



THE DEFENDER

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February 2026

Timeless Lessons in Leadership and Strategy



A leader's true test is not simply responding to what stands plainly before him but anticipating the unseen forces that shape tomorrow. Few historical figures embodied this principle more completely than Sir Aurhur Wellesley, The Iron Duke of Wellington. His writings reveal a commander who understood that victory depended as much on foresight as on courage.

Wellington's correspondence during the Peninsular War shows a mind constantly scanning beyond the immediate battlefield. He studied terrain, supply lines, political pressures, and the likely moves of both allies and enemies. In one letter, he emphasized that success required "making arrangements for all possible contingencies," a reminder that leadership is as much about preparation as action. He refused to be lulled by momentary advantage; instead, he evaluated how today's decisions would echo days or weeks later. This habit of thinking around the corner allowed him to outmaneuver opponents who were often braver but less perceptive.

His approach to logistics is an especially vivid example. Wellington knew that armies collapse not from lack of valor but from lack of food, ammunition, and discipline. While others focused on the drama of battle, he focused on the quiet, unglamorous systems that made battle possible. He anticipated shortages before they occurred, adjusted routes before they became dangerous, and managed local politics before they erupted into crises. This ability to foresee problems—and act before they materialized—became one of his greatest strategic advantages.



Modern leaders, whether in business, government, or daily life, can draw from Wellington's example. The world rarely announces its turning points. Challenges emerge gradually, then suddenly. Leaders who cultivate the discipline to look beyond the immediate moment, who study patterns, anticipate obstacles, and prepare for multiple outcomes, are the ones who navigate uncertainty with confidence. Wellington's writings remind us that leadership is not merely reacting to events but shaping them through foresight, patience, and strategic imagination.

God Bless,
Rob Linebarger,
Chair@SpokaneGOP.com



Defending Faith, Family & Freedom

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We are excited to announce Human Life of Washington is our 2026 Lincoln Day Liberty Sponsor

For more than five decades, Human Life of Washington has stood at the forefront of advancing the value of every human life – from the spark of conception to natural death.

Today, that mission is expanding in powerful new ways. We believe lasting cultural change is built not on winning arguments, but on love, compassion, and the courage to truly listen. The future of this movement will not be shaped by any one organization alone, but by partners who choose to leverage one another's strengths and work side-by-side for the good of every family and every community.

HLW's Mission is to inform and inspire the public about life-affirming options, fostering a culture that cherishes every individual, regardless of age or circumstance

HLW's Life & Love Network™ warmly invites you to the **Prayer Breakfast**



Prayer & Purpose BREAKFAST

Giving You Hope and a Playbook



Join us for a delicious breakfast, inspiration for your pro-life advocacy playbook and time of prayer for the community

DATE: Wednesday February 25, 2026

TIME: 7:00 am Registration, 7:30 am Breakfast

LOCATION: Mirabeau Hotel & Convention Center
1100 N Sullivan Rd, Spokane Valley WA

EMCEE: Carl Tompkins

Minimum Suggested Donation \$40

RSVP by February 20
jeryl@humanlifewa.org

LIBERTY'S SENTINEL



"In the beginning of a change the patriot is a scarce man, and brave, and hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot." [Mark Twain]

Courage and Character are Essential to Actively Defend Liberty

While liberty—freedom from arbitrary coercion, the right to speak, associate, and pursue one's own path—represents humanity's highest political achievement, its preservation requires more than laws or institutions. It hinges on individuals willing to risk personal cost to uphold it.

Courage is the willingness to confront fear, whether physical danger, social ostracism, or professional ruin, when liberty is threatened. History shows that tyrants and majorities erode freedoms incrementally, relying on apathy or conformity. As

Thucydides observed, "The secret to happiness is freedom... And the secret to freedom is courage." Without courage, citizens yield to encroachments—censorship disguised as safety, surveillance as security—allowing liberty to atrophy. Moral courage elevates this to a duty: one must speak truth to power, resist injustice, and defend others' rights as one's own, even when unpopular.

