preface to 'challenge to nonviolence'

The title of this book is deliberately ambiguous. It is intended to convey the notion that the achievements of nonviolence in the twentieth century pose a challenge to accepted ideas about dealing with conflict in both domestic and international politics. But it is intended equally to indicate that nonviolence theory faces major challenges in a world that has changed beyond recognition since the downfall of Soviet communism and the demise of the Cold War.

The book comprises a selection of the presentations and papers given at meetings of the Nonviolent Action Research Project from 1994 to 1999 and an edited version of my notes of the ensuing discussions. The project itself was co-sponsored by the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University and the Lansbury House Trust fund (LHTF), and funded principally by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT). During this period, a core study group of nine to twelve people met every few months to consider presentations or papers by one of its members or by an invited guest about aspects of nonviolence, or events and situations that were relevant to it. The aim of the book is to make the presentations and discussions available to a wider audience.¹

The project developed from two earlier ones, also based at Bradford University and co-sponsored by Peace Studies and LHTF. The first of these was the Alternative Defence Commission, set up in December 1980 to look into defence options for Britain and Western Europe without nuclear weapons. The Commission produced two major studies: *Defence without the Bomb*, (Taylor and Francis, London, 1983), and *The Politics of Alternative Defence* (Fontana, London, 1987). It also produced several shorter studies, and in 1986 held a European Consultation on alternative defence.

The Commission completed its work and dissolved itself in December 1988, but the following year the Social Defence Project, with some overlap of membership from the Commission, was set up to consider in greater depth one of the options ADC had put forward, that of unarmed civil resistance as a form of national defence. In the ADC reports social defence, or what it termed 'defence by civil resistance', figured essentially as a fall back option, complementing a broad military strategy of 'non-offensive' defence. The Commission recognized, however, that there might be particular circumstances where it would be more sensible and efficacious to use this form of defence in the first instance rather than resorting to military resistance.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the overthrow of communist rule across East Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 was a spectacular demonstration of the potential of this form of resistance. These events, and others such as the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines by 'People Power' in 1986, showed that civil resistance could achieve success even against repressive authoritarian regimes of right or left, and have a strategic significance at the international level. Not surprisingly, then, the main study to emerge from the work of the Social Defence Project focussed on the political and security implications of events in Eastern Europe. The study, which I wrote with much input and support from members of the project, was published under the title *People Power: the building of a new European Home* (Hawthorn Press, Stroud, 1991).

Purpose and Concerns of the Nonviolent Action Research Project

At the final meeting of the Social Defence Project in January 1994, the group considered the case for continuing to meet whilst broadening the remit to include consideration of other aspects of nonviolent thought and action. Much time at this meeting, and during the early meetings of the new group which was formally established in March 1994, was spent considering what might be the focus and goals of the project. There was a general recognition that nonviolence faced difficult new challenges in the post-Cold War world. The threat of nuclear war had receded - though it had far from disappeared. But wars within and between the successor Soviet and Yugoslav states, and horrendous ethnic conflicts in Africa, amounting in the case of Rwanda to premeditated genocide, shattered the hopes that the world was entering a more peaceful era. These developments posed particularly difficult problems to those of us who had hoped that the events in Eastern Europe in 1989 when communist regimes were overthrown in largely peaceful revolutions would lead to 'social defence' or 'defence by civil resistance' being taken more seriously and adopted at least as a complementary strategy for national defence and collective security. But while



the seriousness of the challenge to strategic nonviolence could not be ignored, it was equally important that the extraordinary achievements of civil resistance or 'people power' in a variety of social and political contexts should be studied and propagated. This, essentially, was the motivation for the setting up of the Nonviolent Action Research Project. To quote from the Statement of Aims adopted in September 1994, its aim was: 'To establish a British based forum and network for study, debate and enquiry into nonviolent action: its use for social and political ends within a society or for defence of a state against foreign occupation or coup d'etat, and the contexts and cultures giving rise to nonviolence.' The full text of the Statement is printed at the end of the Introduction.

