



# Métis Nationalist Voice

Volume 2, Issue 3

March 2021

Métis Nation Issues and Interests

## Métis Nationalist Movement Saskatchewan launches action against the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan leadership

By MNMS

On Thursday, March 11, 2021, Local Presidents from Prince Albert and Ile a la Crosse, including Darlene McKay, President of Local 7, Gail Johnson, President of Local 269, Sheila Andrews, President of Local 107 and Jim Durocher, President of the A la Baie

Métis Local of Ile a la Crosse, and Métis National Council President Clément Chartier QC in his individual capacity as a member of the MNS Métis Local of Buffalo Narrows, announced an action against the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN-S)

leadership for violating the MN-S Constitution, which provides that all or any Métis meeting the election voter eligibility criteria has the right to vote. See the following page for details on this unfolding news story.

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# Concerned Métis Leaders File Lawsuit on Behalf of Disenfranchised Métis Voters

By MNMS

It is out of grave concern for Saskatchewan Métis that a lawsuit was filed March 11, 2021. Local Presidents from Prince Albert and Ile a la Crosse, along with Métis National Council President Clément Chartier QC in his individual capacity as a member of the MNS Métis Local of Buffalo Narrows launched an action against the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan leadership.

Darlene McKay, President of Local 7, Gail Johnson, President of Local 269, Sheila Andrews, President of Local 107 and Jim Durocher, President of the A la Baie Métis Local of Ile a la Crosse decided to join Mr. Chartier due to the total disregard displayed against them by the MNS. The three Locals in Prince Albert have been excluded from the governance of the MNS for no constitutional or administrative reason, and are seeking a court order instructing the MNS at both the regional and provincial levels to immediately recognize their legitimate right to participate in the MNS governance and discontinue this abusive behavior towards them.

President Jim Durocher is challenging the decision of the MNS Provincial Métis Council to amend the proposed Métis Nation Legislative Assembly agenda to exclude his right as a member of the MNLA to have his proposed

amendment to the Election Act 2007 entered onto the Order of the Day and deliberated by the MNLA. As a consequence of this action by the PMC which is in violation of the MNLA Act, President Durocher was foreclosed from having his proposed legislative amendment considered by the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Clément Chartier QC is taking this action against the MNS on the basis that the action by the MNS PMC contravenes the MNS Constitution which provides that all or any Métis meeting the election voter eligibility criteria has the right to vote. This right has been exercised since the first election of the newly re-established Métis Society of Saskatchewan (now the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan) held in February 1989. Such practice was used for all further elections, including the May 2017 election where the current MNS Executive and Regional Directors were elected.

While the resolution to do away with the declaration/right of vote was adopted in November 2019, it did not become part of the Election Act 2007 until February 20, 2021. In order to vote in the May 29, 2021 MNS election, a Métis citizen in Saskatchewan of the age of 16 or over, must be a registered

member of the MNS or have applied for membership by March 30, 2021. To make matter worse, the Central and Regional Offices of the Registry Department of the MNS was closed in March 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic and remain closed to this day.

In this connection, Mr. Chartier is hoping that the court will set aside the MNLA amendment to the Election Act 2007 as it violates the MNS Constitution.

“I stand firmly in the corner of the Constitution which was adopted in December 1993 by over 900 delegates gathered in Saskatoon based on our inherent right of self-government. This was a solemn declaration of our rights as a people and I cannot sit back and watch the current MNS leadership run roughshod over such a solemn and sacred document to the Métis in Saskatchewan” stated Mr. Chartier.

# There has Never Been a Better Time to Register as Métis

By Lorna Ledoux

Every time I sign onto social media, I see that there is a huge push for Métis in Saskatchewan to become registered as citizens of the Métis Nation. While there are pros and cons to every scenario, I have to agree that we do need to register. The current urgency centers around the upcoming MN-S election. Many of the potential candidates are afraid that they will lose votes as we can all think of friends and family members who are disenfranchised by the recent passing of a resolution by the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly that makes registration a prerequisite for voting. No matter who loses votes, there are a huge number of our citizens that will be left out on

election day, if they are not registered. You know the old saying: "You can't complain if you didn't vote". As Métis we tend to be passionate and vocal about politics, so that will not fly.