Character provides the foundation. Integrity, honesty, and principled conviction ensure courage serves noble ends rather than ego or impulse. A person of character acts from reasoned commitment to liberty's intrinsic value—self-ownership and human dignity—not fleeting passion. John Stuart Mill emphasized that moral courage fosters individuality and genius, while its absence breeds intellectual conformity and societal stagnation. Strong character resists the temptation to compromise principles for comfort or approval.

Today, threats to liberty often arise subtly through cultural pressures or institutional overreach. Defending it requires everyday acts: challenging orthodoxy, protecting dissent, and refusing complicity in erosion of rights. This is a moral imperative because surrendering liberty betrays not only oneself but future generations and the ideal of human flourishing.

Ultimately, courage and character are inseparable from liberty's defense. As Pericles declared, "Freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it." In their absence, liberty becomes a hollow privilege; with them, it endures as a living moral triumph.



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PLATFORM PERSPECTIVES

LIMITED GOVERNMENT

We believe government is best when it governs least and is closest to the people.



Conservatism Cannot Survive Without Truth

By Jenna Ellis, Jan 25, 2026, Townhall.com

American conservatism stands at a crossroads — not merely political, but moral and spiritual. The growing divide on the Right is not simply about tactics or personalities; it is about purpose. Is conservatism ordered toward truth and the preservation of liberty under God, or is it merely a vehicle for winning power in an increasingly hostile culture?

This question is not new. But in 2026, it is unavoidable, because the moral consensus that once restrained power has largely collapsed. When truth is abandoned, power rushes in to take its place. Scripture warns us that this exchange never ends well.

First, truth exists.

Scripture is unequivocal on this point. “Your word is truth” (John 17:17). Truth is not created by human will, nor defined by political success. It exists independently of us and judges us. The American founding reflected this biblical reality by recognizing rights as pre-political — derived not from government, but from nature and nature’s God. Liberty could only exist because truth was assumed to be objective.

When truth is treated as malleable or subordinate to political ends, liberty becomes conditional. A movement that no longer believes in objective truth will eventually justify any means necessary to retain power. Scripture cautions against this temptation: “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” (Mark 8:36). The same is true of movements.

Second, human nature is fallen.

The Bible offers no illusions about human perfectibility. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick” (Jeremiah 17:9). The Founders understood this not because they were pessimists, but because they were realists. As James Madison observed, government is necessary precisely because men are not angels — and therefore must be restrained.

Conservatism aligned naturally with this biblical anthropology. It rejected utopian schemes that assume the right leaders, once empowered, will wield authority virtuously. When conservatives forget this truth, they begin excusing concentrated power in their own hands, trusting outcomes instead of character. Scripture offers a sober warning: “Put not your trust in princes” (Psalm 146:3).

Third, liberty requires virtue.

Freedom is not self-sustaining. Scripture teaches that self-government begins with self-control. Ordered liberty depends on a moral people capable of governing themselves before governing others.

This is why conservatism has historically emphasized family, church and civil society over centralized authority. When virtue erodes, freedom degenerates into license — and license invites coercion. Government power expands not because it is good, but because moral restraint has failed.

Fourth, power must be restrained.

Scripture consistently warns against the corrupting pull of unchecked authority. When Satan offered Christ the kingdoms of the world in exchange for allegiance, Jesus refused. Power divorced from truth was not a shortcut — it was a snare.

This principle is where modern conservatism faces its greatest temptation. In an era of aggressive progressivism and cultural decay, it is easy to conclude that the solution is simply to seize power and wield it more effectively than the Left. But power detached from truth does not become righteous. It becomes indistinguishable from the very statism conservatism once opposed.

Conservatism was never meant to be a will-to-power ideology. It was meant to conserve something real: truth, virtue, liberty and the moral order that makes freedom possible. These are not merely political commitments; they are biblical ones.

