

Strengthening Social Care Character through the Moral Message of “Prokas Pelaket” in the Youth Red Cross (PMR) Extracurricular Program at SMA Negeri 1 Balai

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ABSTRACT (10 PT)

This study aims to examine the strengthening of social care character through the moral message of “Prokas Pelaket” at SMA Negeri 1 Balai. A qualitative approach with a descriptive method was used. The research subjects were the Youth Red Cross (PMR) advisor, the vice principal for student affairs, and PMR members. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the strengthening of students' social care character takes place through a series of structured PMR work programs, including unit training, first-aid practice, blood donation, fundraising, social action, and service as the health team during the flag ceremony. The value of social care is instilled through three main approaches: case projects with reflection, direct experience, and role modeling. Supporting factors influencing the success of the program include school support, members' motivation, cooperation with external parties, and role models set by advisors and seniors. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors are limited time, funding, and facilities, differing levels of awareness among members, and insufficient family support. Optimization strategies are carried out through systematic program planning, habituation of social care values through routine activities, collaboration with external parties, and periodic evaluation and reflection. This study concludes that the PMR extracurricular program at SMA Negeri 1 Balai plays a strategic role in strengthening students' social care character. Through the Prokas Pelaket approach, students not only understand the value of social care theoretically but also experience it directly, so that PMR activities are shown to support the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening (PPK) program, particularly in the aspect of social care.

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I. Introduction

Character education has so far been taught mainly as classroom theory, without direct experience that allows students to understand and feel the impact of their own social actions. In fact, effective character education should involve students' active engagement in real experiences that shape moral values. A growing phenomenon of individualism and excessive gadget use among adolescents has been linked to rising rates of student brawls, substance abuse, indifference toward others, and a weakening of social sensitivity, which in turn erodes the culture of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) and social solidarity [3].

One effort that can be made to instill social care character is through extracurricular activities, which allow students to experience and practice social values directly. In this regard, the Youth Red Cross (Palang Merah Remaja/PMR) is one extracurricular activity that plays a significant role in shaping students' social care character. Operating under the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI), PMR carries the main mission of instilling humanitarian values, solidarity, and social care through various

activities such as first-aid training, blood donation, social service, and health counselling. Through these programs, students are taught to become more sensitive to the social conditions around them, to strengthen their sense of empathy, and to develop the skills needed to help others [1].

The delivery of moral messages in PMR extracurricular activities holds considerable potential for shaping students' social awareness. This study examines the delivery of moral messages through case projects with reflection, direct experience, and role modeling. According to [2], PMR, as a youth organization that focuses on humanitarian values, provides a space for students to engage in various social activities such as first aid, blood donation, social service, and health counselling.

This study was therefore conducted to identify the extent to which social care character has developed among students at SMA Negeri 1 Balai and how the moral messages delivered during PMR extracurricular activities strengthen students' moral and social values. Based on preliminary observation and interviews with several teachers and students, it was found that PMR activities at SMA Negeri 1 Balai have run reasonably well, although several aspects still need improvement. The activity shows a positive contribution to students' character formation, even though the level of student involvement still varies.

This study is expected to analyze in depth how the PMR extracurricular program can strengthen students' social care character at SMA Negeri 1 Balai. It also seeks to identify the factors that support and hinder the effectiveness of PMR in shaping students' character, and to provide recommendations for schools to optimize the role of extracurricular activities in character education. The findings of this study are expected to make a real contribution to the development of character education in schools, particularly in shaping students with a strong sense of social care who are ready to become agents of change in society.

II. Method

This study applies a qualitative approach using a descriptive method. The qualitative approach focuses on exploring the research object within its natural setting, in which the researcher acts as the main instrument of the research process [4]. The informants involved in this study consisted of the PMR extracurricular advisor, the vice principal for student affairs, and PMR members. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, using observation sheets, interview guidelines, and documentation tools. Data analysis in this study used data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Testing the validity of the data plays an important role in ensuring that the data obtained are valid, accurate, and scientifically accountable; validity testing was carried out through observer persistence, source triangulation, and technique triangulation.