I myself became registered a few years back and some of my children and grandchildren did the same over the past year. I did so because I am a die-hard Métis who felt a need to have that card in my wallet. My family members registered out of a need to because they were applying for programs and services. I might add that I have carried every card issued by the MN-S since the late 1980s. I actually think that doing the required genealogy for the applications is a great exercise in

getting to know our ancestors and how can you go wrong in doing that? Because many of us have done that and submitted copies of the required scrip/census documents, it is much easier for relatives applying now. One simply has to find a relative who has done the research and obtained a card, and then show a relationship to the ancestors that they used to establish that historical Métis status.

For fun, I am attaching a copy of some of the documents that I used. While the terms used by the non-Indigenous census takers were offensive, they are useful to us today when we need to get registered and put that awesome card in our wallet.

Métis National Council Historical Database <small>BETA</small>	
<a href="#">← Back</a>	
Family Name:	Haggeyt
First Name:	Susanne
Second Name:	""
Document Series: Census 1901	
Census Year:	1901
Colour:	Red
Community:	Wood Mountain
District:	Assiniboia West
Marital Status:	Single
Mother Tongue:	French
No of Dwelling:	10
No of Family:	10
Place of Birth:	Assiniboia
Province or Territory:	North West Territories
Racial or Tribal Origin:	French Breed
Relationship to Head:	Daughter
Religion:	Roman Catholic
Sex:	F
Year of Birth:	1894
Archival Reference:	LAC RG 31 V. 1250-1251

Family Name:	King or Roy
First Name:	Marie OR Mary
Second Name:	""
Document: Northwest Scrip	
Originating Record:	111
Application Source:	LAC RG 15 v. 1350
Gender:	Female
Birth Year:	unknown
Application Year:	1900
Application Location:	unknown
Birth Location:	unknown
Residence Location:	Wood Mountain
Married Name:	Haggeyt

Family Name:	Roy
First Name:	Marie
Second Name:	""
Document: Manitoba Affidavit	
Birth Year Only:	1857
Family Name:	Roy
Father Name:	Joseph Roy
First Name:	Marie
Parish of Birth:	Northwest Territories
Parish:	St Francois Xavier
Residence:	
Year of Application:	1875
Mother Name:	Josephine Cayen
Archival Reference:	LAC RG 15 v. 851

## Clem Chartier Announces Bid for MN-S Presidency

By Lorna Ledoux



After months of speculation by Métis across Saskatchewan and urging from close friends and family to do so, Clem Chartier has announced that he will run for the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S) President's seat. I am writing this piece about his Presidential run as a writer for The Voice and sharing the platform of Mr. Chartier and the Métis Nationalist Movement Saskatchewan (MNMS) team. Other candidates on the team will be featured in future issues of The Voice as they declare their candidacy. The MNMS is delighted that Clem has moved home full time and put our

full support and endorsement behind him in his bid for MN-S President.

Clem's accomplishments are many, however the ones that immediately come to mind are as follows:

From the early 1970s until this very day, Clem has been a staunch supporter of Métis Rights and has never wavered from this position. He served Saskatchewan Métis as an executive member of the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians and the MN-S at various times throughout the past

forty (40) years. He also served as a staff member, management, and consultant roles for Saskatchewan Métis.

Clem was a part of the formation of the Métis National Council (MNC) in 1983 and sat at the table for the Constitutional talks in 1983 and 1984. In this role, he represented Métis interests, promoted the Métis rights agenda and was a part of the negotiation of Métis into section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

In 1987-1988 Clem was instrumental in the establishment

of a Métis -only, Métis Society of Saskatchewan. This was a huge decision for Saskatchewan Métis that was not entered into lightly after the passing of Bill C-31 made it possible for Non-Status Indians to be recognized as First Nations people.

Clem has served as President of the MNC since 2003. In this role, he pursued a nation to nation agenda for Métis that resulted in a relationship with the federal government that culminated in the agreements we see today for the provincial affiliates, such as the MN-S. The Daniels decision served to further cement the nation to nation relationship that Clem and his team had formalized.