Note on the form of the Book

The choice I faced as editor of the book was whether simply to reproduce the papers and presentations on their own, or to publish in addition either a summary or a fairly extended version of the subsequent discussions. To have published only the presentations, I felt, would have meant losing the critical evaluation of them that occurred during the discussions, and much material that was of interest in its own right. However, to have included the bulk of the discussion, even in edited form, would not only have made the book unduly long but rather unfocussed. The discussions often ranged widely even within individual meetings and sometimes took off at a tangent from the original topic. After discussing the problem with colleagues on the project, and the Department of Peace Studies, I therefore decided upon a middle course of using the papers and presentations together with edited extracts of part of the discussions.

Members of the Core Group (at various times) were: Tricia Allen, Christina Arber, John Brierley, Howard Clark, Annie Harrison, Bob Overy, Lindis Percy, Michael Randle, Carol Rank, Andrew Rigby, Walter Stein.

Contributors: Felicity Arbuthnot, Roberta Bacic, Alex Begg, Bela Bhatia, April Carter, Howard Clark, Lynne Jones, Kate McGuinness, Richard Norton-Taylor, Fionnuala O'Connor, Ciaron O'Reilly, Bob Overy, Bhikhu Parekh, Lindis Percy, Michael Randle, Andrew Rigby, Tarig Shabeer, Nick Wilson, Angie Zelter.

Guest attenders at individual meetings: Roberta Bacic, Pat Bracken, Richard Evans, Isobel Guillou, Tracey Hart, Wael Hussein, Jude Hutchen, Albert Hunt, Yolanda Juarros Barcenilla, Philip Lewis, Ruth Overy, Alan Marks, Joanne Sheehan, Kate Witham

Notes on Core Group Members and Contributors

Tricia Allen was an active supporter of the three Ploughshares actions which took place in Britain between 1990 and 1996? organising public meetings, producing information about the actions, mobilising support in different towns, and arranging media coverage of the actions and court cases. As a result of one of the actions, she started a local campaign in Lancashire in 1994, targeting British Aerospace's production factory for Hawk aircraft, due for export to Indonesia, which later grew to be a significant national campaign across Britain. In the mid?90s she started work with Friends of the Earth as a climate campaigner, and developed campaign projects for FOE's 250 local groups across the country. In 1999 she moved to New Zealand, where she is currently Campaign and Communications Director for Greenpeace.

Chris Arber organized Bradford events for Pax Christi in the 70s. She wrote about Nonviolence in Pax Christi's Newsletter *JustPeace* and the *Peace Education Newsletter*. She did her MA Dissertation on ¡Nonviolent Civilian Resistance in Czechoslovakia and Hungary' and her Ph.D. on Gandhi. She has taught evening classes on Peace Studies and Nuclear Weapons, and taught in the Department of Peace Studies on Gandhi, Peacemaking, and Nonviolent Action. She has been a Trustee of the Commonweal Collection, an independent library focussing on nonviolent social change, for eleven years. Since summer 1999 Chris has been Outreach Worker for Commonweal.

Felicity Arbuthnot is a journalist specialising in social and environmental issues with special knowledge of Iraq, a country which she has visited twenty three times since the 1991 Gulf war? journeys which she describes as watching a people slide from 'the impossible to the apocalyptic'. She was Iraq researcher for John Pilger's Awardwinning documentary 'Paying the Price? Killing the Children of Iraq'. She was nominated for the 1998 (EC) Lorenzo Natali Award for Human Rights Journalism for her Iraq coverage and is nominated for The Millenium



Peace Prize for Women co?sponsored by the UN women's organisation, UNIFEM, and International Alert, and the Courage of Conscience Award established to commemorate the life of Archbishop Romero. Chapter 17 [1]

Roberta Bacic was born in Santiago Chile in 1949, the only daughter of migrants who had just arrived from Europe where they had suffered displacement and the loss of most of their families during World War II. She began an academic career in the field of education in 1970 at the time of Allende's success in the Presidential election. After the 1973 coup, she became increasingly involved in the resistence to Pinochet as a result of which she was sacked from her academic post. She and her colleagues developed strategies and methods of nonviolent action, working with the families of the detained and disappeared and with the victims of torture. Although a critic of the accommodation which was reached between the military and the mainstream Chilean political parties resulting in the end of Pinochet's presidency, she was appointed to the Corporation Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Truth Commission). She returned to academic life in the early 1990s, introducing the teaching of human rights as an academic discipline in Chile and carrying out research into the circumstances of those who had survived oppression especially in the indigenous Mapuche community. In 1998, she moved to London to work as Programme Officer with War Resisters' International. Chapter 20 [2]