III. Results and Discussion

A. *Strengthening Social Care Character through the Moral Message of "Prokas Pelaket" in the PMR Extracurricular Program*

Based on observations and interviews conducted with the vice principal for student affairs, the PMR advisor, and PMR members (the chairperson and vice-chairperson) at SMA Negeri 1 Balai in September 2025, it was found that the Youth Red Cross (PMR) program is one of the school's flagship programs focusing on shaping students' social care character. PMR activities include unit training, material practice, service as the health team during the flag ceremony, social action, blood donation, fundraising, and material and practical assessment. All of these activities are not only intended to sharpen Red Cross skills but also serve as a means of instilling moral messages through Prokas Pelaket, which includes real experience, social projects, and role modeling by advisors and seniors.

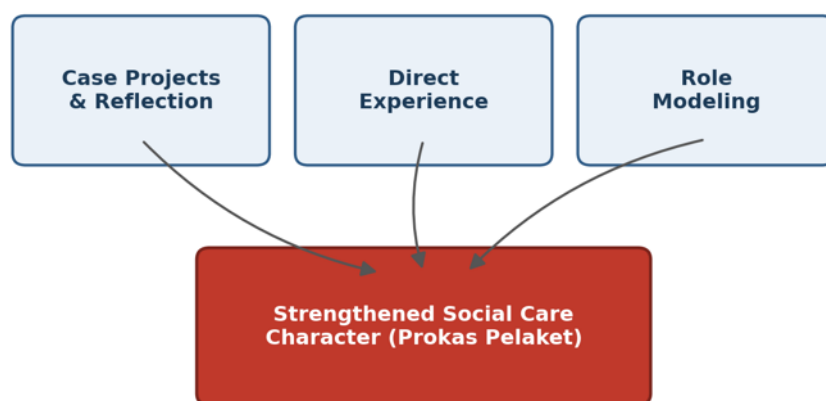


Fig 1. The Prokas Pelaket approach to strengthening social care character: three integrated instructional pathways converging into internalized social care character.

Table 1. Interview Results on Strengthening Social Care Character through the Moral Message “Prokas Pelaket” in the PMR Extracurricular Program

Indicator	Observation and Interview Results
Unit Training	“The values and principles instilled include the seven basic principles of the Red Cross. These principles shape a caring attitude, helping one another regardless of race, religion, or social status.” “Response could be faster – for example, if someone faints, they must be attended to quickly, lifted with a stretcher, and examined immediately so the condition does not worsen.”
Material Practice	“I feel sad when I see a friend who is injured or exhausted. I feel compelled to help immediately so my friend can recover and feel better.” “Positive change is clearly visible – students have become braver speaking in public, more confident meeting new people, and more responsible with their tasks.”
Health Team at the Flag Ceremony	“I want to help when they are sick, panicking, or exhausted by taking them to the school clinic (UKS), giving medicine, so they feel calmer and no longer in constant pain.” “PMR's routine duty is serving as the health officer at the ceremony every Monday, and being active in major sub-district events.”
Social Action	“From the experience of helping others, I have learned to be a more sensitive person, not indifferent, and more caring toward the people around me.” “PMR was only formed a few years ago but has already made a positive impact. Students show a remarkable social spirit through blood-donation drives, social action, and concern for the environment.”
Blood Donation	“When taking part in social activities such as blood donation, the motivation is the wish to help others, even in a small way. However small the help, it still matters to someone else.” “The most effective form of social activity is one that directly touches other people's needs, such as blood donation.”
Fundraising	“At first I felt afraid because I had no experience. But after going through it, that feeling turned into excitement and enjoyment. Social activities provide new experiences and the chance to make new friends.” “Most students take part voluntarily because they feel happy doing good, although some initially joined out of obligation. Over time, their sense of

	responsibility and social awareness grew, making their involvement more sincere.”
Material and Practical Assessment	“After taking part in an activity, I want to keep repeating the experience. Social activities leave a positive impression and great benefit, fostering a desire to get involved again in the future.” “Evaluation is conducted at the end of every activity through joint reflection with the advisor and PMR members. In the evaluation session, students are asked to share their feelings, difficulties, and the strengths and weaknesses of the activity carried out.”