One cannot think of Clem without thinking of him as a lawyer and the extensive list of litigation for Métis rights that he has participated in as lead counsel. Such cases include: Morin and Daigneault, Laviolette, Grumbo, Bellehumeur, Myette, Boyer and Poitras. This was most often done at his own expense and/or without pay.

Clem is currently defending the right to democracy of Saskatchewan Métis as per the story in this publication. This story is unfolding and the outcome of the case is crucial to the future of Métis in this province.

As part of the MNMS, Clem's platform outline, which lists key areas of priority, is as per the story in this newsletter. His agenda is rights-based and all-encompassing to include and benefit all of our Métis citizens.

# Métis Nationalist Movement Saskatchewan



The Métis are a distinct Indigenous people and nation who emerged in the historic Northwest during the late 18th century. The Métis Nation Homeland encompasses the Prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and extends into a contiguous part of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the northern United States.

The Métis Nationalist Movement Saskatchewan (MNMS) consists of Métis from within the borders of Saskatchewan. Métis within Saskatchewan, like our counterparts throughout the Métis Nation have a long, proud storied history of acting collectively to protect and fight for our rights, lands and ongoing existence as a distinct Indigenous people and nation within the Canadian federation. From the Métis provisional government of Riel at Batoche in 1885 to contemporary Métis governments, this dedication has continued to exist as citizens and communities throughout Saskatchewan keep the nation's distinct culture, traditions, language and lifestyle alive and pursue our own political, social and economic development.

## Métis Rights

Métis rights are at the heart of our agenda. A primary goal of MNMS is to advance the recognition of Métis rights while protecting the integrity of the Métis Nation from erosion and misinterpretation of collective and individual Métis rights.

### Constitutional Rights

While the 1982 Constitution Act guaranteed Indigenous rights, they were not defined. MNMS asserts that our rights are both of a constitutional nature and an inherent nature and that these rights are all-encompassing in so much as they affect everyday living for every Métis citizen. Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution states that:

*(1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.*

And that:

*(2) In this Act, "aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.*

### Inherent Rights

Métis have the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples that pre-date European contact with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and later, subsequent Canadian government control over the Métis Homeland. Inherent rights are distinct and separate from the rights of non-Indigenous people and are protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Métis inherent rights include the right to self-government, rights to the land, the right to self-determination that includes right to practice our own culture and customs, as well as a right to our own institutions. (i.e. Affiliates of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan)

## Our Goals

### Rights Agenda

We will keep the rights agenda at the forefront and use it as a basis for every single action and activity we undertake on behalf of Métis citizens.

### Identity

MNMS feels that after the daily necessities of life, identity is the most crucial to Métis as individuals and as a collective. Métis are a distinct Indigenous people and MNMS strives to protect and promote this identity.

### Governance

MNMS believes that Métis Governance structures in Saskatchewan already exist through the Locals, Regional Councils, Provincial Métis Council and Métis Nation Legislative Assembly and Senate. We will work closely with these entities to ensure that they are operating effectively and for the benefit of Saskatchewan Métis.

MNMS believes that Métis governance structures are accountable to the Métis people. We will strive to ensure accountability through consultation with Métis citizens and communities. MNMS will work for Métis goals and communities by taking direction from our citizens at all levels of governance.

Local and Regional governance Capacity need to be developed and/or enhanced. MNMS knows that nobody understands local communities better than the Local governments, and we will work with the Local governments directly and through Regional Councils to develop and/or enhance the capacity of Local governments to serve their citizens.

### Land

MNMS will make land a priority. In addition to supporting the current NW Saskatchewan land claim, we will establish a Métis Lands Commission that will consult with our citizens in all regions of Saskatchewan to establish a list of traditional Métis lands. We recognize that there are many types of

Métis lands including historic, economic, resource and agricultural lands so our consultations will be broadly focused.

### Harvesting

MNMS will support litigation to advance the portability of Métis harvesting rights. At the same time, we will immediately engage the Provincial Government using our Metis Wildlife Act 1993 as a basis. This act was developed with the assistance of elders and harvesters and debated at our MNLA and we respect its authority.