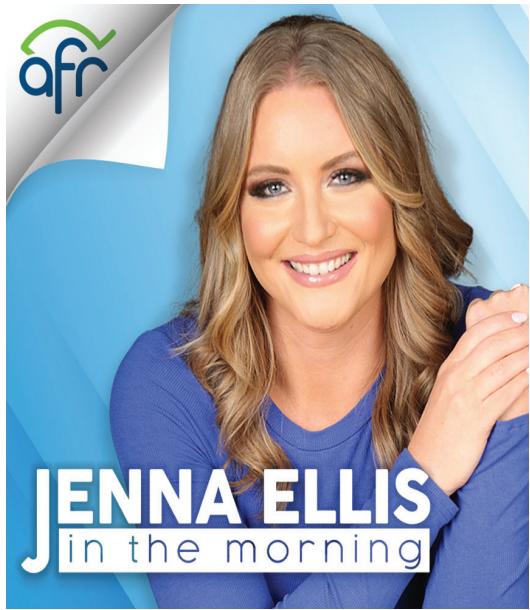
The question before the movement is not whether it wants to win elections. It is whether it wants to remain faithful to reality, to liberty and to the moral law that precedes all earthly authority.

Jenna Ellis is a senior adviser of public policy for the American Family Association, national radio host of “Jenna Ellis in the Morning” and a Florida resident. She previously served as a senior legal adviser to President Trump



FAITH FAMILY AND FREEDOM

JENNA ELLIS TO HEADLINE 2026 LINCOLN DAY GALA



JENNA ELLIS
in the morning

The Spokane County Republican Party is honored to announce **Jenna Ellis**, former attorney for President Trump and host of Jenna Ellis in the Morning on the American Family Radio Network as our 2026 Lincoln Day keynote speaker.

Jenna attended Cedarville University, where she earned a B.A., followed by a Juris Doctor from the University of Colorado Law School. Her early interest in law began at age 14, influenced by her father's political involvement. She was raised in an environment that prioritized biblical principles, which later informed her work with organizations like the James Dobson Family Institute, focused on promoting marriage, family, and child development.

Jenna is a pro-life champion who starts and finishes her daily program with a message to support **Preborn.com's** mission, "To Glorify Jesus Christ by Leading and Equipping Pregnancy Clinics to Save More Babies and Souls," one ultrasound at a time.

In an era where the future of our nation, community and culture hangs in the balance, Jenna has stood and continues to stand as a fearless advocate for truth, dignity, and principled leadership.

Jenna's unwavering commitment to justice and liberty echoes the timeless wisdom of leaders past; the courage to stand alone, the strength to make hard decisions, and the compassion to serve others. As Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." Jenna Ellis embodies this "measure."

In a time of unprecedented political turmoil, Jenna Ellis stood tall for justice, truth, and the Constitution. As President Trump's attorney following the contested 2020 Presidential Election, she demonstrated unwavering courage and conviction—defending the integrity of our electoral system and the foundational principles of our Constitutional Republic.

While many remained silent or retreated under pressure, Jenna chose the harder path: to speak boldly, act fearlessly, and uphold the rule of law. Her resolve in the face of media hostility, professional risk, and personal sacrifice is a testament to the kind of moral courage our country and community so desperately needs.

Jenna's keynote will be more than a speech—it will be a rallying cry and a call to conscience. A challenge to rise, speak, and peacefully act to preserve what we hold most dear—Faith, Family and Freedom.

Please join us in welcoming Jenna for what promises to be an inspiring and unforgettable evening.



God's Champion

COACH JOE KENNEDY JOINS THE 2026 LINCOLN DAY LINEUP



The Spokane County Republican Party is honored to announce **Joe Kennedy** will join us as a Featured Speaker at Lincoln Day 2026.

He was just an “average” high school football coach in a small Washington town—until he dropped to one knee after a game for 30 seconds of silent prayer. That single act of faith and gratitude, which many of us believe was God’s Divine Plan, cost Coach Joe Kennedy his job and then launched