Students' social care character at SMA Negeri 1 Balai is effectively strengthened through the Youth Red Cross (PMR) extracurricular program. All PMR activities at the school are united under the concept of “Prokas Pelaket,” a combination of case projects, direct experience, and role modeling. This approach ensures that character coaching is not merely theoretical but gives students real opportunities to practice care. In daily practice at PMR SMA Negeri 1 Balai, the value of social care is genuinely brought to life, for example when students serve as the health team responsible for assisting sick or fainting classmates during the flag ceremony. This shows that character strengthening in PMR is not confined to theory or classroom material but truly becomes part of students' daily routine.

[5] reinforces this finding by emphasizing that character strengthening must touch every aspect of students' lives – moral knowledge, moral feeling, and real moral action. This process forms an integrated character that is not only known but also experienced and internalized by students in their daily behavior. In relation to the national character values, PMR activities specifically emphasize the value of social care, namely the attitude and action of always wanting to help others or people in need. This value is clearly evident when students voluntarily take part in blood donation, join fundraising for disaster victims, or take part in social service. [6] affirms that social care is a sense of compassion and empathy toward others, both individually and in society – a quality genuinely reflected in the experience of PMR students, who show care not only toward classmates but also toward the wider community through social action.

In line with the indicators of social care proposed by [7], namely empathy, facilitating social activities, carrying out social action, and organizing fundraising, all four indicators correspond to the activities found in PMR SMA Negeri 1 Balai. Students' empathy is evident in their responsiveness toward sick classmates; they also facilitate social activities, for instance by becoming committee members for blood donation or health counselling; social action is realized through direct engagement with the community, while fundraising demonstrates concern for the needs of others. Similar patterns have been reported in other PMR-based studies: [9] found that students who actively participated in PMR extracurricular activities demonstrated a significantly higher level of social care than those who did not, while [10] showed that integrating PMR activities with classroom instruction helps students connect social values with contextual learning rather than abstract theory. These findings confirm that PMR activities are genuinely effective in shaping the social care character indicated by scholars.

Character formation is also influenced by internal and external factors, as noted by [8]. Internal factors such as empathy, conscience, and self-confidence become the basis for students' willingness to help others – for example, a student with high empathy will respond more quickly when a friend becomes ill. External factors such as a school environment that provides a platform through PMR activities, a culture of mutual cooperation in society, and role modeling by teachers and seniors further strengthen the formation of social care attitudes. This indicates that the formation of social care character cannot be separated from the synergy between students' internal potential and a supportive environment.

In terms of the method of delivering moral messages, PMR activities at SMA Negeri 1 Balai apply three approaches as explained by [2]: role modeling, direct experience (learning by doing), and case projects with reflection. Role modeling is demonstrated by advisors and PMR seniors who consistently show a caring attitude, giving students a real example to imitate. Direct experience occurs when students engage in real activities such as blood donation, serving as the health team, or

fundraising. Meanwhile, case projects with reflection are carried out when students are invited to evaluate the experiences they have undergone so that they can understand the meaning of care more deeply.

Overall, this discussion shows that the strengthening of social care character at SMA Negeri 1 Balai through PMR activities is consistent with the theories and concepts put forward by scholars. This confirms that PMR is an effective form of character-education practice because it is able to instill the value of social care comprehensively, touching students' thoughts, feelings, and actions alike.

B. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Strengthening Social Care Character through the Moral Message of "Prokas Pelaket"

Based on observations and interviews with the vice principal for student affairs, the advisor, the chairperson, and the vice-chairperson of PMR at SMA Negeri 1 Balai on 4–5 September 2025, it was found that the success of the process of strengthening students' social care character through the moral message of Prokas Pelaket is strongly influenced by supporting and inhibiting factors present in the field.

Table 2. Observation and Interview Results on Supporting Factors

Indicator	Observation and Interview Results
Full support from the school	"PMR was only established a few years ago, but has already had a positive impact. Students show a remarkable social spirit through blood-donation drives, social action, and concern for the environment."
Spirit of voluntarism	"Most students are voluntarily involved because they feel happy doing good, although some initially joined out of obligation. Over time, their sense of responsibility and social awareness grew, making their involvement more sincere."
Cooperation with external parties	"Through this cooperation, PMR activities such as blood donation, social service, or fundraising gain wider legitimacy and produce a real impact on society. This makes students realize that what they are doing is not merely school training but is genuinely helping others."

