the development of their minds and rendering them more susceptible to other diseases, the hookworm has caused incalculable damage. It has slaughtered members of the human family by the thousands and rendered them ill by the millions."

And it wouldn't have to be that way at all if there weren't so many poverty-stricken Barefoot Boys in the South!

The Not-So-Happy Barefoot Boy

By Grace Carlson

This is the season of the year when newspaper editors, at a loss for material to fill the editorial columns, knock off a piece about the Happy Barefoot Boy. A few lines from Whittier's poem are quoted to prove that the "blessings" which fall on "the barefoot boy" fill him with "outward sunshine and inward joy."

But the barefoot boys and girls of the Southern states do not fit this picture, because in that area, thousands of barefoot children and their parents are victims of hookworm disease. In North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky, the lack of an adequate sewage disposal system means that the soil is infested with the hookworm parasite.

Under the favorable conditions provided by the mild climate and moist sandy soil of these Southern states, the hookworm parasites thrive, and infest not only the soil, but those who walk barefoot across the soil. In the highly authoritative textbook, Preventive Medicine and Hygiene, Dr. Milton Rosenau writes:

"The prevention of hookworm disease is based on three principles: (1) sanitation, i.e. the prevention of soil pollution; (2) treatment of cases so as to diminish the amount of infestation; (3) mechanical protection, as the wearing of shoes. Sanitation is fundamental and enduring, but slow; treatment is quick, but temporary; shoes are effective, but not always economically practicable."

Notes From The News

CIO Tobacco Workers Union Local 22, on strike against the makers of Camel Cigarettes in North Carolina, has demanded state action to prevent the use of school children as scabs. Union officials charged that Reynolds Tobacco officials are appealing to high school principals for children to work in the struck plants.

Federal Judge Clark upheld a lower court in ordering four Negro families to vacate homes they had bought in Washington, D. C. because the neighborhood was lily-white by virtue of a real estate owners' covenant.

The National Maritime Union is protesting a

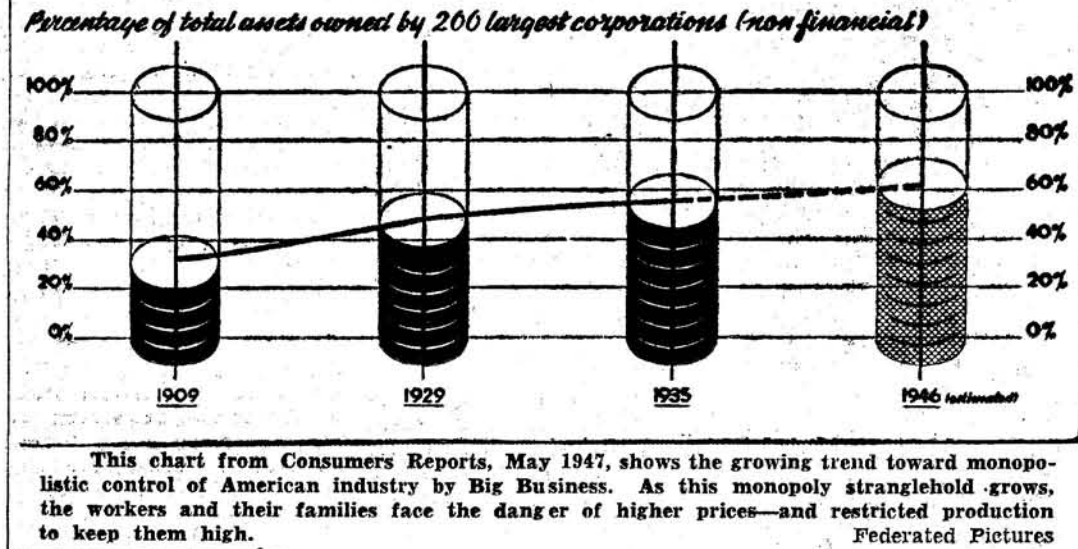
bill that would drive many foreign born seamen from American ships. Maritime workers who were torpedoed while sailing the ships during the war are in danger of losing their jobs because they have been unable to obtain citizenship papers.

Drunken members of the Michigan State Senate threw that body into an uproar at an evening session last week. Senators staggered around the chamber, waving their hats and shouting for adjournment. After three attempts to start the session, Lieutenant-Governor Keys gave up. It was understood the Senators were pie-eyed from drinking too many cocktails provided by professional lobbyists.

THE MILITANT

Seven Out On Bail After Lynch Attempt In N. C.

Capitalist Monopoly Grows Bigger



Secretary Of War Reveals Real Aim Of UMT Program

ment. The UMT program is designed to give this manpower "the benefit of basic military training." In addition "UMT will allow decisive offensive to be assumed much earlier" than would otherwise be possible. "The whole philosophy of UMT is to speed up the time it takes to shift to the aggressive decisive counter-attack."

The lynch spirit rules Rich Square, N. C. The men who kidnaped Godwin Bush, 24-year old Negro, from the local jail and tried to lynch him, are walking the streets free. They are confident that like the Greenville, S. C. lynchers they will never be punished. Bush, whose courage and agility saved him from the mob, is in prison. Moreover, there is a strong danger that he will spend most of his life in prison on completely phony charges.

Seven white men have been charged with the lynch attempt on Bush. More arrests are possible since it is well known that more participated in the lynch mob. All seven were arrested with great reluctance on the part of local police authorities and were immediately freed on \$2,500 bail apiece. As in the Greenville case, the identities of the men were established by the confession of one member of the mob. The FBI participated in the questioning that led to the confession but it is now out of the case. Washington announced that the FBI investigation had revealed no violations of federal law. Left in the hands of the local authorities, there is no doubt that the would-be lynchers will go free.

Buffalo SWP Steps Up Drive Against Pending Sales Tax

BUFFALO, May 28—With mounting enthusiasm and energy the Socialist Workers Party branch here is bringing to a climax its county-wide campaign against the impending 1% sales tax—which will be foisted on the working people of Erie County on July 1 unless an aroused labor movement will stop it.

Mass Meeting In L.A. Protests Freeing Of 28 Lynch Murderers

LOS ANGELES, May 28—The Socialist Workers Party today gave support to the mass meeting to protest the acquittal of 28 confessed lynchers and to demand immediate federal anti-lynch legislation which has been called by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for next Sunday.

Pendergast Machine Scored In Kansas City Vote Fraud

The Kansas City vote fraud scandal, involving the notorious Pendergast machine and President Truman, reached new heights last week. A state grand jury, after a two-month investigation, indicted 81 for false election returns, miscounting of ballots, illegal marking of ballots, vote buying and bribery in a Democratic congressional primary last August. A few hours after the indictments had been brought in, expert safe-crackers broke into the vault of the Kansas City Board of Elections and stole the ballots, poll books and tally sheets to be used as evidence against those indicted.

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