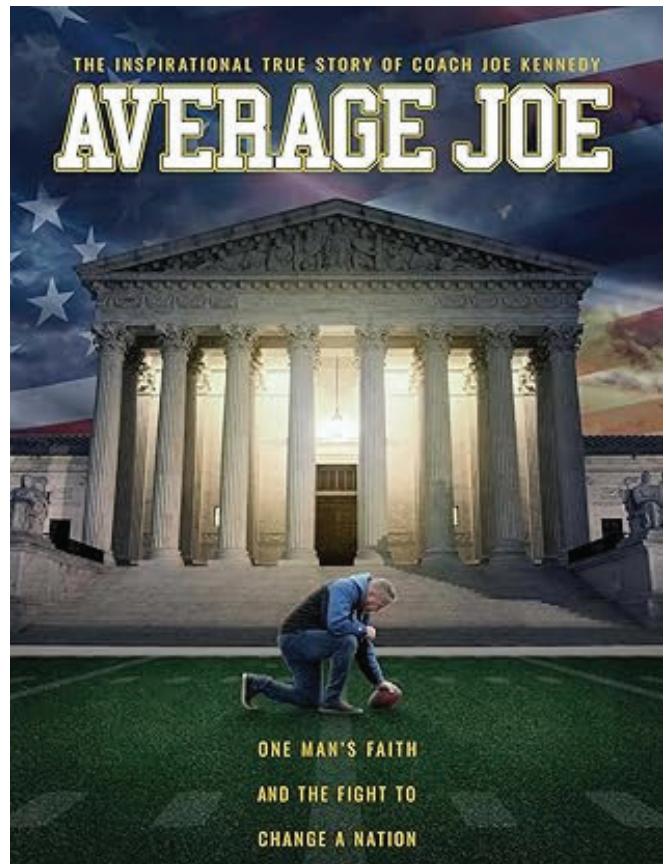
one of the biggest religious-liberty victories in decades.

From a challenging childhood in foster homes and sleeping in broken-into cars, to 20 years honorably serving our country as a United States Marine, Joe never knew God.

An atheist until becoming a Christian in his 30s, through the influence and prayers of his wife Denise Joe made a covenant with God: **“Give me my wife and family, and I’ll give You everything.”** That promise changed not only his life, but all of ours as well.

For eight years following each game, Coach Kennedy jogged unnoticed to midfield, took a knee and gave thanks. Then one admiring phone call from another school to deliver a compliment detonated into a national firestorm.

The school district demanded he pray in secret—or not at all. Coach Joe refused, was fired, vilified, and dragged through seven years of court battles. Finally, he stood before the Supreme Court and won a 6–3 decision, restoring the right of every American to live their faith publicly.



Coach Joe’s Faith, Family, and Freedom journey is amazingly captured in the Movie *Average Joe* (released October 2024) and now in his inspirational book *Average Joe—One Man’s Faith and the Fight to Change a Nation* by Joe Kennedy with Stephanie Katz.

Please join us in welcoming Coach Joe Kennedy at the March 21, 2026 Lincoln Day Gala at The Davenport Grand Ballroom for what promises to be an inspiring and unforgettable evening.



LINCOLN DAY SPEECH CONTEST



The Spokane County Republican Party is excited to announce our annual Lincoln Day Speech Contest and invite passionate young people, ages 14-22, to participate and share their thoughts for this year's speech topic:

"The Consent of the Governed Is Not Theoretical—It's Fundamental"

Historical background of the speech topic:

The phrase "**consent of the governed**" is not a lofty abstraction tucked into the pages of history—it is the bedrock of American democracy.

When the Founders declared independence in 1776, they asserted that governments derive "**their just powers from the consent of the governed**," establishing a radical departure from monarchies and authoritarian rule.

This principle is not merely philosophical; it is operational. It defines how laws are made, how leaders are chosen, and how legitimacy is sustained.

Without consent, government becomes coercion. Consent is expressed through voting, civic engagement, and public discourse. It is renewed with every election, challenged through protest, and protected by the Constitution. The rule of law, separation of powers, and individual rights all hinge on this foundational idea.

To treat consent as theoretical is to risk erosion of liberty. When citizens disengage, power consolidates. When voices are silenced, legitimacy fades.

The consent of the governed is not a passive inheritance—it is an active duty. It demands participation, vigilance, and accountability. In a republic, freedom is not self-sustaining. It must be affirmed by the people. That affirmation is not optional—it is fundamental.