Table 3. Observation and Interview Results on Inhibiting Factors

Indicator	Observation and Interview Results
Limited facilities and infrastructure	"Basic equipment such as first-aid kits, stretchers, or training tools is still incomplete, so students sometimes have to improvise with whatever is available. This condition prevents first-aid training and simulation from running as optimally as expected."
Inconsistent student attendance in routine activities	"Some members cannot always attend because their schedules clash with other activities, such as extra tutoring or family matters. As a result, the habituation of social care values becomes less optimal because not all students experience the same learning process."
Varying initial motivation among students joining PMR	"Some students genuinely intend to learn and serve, while others join because of a friend's invitation or simply to fulfill an extracurricular requirement. This makes some students less serious at first, although in the process they usually begin to find meaning in their involvement with PMR."

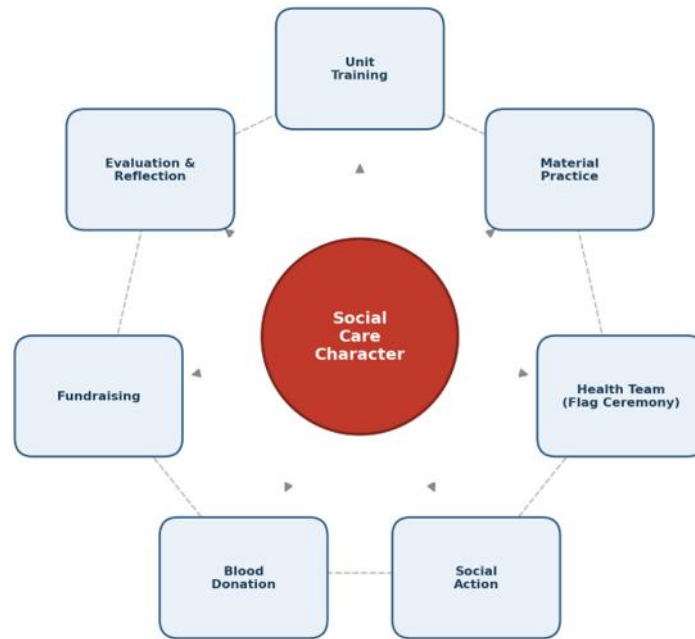


Fig. 2. The cycle of PMR program activities that habituate social care character at SMA Negeri 1 Balai.

1) Supporting Factors

Several supporting factors were found in the field. First, full support from the school is the main pillar. The principal and advising teachers provide space for PMR to develop through the provision of facilities, permission for activities, and regular mentoring. This finding is consistent with [8], who states that external factors, particularly the school environment, play an important role in shaping social care character; a conducive school environment full of a culture of togetherness and mutual cooperation strengthens students' personal sense of social care.

Second, the enthusiasm and motivation of PMR members are a significant supporting factor. Many members voluntarily take part in every activity, both routine ones such as unit training and incidental ones such as blood donation or social action. This internal motivation is closely related to the internal factors in the formation of social care described by [8], namely empathy, conscience, and self-confidence. With high motivation, students more easily internalize the value of social care and apply it in real action.

Third, cooperation with external parties such as the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI), health authorities, and the community further strengthens the PMR program. Through this cooperation, students gain direct experience (learning by doing) as described by [2], in which involvement in real activities becomes the most effective way to instill moral values. For example, blood-donation activities carried out together with PMI give students the opportunity to interact with the wider community and understand the meaning of humanitarian solidarity. Similar collaborative patterns have also been found to strengthen program legitimacy and community impact in other schools' PMR programs [11].

Fourth, role modeling from advising teachers and PMR seniors is also an important supporting factor. In line with the concept of delivering moral messages through role modeling, students directly observe how teachers and seniors demonstrate care, discipline, and responsibility. This makes it easier to internalize values, since students tend to imitate the real behavior shown by figures they respect – a pattern also emphasized in the teacher-centered internalization model reported by [12], who found that the effectiveness of PMR in cultivating social care values is strongly dependent on the teacher's role as educator, role model, mentor, and value facilitator.