### MN-S Registry

MNMS will work closely with the Registry to ensure that Métis citizens become registered. A reasonable goal is to register 10,000 citizens yearly. Registration is crucial to future planning for programs and services to Métis people.

### Culture and Language

Métis Culture remains vibrant, recognizable and distinct from others. MNMS will support Métis community activities as well as institutions such as Gabriel Dumont Institute to ensure that Métis language and culture are preserved for future generations.

### Socio-Economic Well-Being

MNMS will strive to ensure that Métis citizens and communities experience optimum socio-economic well-being. Targeted areas include:

- Health
- Education
- Employment
- Housing

MNMS believes that all citizens are important and that Youth and Elders are the bridges to the past and future of the Métis Nation within Saskatchewan and across the Homeland. Métis Women have always played key roles in maintaining the nation through their management of families, homes, and communities as Mothers, Aunts, Sisters,

Grandmothers, Daughters and Leaders. MNMS values the role Métis women continue to play.

### Institutions

Métis Institutions are there to help Métis people and communities. MNMS will ensure that these institutions operate at full capacity to serve Métis citizens and communities. MNMS feels strongly that the institutions need to be arms-length so that they are attached to the MN-S and answerable to the Métis people and communities, while being autonomous and without political interference. Métis Institutions include:

- Gabriel Dumont Institute
- Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan
- Provincial Métis Housing
- Any other existing and new institutions that may be developed (Justice, Family Services)

### Transparency Through Communications

MNMS knows that it is crucial for Métis governments, institutions and such entities to communicate with the Métis people they serve and answer to.

### Planning

MNMS will develop weekly, monthly and yearly plans.

### Review

The MNMS team will review our plans at the end of each month. We will offer Métis citizens the opportunity to evaluate our successes through consultations and surveys.

### Annual Retreat

The PMC will meet annually in a retreat style setting with the Boards of all Affiliates for the purpose of yearly planning and exchange of ideas.

## Métis National Council marks its 38th Anniversary

By Clem Chartier



During the 1983 constitutional negotiations process the three prairie Métis organizations found themselves on the outside looking in at the then upcoming March 14-15, 1983 First Ministers Conference on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters. Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau as directed by the new Canadian constitution was mandated to convene a constitutional conference to which the Aboriginal peoples' representatives were to be invited.

For the Métis, Prime Minister Trudeau invited the Native Council of Canada (NCC, now CAP) to the conference. The NCC Board decided that the President, a non-Status Indian and the Vice-President, a Status Indian would occupy both NCC seats to the exclusion of the Métis Nation, as well as agreeing with other Aboriginal leaders to take the Métis agenda items of land base and self-government off the table.

This infuriated the Prairie Métis leadership which did not accept the sell out of their rights, or at least the potential to negotiate recognition of their rights and swiftly took action. As then Vice-President of AMNSIS I, along with Don McIvor, MMF President travelled to Edmonton and met with MAA (MNA) President Sam Sinclair and his Board on March 6<sup>th</sup> and signed the Edmonton Accord pledging to work together to form a Métis National Council. Two days later, March 8, 1983, the three Boards of the MMF, MAA and AMNSIS agreed to form the MNC at a meeting in Regina. As one of the first members of the newly created MNC Board I was elected as National Representative (President). Jim Durocher and Frank Tomkins were the other two leaders representing AMNSIS on the newly formed Board.

From this point forward we have never looked back. A court injunction against Prime Minister Trudeau led by AMNSIS President Jim Sinclair resulted in an out of court settlement and a seat at the table with

## Métis National Council marks its 38th Anniversary continued

a commitment to restoring Métis self-government and a land base to the agenda when the conference opened and I raised it. This was the only constitutional conference, with 4 more until 1992, where Canada's constitution was amended and which constitutional amendment document I signed on behalf of the Métis Nation.