Speech Contest Information and Format:

- Research the topic from the perspective of our "Founder's Intent" and create a 3-minute video of you presenting your speech highlighting a key point or points from your research, why the Founders believed it was important, why you believe it remains important today, how you will do your part to carry forward this critical "Freedom's Framework" civic duty, and the impact it will have on our community, state and nation.
- Submit a video of you presenting your speech before February 14, 2026.
- Contestants must be available to attend and deliver their speech live at the Lincoln Day Gala
 - Date and Time of the event: Saturday March 21, 2026 5:00 to 9:00 pm
 - Location: Davenport Grand Hotel Ballroom
- The Lincoln Day Speech Contest Committee will evaluate the entries based on the following criteria:
 - Content (structure, originality, clarity)
 - Delivery (confidence, enthusiasm, presence)
 - Language (grammar, vocabulary, articulation)
 - Engagement (storytelling, humor, connection with the audience)

* **Contestants will be notified of the results no later than February 22, 2026**
- The top-3 finalists will be selected to deliver their speech live at the Lincoln Day Gala Saturday March 21, 2026
 - The Lincoln Day audience will vote to determine 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners
 - Cash Scholarship Awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners
- How to Apply:
 - Go to: <https://spokanegop.com/lincoln-day-speeches>, complete the submission form, and attach the file with your speech
- For more information or if you have questions contact:
Morna Gilbert, Lincoln Day Speech Committee Chair, Morna6064@pm.me



LINCOLN DAY SPONSORSHIPS



Heritage Event Sponsor - \$25,000

Pre-event Recognition

- Recognition as the Event Sponsor on all marketing materials (print and digital)
- Recognition on the Front Page of the Program
- Recognition as the Event Sponsor in all media releases
- Top recognition on Event website, Spokane GOP website and in our monthly newsletter

At the Event

- GOBO projection of your logo above the stage
- Speaking opportunity at the event (3 minutes)
- Recognition in the event slideshow
- Full page ad in event program
- Promotional One Minute Sponsor Video
- Two Premium Front-Center tables at the Main Event and Dinner
- Keynote and Featured Speakers seated with the Heritage Sponsor
- VIP tickets for all Heritage Sponsor guests
- Table side bottle service for your guests (wine and beer only)

Half-page Ad in the digital version of the Spokane GOP Monthly "Defender Newsletter" and all Print Editions distributed at events for one year

Liberty Sponsor - \$10,000

Pre-event Recognition

- Recognition on all print and digital materials
- Scaled Recognition on the Event and Website, Spokane GOP Website

At the Event

- VIP Tickets for 10 People and Table Side Bottle Service (Wine and Beer)
- GOBO projection of your Logo above the stage during the event
- Recognition in the event slide show
- Full-page Ad in the Event Program
- Promotional One Minute Sponsorship Video

Half-page Ad in the digital version of the Spokane GOP Monthly "Defender Newsletter" and all Print Editions distributed at events for one year

Freedom Sponsor - \$5,000

Pre-event Recognition

- Recognition on all print and digital materials
- Scaled Recognition on the Event and Website, Spokane GOP Website

At the Event

- VIP Tickets for 10 People and Table Side Bottle Service (Wine and Beer)
- GOBO projection of your Logo above the stage during the event
- Recognition in the event slide show
- Half-page Ad in the Event Program

Quarter-page Ad in the digital version of the Spokane GOP Monthly "Defender Newsletter" and all Print Editions distributed at events for one year.



MORE TABLES AND TICKETS



Patriot Sponsor - \$3,500

At the Event

- Recognition in the event slideshow
- Mention with Logo in the event program
- Reserved seating at the Main Event and Dinner for 10 guests
- VIP tickets for all Patriot Sponsor guests
- Table side bottle service for your guests (wine and beer only)

Ad in the digital version of the Spokane GOP Monthly "Defender Newsletter" and all Print Editions distributed at events for one year

Discounts on Tables and Tickets through February 28

Reserved VIP Table - \$3,500

Save \$1,000 at checkout with Coupon Code "FREEDOM"

- VIP Reception Tickets for 10 guests
- Reserved seating at the Main Event and Dinner for 10 guests



Reserved General Admission Table - \$2,000

Save \$250 at checkout with Coupon Code "FREEDOM"