Bela Bhatia is a freelance writer, researcher and activist based in Patna (Bihar, India). After graduating from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Mumbai), she worked for several years with Shramjivi Samaj, an organisation of labourers and farmers in Sabarkantha district, north Gujarat. In 1990 she joined the Gulf Peace Team, an international team of peace?minded individuals who set up a peace camp on the border between Iraq and Saudi Arabia shortly before the Gulf war. After returning to Iraq in 1991 with the International Study Team, she co?authored *Unheard Voices: Iraqi Women on War and Sanctions* (with Mary Kawar and Miriam Shahin). She recently completed a PhD thesis at the University of Cambridge, on the Naxalite movement in Bihar. Chapter 18 [3]

Alex Begg became involved in radical politics while studying politics at Leeds University, getting involved in Earth First! and the Green Student Network. He studied training skills with the Directory for Social Change, and has run courses for Radical Routes, the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation, and UpStart Workers Co?operative. He is a specialist on the social economy, and has been a founder member of two Housing and two workers' co?operatives. He has also served on the National Executive of the Green Party, and is the author of a book entitled *Empowering the Earth* (Green Books, 2000). He has two children and lives in Yeovil. Chapter 4 [4]

John Brierley worked for fourteen years for the Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament as a development worker and then fundraiser. In 1997 he was part of the organising group for the first Gathering Visions, Gathering Strength? an event initiated by the Nonviolent Action Research Group and which drew together nonviolent activists from across movements and generations. He now works as the publicity and marketing officer for the Hebden Bridge Alternative Technology Centre.

April Carter was involved with the direct action wing of the peace movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s and with the Alternative Defence Commission in the 1980s. She has written on political theory, arms control and social movements and compiled an annotated biblioraphy on Gandhi. Her books include *The Politics of Women's Rights*, 1988 and *Peace Movements*, Longmans, 1992, and her most recent book, *The Political Theory of Global Citizenship*, is being published by Routledge. Chapter 8 [5]

Howard Clark became involved in nonviolent action as a student. As co?editor of *Peace News* from 1971?76, he was closely connected with several nonviolent initiatives ranging from the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign to the Community Levy for Alternative Projects. Unemployed for the next five years, he had the time for a variety of activities mainly revolving around nonviolence training, safe energy campaigning and anti?sexist work in schools. In 1981 he moved to Bradford to research first at the School of Peace Studies and then with the Alternative Defence Commission, being active in the local nuclear disarmament group. From 1985 to 1997 as coordinator of War Resisters' International in London, Howard was in touch with a variety of projects and emerging nonviolent movements in many places, forming especially close links in Poland, South Africa and former?Yugoslavia. He left WRI to become a Research Fellow for the Albert Einstein Institution studying the nonviolent struggle in Kosovo. He was a co-founder of the Balkan Peace Team, sending volunteers to Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo/a. His book, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo* was published by Pluto Press in August 2000. He was author of the pamphlet *Making Nonviolent Revolution* (Peace News, 1978 and 1981) and co?author of *Preparing for Nonviolent Direct Action* (Peace News/CND 1983). He now lives in Spain. Chapter 10 [6]

Annie Harrison has been involved over a long period in the peace movement in Britain and in human rights work amongst indigenous peoples in North America - both the USA and Canada. She has run training workshops on



Nonviolent Direct Action and Conflict Resolution and is a qualified counsellor and massage therapist. She lives in Manchester where she now works as a drug counsellor with probation clients.