Since then, the MNC has come a long way in securing the rights and interests of our people, particularly during this Liberal government under the Right Hon. Justin Trudeau. In particular, through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) process established by

the Canada-Métis Nation Accord 2017 the MNC has been successful in negotiating over 2 billion dollars in much needed programs and services for our citizens. We are hopeful to secure more in the next federal budget, especially for sorely needed health services and benefits for our seniors.

Based on a long-standing MNC General Assembly decision the budgets we secure for the Governing Members, including the MNS, are distributed on a Métis population basis, which is 25% each to MNS, MNA and MMF and 12.5% each to MNBC and MNO.



## CCDF Offers Opportunities for Métis Youth Entrepreneurs

By Lorna Ledoux

According to the Clarence Campeau Development Foundation (CCDF) website, "Starting a business as a young Métis entrepreneur can be difficult, but very rewarding!" Staff at CCDF are there to help bridge that gap between young people with the skills and abilities to start a successful business, and the lack of finances to get going. Métis millennials are well positioned to adapt to a changing market by identifying trends and opportunities.

CCDF cites some of the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs: "Working with financiers, negotiating contracts, and finding mentorship are all unfamiliar challenges young Métis entrepreneurs face getting into business" and further state: "but it's worth it! Being your own boss and working towards projects that you are truly interested in can be an exciting career choice."

CCDF can help youth figure out all the information they need to get their first business loan and take the leap into entrepreneurship. Under the Youth Business Development Program which is aimed towards smaller business opportunities, CCDF can provide financial assistance of up to 65% of project costs to a maximum of \$10,000 in the form of an interest-free loan, with no security, for Métis Youth aged eighteen (18) to twenty-five (25). The total project costs cannot exceed \$25,000. The program, according to CCDF, "is intended to enhance an entrepreneur's ability to leverage financing and support services from other financial institutions and agencies. We're only one piece of the pie – we still require a term loan, line of credit, or some other financial product to finance the remaining amount."

For projects with costs of more than \$25,000, there are a wide array of programs that allow CCDF to finance any project up to \$1,000,000. The Business Development Program offers interest-free financing of up to \$300,000.

Métis Youth looking to take the next step on an entrepreneurial journey can call CCDF at 306-657-4870 or check out their website at [clarencecampeau.com](http://clarencecampeau.com).



*Batoche Museum Photograph*

*Francois-Xavier Letendre dit Batoche, 1841-1901 (ca. 1885). "A genial good-humoured handsome fellow . . . a fair sample of his class" (Capt. Butler, Wild North Land).*

**Xavier Letendre, also known as Monsieur Batoche,** founded a village he called Batoche, built a store there, and set up a ferry service which became known as Batoche's Ferry. He filed claims for a number of river lots to enable his sisters, brothers, and other relatives to join him. In 1882, eager to draw settlers, he dictated a report to missionary Valentin Végréville in which he praised the village's attractions, pointing out "the advantages of the place and of its future . . . at the centre of the great thoroughfares of communication . . . where the settler will find good land, hay, water, and wood."

Source: [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/letendre\\_francois\\_xavier\\_13E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/letendre_francois_xavier_13E.html)

## Métis and the Covid-19 Vaccine

By Lorna Ledoux

A recent Facebook post by Métis Nationalists has evoked some very heartfelt responses and then heated discussions ensued! The post simply asked: "What are your thoughts on the Vaccine?" That post outperformed all of the educational posts that the group posted by far. I was very surprised to see how many people were opposed to the vaccine. I personally want to be vaccinated so that I can see my children and grandchildren again. It has been almost a year of this now and I have really had enough.

It is great that the vaccine has been available to First Nations and northern communities as well as seniors and health care professionals! I would really have liked to see vaccines set aside for Métis people in a similar way, but some of our people do live in northern communities so that gave them the opportunity already. Because Métis share some of the poor health statistics with First Nations, it would have stood to reason that we did fall into the same strategy. Apparently Métis leaders in Manitoba did ask for the same consideration as First Nations. I hope that those asks become a reality.

Meanwhile, I am informed that Saskatoon Métis Local #165 (CUMFI) is providing vaccinations to seniors seventy (70) and over as I write this story. I applaud their efforts to ensure this important event take place, as the elders

are our language and cultural carriers and at the same time, most vulnerable to the effects of Covid-19. Saskatoon Métis Elder LaRose (shown in the photo) received the vaccine and has had no side effects.