- Reserved seating at the Main Event and Dinner for 10 guests



Individual VIP Tickets - \$350

Save \$50 at checkout with Coupon Code "FREEDOM"

- VIP Event Ticket
- Admission to the Main Event and Dinner



Individual General Admission Tickets - \$200

Save \$25 at checkout with Coupon Code "FREEDOM"

- Admission to the Main Event and Dinner

YOUNG REPUBLICAN AND STUDENT DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE
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LINCOLN DAY LINKS

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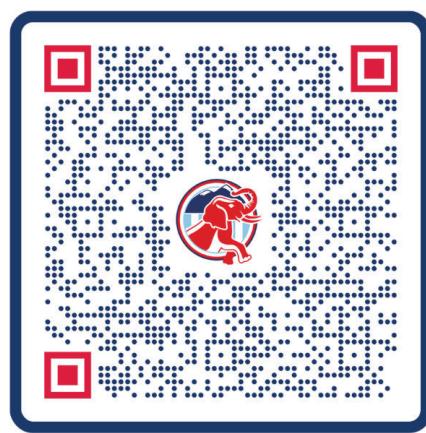
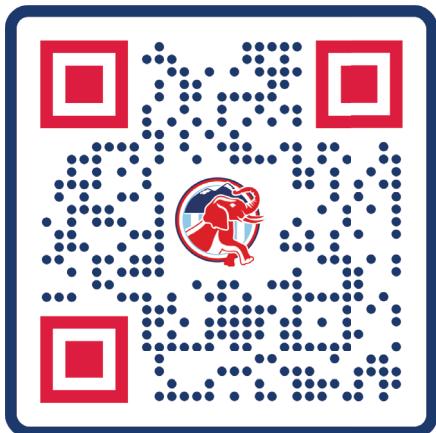
SPOKANE COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY

THE DAVENPORT GRAND BALLROOM
6:00PM TO 9:00PM - MARCH 21, 2026

SpokaneGOP.com

[Lincoln Day Website](#)

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CONTACT VChair@SpokaneGOP.com



PCO CORE RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPACT



Our Precinct Committee Officers (PCOs) serve as the essential link between the community and the party organization. This role ensures local voices are heard, civic participation is strengthened, and future leaders are identified and supported. PCOs help shape the direction of the party by representing their neighbors, mobilizing voters, and cultivating strong local leadership.

The Core Functions and Responsibilities of a PCO, in priority order, include:

1. Represent the Voters of the Precinct

- PCOs are the direct connection between residents and the party's decision makers.
- Gather concerns, priorities, and feedback from local voters and bring them to party committees for discussion and action.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with community members through regular outreach and presence at local events.
- Ensure party activities and advocacy efforts best reflect the needs and priorities of the precinct.

2. Mobilize Civic Participation

- PCOs play a central role in strengthening political engagement within their community.
- Host precinct level meetings, forums, and events that give voters opportunities to learn, ask questions, and engage with local leaders.
- Provide clear, accessible education on issues, ballot measures, and civic processes to help voters make informed decisions.
- Lead Get Out The Vote (GOTV) efforts—door knocking, phone banking, ballot chasing, and turnout operations—to maximize voter participation.
- Encourage a culture of civic responsibility by promoting year round engagement and community involvement.

3. Recruit, Support, and Equip Candidates

- PCOs help identify and develop the next generation of local leaders.
- Identify potential candidates within the community and encourage them to run for office, with special emphasis on recruiting future PCOs.
- Provide candidates with essential support, including volunteers, training opportunities, and organizational resources.
- Help campaigns build meaningful connections with voters by sharing precinct insights and facilitating introductions.

Impact of the Role

A strong PCO strengthens the entire party infrastructure. By representing voters, mobilizing participation, and cultivating leadership, PCOs help shape the political landscape from the ground up. Their work ensures that the party remains responsive, community driven, and prepared for the challenges ahead.

If you're interested in serving as a Spokane County Republican Precinct Committee Officer our would like more informaton about the position please visit SpokaneGOP.com or email Chair@SpokaneGOP.com.



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