Lynne Jones is a child psychiatrist and writer. She has been involved in the peace movement since the early '80s, as a Greenham woman and as member of END (Chair 1986?88). In particular she was involved in the Polish working group. Her additional interest was in nonviolence in Central America. Her PhD was on the Process of Political engagement in Nonviolent Collective Action (Bath University 1995). Since 1990 she has been involved in the Balkans and set up the Balkans Peace Project to train groups in conflict resolution which worked in all the republics of the former Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1994. Since 1994 she has been doing aid work in the Balkans: first in Bosnia and since 1998 in Kosova. She is currently a senior Research Associate at the Centre for Family Research, Cambridge University, and medical director of a child psychiatry training programme in Kosova. She writes regularly for the *London Review of Books*. Chapter 1 [7]

Kate McGuinness is completing her PhD with the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University. Her project is a deconstruction of the relationship between power and difference. Kate was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. After extensive travels, she now makes a home in Co. Leitrim, Ireland. Chapter 5 [8]

Richard Norton-Taylor joined the Guardian in 1975. Since then, he has investigated official secrecy, behind?the?scenes decision?making in Government, and the activities of the security and intelligence services. He has regularly contributed to BBC news and current affairs programmes. His books include: Whose Land Is It Anyway?, An investigation into land ownership (Turnstone Press, 1981); The Ponting Affair (Cecil Woolf, 1985); Blacklist, The Inside Story of Political Vetting (with Mark Hollingsworth, The Hogarth Press 1988); In Defence of the Realm? The case for Accountable Security and Intelligence Services (Civil Liberties Trust, 1990); A Conflict of Loyalties, GCHQ, 1984?1991 (with Hugh Lanning, New Clarion Press, 1991); Truth is A Difficult Concept: Inside the Scott Inquiry (Fourth Estate, A Guardian Book, 1995); Knee Deep in Dishonour on the arms?to?Iraq affair (With Mark Lloyd and Stephen Cook, Victor Gollancz, 1996). Contributor to Sleaze, The Corruption of Parliament (4th Estate, 1997), and to Aitken, The Liar (Penguin Books, 1997). He won the Freedom of Information Campaign Award for journalism in 1986. With John McGrath, wrote Half the Picture, an adaption of the Scott arms?to?Iraq inquiry which was presented at the Tricyle Theatre, House of Commons, and on BBC2 and won a Freedom of Information Campaign award and Time Out Drama Award. In 1999, he wrote The Colour of Justice, an edited version of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, for the Tricycle. It later transferred to the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, the Victoria Palace and the National before touring in the north of England and Belfast (at the Grand Opera House). His edited version of the 1946 Nuremberg trials was performed at the Tricycle in 1996. Chapter 16 [9]

Fionnuala O'Connor is a Belfast journalist and political commentator who has written a study of Catholic political identity (*In Search of a State*) and is working on a book about integrated education in Northern Ireland. She is the *Economist's* Northern Ireland correspondent. Chapter 11 [10]

Ciaron O'Reilly is an Irish Australian peace activist. He took part in the 1980s civil rights, social justice and free speech movement in Queensland, Australia, during the rule of the far-right Premier, Joh Bjelke-Peterson. During the 1991 Gulf War, Ciaron was a member of the 'ANZUS Ploughshares' group who entered Griffis Air Force Base, New York, and put a B-52 Bomber out of action. Together with the other members of the group, he was arrested and sentenced to 13 months in the US penal system. After his return to Australia, Ciaron took part in the 'Jabiluka Ploughshares' group action which disabled uranium mining equipment in the Northern Territory of Australia in 1998. Ciaron is the author of *Remembering Forgetting - A Journey of Nonviolent Resistance to the War on East Timor* (Otford Press, Australia, 2001). Together with other members of the Brisbane Catholic Worker, he took an active role in highlighting the involvement and complicity of the Australian government, corporate and military sectors in supporting Indonesia's brutal and illegal 25 year occupation of East Timor. On 25 July 2006, Ciaron and the four other 'Pitstop Ploughshares' were acquitted by a Dublin jury for disarming a US Navy war plane at the civilian Shannon airport. Chapter 9 [11]