I am hopeful that with the Health Canada approval of a number of vaccines, there will be an opportunity for everyone who chooses to be vaccinated to do so. It is a choice and the opportunity should be there for all of the citizens of the Métis Nation.



### SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

**HOW ARE YOU COPING IN THESE COVID-19 TIMES?**

**We want to hear from you!**

Email your response to [metisnationalists@gmail.com](mailto:metisnationalists@gmail.com)

Fill out the form on our website at  
<https://metisnationalists.ca/share-your-thoughts>

## Métis Nationalist Voice Editorial

We have just witnessed another MNLA, virtually no better than the previous two or three where the stage is set, the actors determined and the outcome scripted. Definitely not democracy at its finest.

Those in control of the MNLA know what they wanted and did everything in their power to get that outcome. The worst of this is not allowing Members of the Legislative Assembly to address the amendments to legislation that they wished to have put forward. In this connection, the only legislative amendments were those supported by the President, Vice-President and the majority of the PMC as they predetermined the agenda, deliberately excluding from the Order of Day legislative amendments and resolutions which they did not support. So much for democracy and allowing the Members of the MNLA to decide what it is that they support in a free and informed discussion. To lose a vote after being allowed to present a legislative amendment would have to be acceptable to the Member or Members putting forward the amendment or resolution, but to not even have the chance to address it/them and have the Legislative Assembly decide is totally dictatorial!

In this case, the legislative amendment to the Election Act put forward by Member Jim Durocher which by the MNLA Act must be included on the Order of the Day and dealt with, was deliberately left off by the Clerk because the powers that be

took it off the agenda before the agenda was even presented to the Members of the Legislative Assembly. President Durocher's proposed amendment was complimentary to the one the President and Vice-President wanted passed as it simply added to theirs' that for election 2021, the use of Declarations be retained for this one last time.

The rationale for this was based on the fact that the resolution to amend the Election Act was passed by the MNLA in November 2019, leaving only one and a half years for people to conform to the new requirement which would change 32 years of voting rights, practices and procedures. But that was only a resolution, not a legislative amendment, which may or may not have been adopted. Well, it was adopted on February 20, 2021 and became election law, but only about 37 days before the cut-off date for applying for citizenship.

To make matters worse, even if citizens wished to apply since the November 2019 resolution was adopted, with the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in March 2020 and the closing of the Central Registry Office and all of the Regional Registry Offices, the opportunity for Métis citizens to apply was significantly diminished.

The rationale given by the Vice-President who spoke in favour of the amendment requiring a citizenship card to vote and abandoning the Declaration system and the right of all Métis 16 years of age and older to vote was that

such voting was okay in the past because MNS didn't have much money or services to offer our people; but now that there is a lot of money and a lot of programs and services MNS has to limit who gets to vote and who gets any of the big amount of programs and services that the MNS now has!

That certainly is a novel approach to denying Métis citizens their inherent and democratic rights to participate in their government. True, the Métis National Council has negotiated millions of dollars from federal budgets 2017, 2018 and 2019 which the MNS has benefited from, but this was negotiated on behalf of all Métis citizens living in Saskatchewan and not just those who have registered with the MNS. In fact, the MNS receives 25% of all of the monies negotiated by the MNC for all Métis Nation citizens, which in this case is over two billion dollars, of which 25% is a substantial amount.

There certainly has to be a better way for the MNS to serve all of the Métis Nation citizens living in Saskatchewan. Winning elections is one thing, denying Métis citizens their democratic rights and depriving them of programs and services long fought for is another.

# Reminder

**You will need a Métis card to vote in the next Métis Nation - Saskatchewan election.**

**Declarations may not be used.**

**If you plan to participate in choosing who will represent you as a Métis, you need to get a card. To apply, go online to:**

<https://metisnation.sk.com/citizenship/>

*We are on the web at:*

[www.MetisNationalists.ca](http://www.MetisNationalists.ca)

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