Bob Overy was awarded his PhD from Bradford University in 1982 for his study of 'Gandhi as a Political Organiser', which remains unpublished. Since 1985 he has worked as principal officer in the Peace and Emergency Planning Unit of Leeds City Council. Currently (2001), he is seconded to the Home Office to review emergency planning arrangements in the UK. Chapter 6 [12] and Chapter 12 [13]

Bhikhu Parekh is Professor of Political Theory at the University of Hull. He has been a Visiting Professor at several universities including the University of British Columbia, McGill, Harvard, and the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of several widely acclaimed books in political philosophy, and his latest book



Rethinking Multiculturalism was published by Harvard University Press in September 2000. Professor Parekh is also active in British political life. He was Deputy Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, and is currently Chair of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain whose report on the state of race relations in Britain was published in October 2000. He received the BBC's Special Lifetime Achievement Award in November 1999, and was appointed to the House of Lords in March 2000. Chapter 19 [14]

Lindis Percy: Born in Leeds, West Yorkshire? married with three children? trained nurse midwife and working health visitor in Bradford? has worked in the NHS for nearly 30 years. Responded to Biafran crisis in the 1960s. While working as a midwife in Southampton, she was awakened to the issue of weapons of mass destruction in general and nuclear weapons in particular by the arrival of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common. She is a member of CND, Medact (Global Security), Greenpeace, and Charter 88 and was closely involved with the protest at Greenham Common and Cruise Watch. She was arrested and charged many times at Greenham Common and Salisbury Plain. Challenged the validity of Military Land Byelaws (Imber Ranges) in 1987. She attended the Department of Peace Studies late 80s and early 90s and was closely involved with protest at the National Security Agency of America base at Menwith Hill. A temporary injunction sought by Tom King then Secretary of State for Defence in 1991 at Menwith Hill? became permanent in 1996. Other permanent injunctions brought by Secretary of State for Defence include USAF Mildenhall, USAF Lakenheath, USAF Alconbury, the Deep and Near Space Tracking Facility at Feltwell. Served over a dozen prison sentences Again challenged validity of byelaws at Menwith Hill (1993) and Fylingdales (2001). Involved with actions through the courts at all levels of legal system except House of Lords. Successful with several legal authorities (Percy v DPP Balcombe and Collins 1994). Brought two legal actions against the US government. Member of Otley Peace Action Group. Founded the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (CAAB) with Anni Rainbow in 1993. Arrests and charges continue to date. <u>Chapter 7</u> [15]

Michael Randle is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford. He has been involved in peace movement activities since the 1950s and was a member of the March Committee which organised the first Aldermaston March at Easter 1958. From 1980 to 1988 he coordinated the Alternative Defence Commission, and subsequently the Social Defence Project and the Nonviolent Action Research Project. His books include *People Power: the Building of a New European Home*, Hawthorn Press, 1991, *Civil Resistance*, Fontana, 1994 (now online here [16], *How to Defend yourself in Court*, Civil Liberties Press 1995. Chapter 1 [17] and Chapter 3 [18]

Carol Rank has taught Peace Studies at universities in the U.S. and Europe, and has worked for a range of grassroots organisations involved in community development, mediation, and peace education. She is currently teaching at the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University.

Andrew Rigby is a lecturer and writer, and formerly Reader in Peace Studies at the University of Bradford. He is currently the Director of the Centre for the Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University. His books include *Living the Intifada*, Zed Books, 1991 (now online here [19]), and *Justice and Reconciliation: After the Violence*, Lynne Rienner, 2001. Chapter 2 [20]

Tariq Shabeer was born and brought up in London within a Pakistani Sunni Muslim environment. He gained BSc and MSc degrees in Oceanography from Swansea and Southampton, and completed PhD research in Acid Rain from the University of Essex. Although there were opportunities to continue this research, he chose to work to benefit the British Asian community in the UK. Tariq is active in local Green politics and committed to non-violent techniques and co-operative ways of working. He is interested in the establishment of practical local interest free systems, compatible with Islamic principles. He came to Bradford in 1991, and worked as a Community Environment Development officer in the Manningham area from 1992 to 1995. He continued to expand on LETS and other community based forms of work, from 1995 to 1998, as part of Bradford Council's Community Economic Development Unit. Tariq presently works in Croydon Council as Social Enterprises Business Adviser. Chapter 15

Walter Stein, writer, critic and prominent Catholic moral philosopher, he held a Research Fellowship at Liverpool University, and was a Lecturer in English Literature and Philosophy in the Department of Extramural Studies at Leeds University. He was a member the Alternative Defence Commission, 1980-1988, and subsequently of the Social Defence Project and the Nonviolent Action Research Project from its inception in 1993 until his death in 1996. He edited and contributed to *Nuclear Weapons and Christian Conscience*, Merlin Press 1961 and 1981 and *Peace on Earth: the Way Ahead*, Sheed & Ward, 1966. He was for many years an adviser on drama to the Arts Council and contributed the chapter on drama to C.B.Cox and A.E.Dyson (eds) *The Twentieth Century Mind*, OUP,



1972. He was the author of *Criticism as Dialogue*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, and a regular contributor to *The Tablet* and other publications.

Nick Wilson trained in history and decorative art. He was one of the first volunteers on the Pakrac Project, then pioneered participative training with Amnesty cells in the newly ex-Soviet bloc, writing a human rights training manual since translated into 30 languages from Kazakh to Swahili. He helped create experiential training at the Zagreb Centre for Peace Studies, of which he is a Research Associate, and has worked in UK NGOs as a trainer, mediator, and fundraiser. He is currently campaigner at Conscience - The Peace Tax Campaign (conscience.org.uk and peacepays.org). A short article on the Pakrac Project was published in CCTS Review 12 [22]. Nick's book based on interviews with Pakrac people: 'A More Human Channel: Peacebuilding on the Frontline', is unfinished due to funding. Chapter 14 [23]

Angie Zelter is a grass?roots campaigner and activist for peace, social and environmental justice. She has been confronting the UK state and others for over 20 years with nonviolent and accountable direct actions against arms sales to repressive regimes (she was one of the four women who, after disarming a BAe Hawk jet by causing one and a half million pounds worth of damage to prevent it going to Indonesia and spending 6 months in prison, were acquitted by a jury at Liverpool Crown Court); illegal logging (she was part of an Earth First!,SOS Sarawak action and spent 2 months in a prison in Sarawak for taking part in a blockade to prevent logging on Penan land? she also started an 'ethical shoplifting' campaign to take wood products stolen from indigenous peoples' lands from shops in the UK to police stations on behalf of Brazilian Indians and also on behalf of the nuxalk people of British Columbia); and nuclear disarmament (after disarming a vital link in the Trident nuclear weapon system with two other women she spent 5 months in prison and was then acquitted after arguing that trident was unlawful and criminal under international law). She continues to actively confront evil wherever she can although she concentrates on the abuses of power within the UK where she resides as a 'global citizen'. Chapter 13 [24]

Notes:

- 1. The other principal way in which the group succeeded in reaching out to a wider audience has been through a series of conferences entitled Gathering Visions, Gathering Strength which brought together nonviolent direct actionists from different campaigns and different generations to discuss principles, strategy and tactics. The meetings took place in Leeds in April 1997, Manchester in April 1998, and Hebden Bridge in 1999. They have been organized on a co-operative basis by people from various bodies, but it was the Nonviolent Action Research Project which took the initiative in setting up the first gathering.
- 2. Activists and researchers have not managed to agree on the most suitable name for civilian resistance as a national defence and the various choices usually indicate different viewpoints on how the resistance might be organised or conducted. The pioneer US researcher in the field of nonviolence, Dr Gene Sharp, has proposed 'Civilian-Based Defence' or CBD, reflecting his concern to disentangle the concept from moral and ideological presuppositions and regarding it as 'an alternative weapons system'. Social Defence is more commonly used in Britain and Europe and often carries with it the implication that it is the free organisations of civil society, rather than necessarily the state as such, which requires defending and which would form the base of resistance. Civilian defence is more neutral in its connotations, though it risks being confused with Civil Defence

Acknowledgements

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Resistance. Finally I would like to express my special personal thanks to Anne, my wife, for her support and help during the long gestation period of this project.

Michael Randle

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