2) *Inhibiting Factors*

On the other hand, the study also found several inhibiting factors. First, time constraints are often the main obstacle. PMR activity schedules frequently clash with academic activities or other extracurricular programs, so not all programs can be carried out optimally. This shows that character formation, although important, is sometimes still hindered by academic priorities that remain the school's main focus – a challenge similarly reported among schools with low PMR participation rates [11].

Second, limited facilities and funding are also obstacles. Several social activities require resources and costs, such as procuring first-aid medicine or transportation for social service. This limitation reduces students' opportunities to broaden their real-world experience; as [13] similarly found, facility and funding limitations were among the main obstacles constraining PMR's effectiveness in character formation despite its otherwise positive impact.

Third, differences in the level of awareness among members remain. Not all students show the same enthusiasm in participating in activities; some members are less active or attend only when there is a specific obligation. This shows that the formation of social care character requires continuous habituation, since each individual's basic disposition differs. [6] affirms that social care does not appear suddenly but develops through a long process of learning and social experience. This difference in awareness is a challenge in creating uniform social care character among all members, a pattern also reported among PMR members whose initial motivation to join varied between genuine intention and mere obligation [14], [16].

Fourth, the influence of the environment outside school is also an inhibiting factor. Some students who lack support from family or their surrounding environment find it more difficult to maintain a caring attitude. For example, students raised in an individualistic environment tend to have less empathy toward others. This reinforces the view of [8] that external factors, including family and community, strongly determine the formation of social care character – consistent with findings that management-level support and a well-structured extracurricular curriculum are needed to sustain social-care outcomes over time [15], [17].

These supporting and inhibiting factors are consistent with the concept of internal and external factors in the formation of social care character. Internal factors in the form of motivation, empathy, and individual awareness are the main drivers, while external factors in the form of school support, community cooperation, and teacher role modeling provide a real social-learning space. Conversely, inhibiting factors such as limited facilities, lack of time, differences in individual awareness, and outside-school influence show that character coaching is not an instant process but requires continuity, systemic support, and adaptation to existing obstacles – findings that echo the broader sociological understanding of character and social change amid rapid societal shifts [19] and the documented positive contribution of humanitarian activities such as PMR's Jumbara program to students' social-value formation [18].

Thus, this discussion shows that the success of strengthening social care character through PMR activities at SMA Negeri 1 Balai strongly depends on the balance between supporting and inhibiting factors. As long as supporting factors remain dominant and are able to overcome the obstacles, the goal of social care character coaching can still be achieved effectively.

C. Strategy for Optimizing the Strengthening of Social Care Character through the Moral Message of “Prokas Pelaket”

A strategy is a set of steps planned systematically to achieve a particular goal. In the context of this study, the strategies applied by SMA Negeri 1 Balai to optimize the strengthening of social care character through the moral message of Prokas Pelaket include program planning, methods of delivering moral messages, and consistent habituation through real PMR activities. This strategy is

important because, even though social activities are already running, without directed management the results will not be optimal. With a clear strategy, the value of social care can be instilled more effectively in students.

Table 4. Strategy for Optimizing the Strengthening of Social Care Character through the Moral Message “Prokas Pelaket”

Indicator	Interview Results
Strategy through habituation of routine activities	“Positive change is clearly visible, such as students becoming braver speaking in public, more confident meeting new people, and more responsible with their tasks.”
Strategy through real field experience	“When taking part in social activities such as blood donation, the motivation is the wish to help others even in a small way. However small the help, it still matters to someone else.”
Strategy through role modeling by teachers and seniors	“As advisors, we try to give simple examples, such as asking about the condition of a sick student or taking part in social activities ourselves. From these small examples, students become accustomed to imitating and learning to care.”
Strategy through evaluation and reflection	“Evaluation is conducted at the end of every activity through joint reflection with the advisor and PMR members. In the evaluation session, students are asked to share their feelings, difficulties, and the strengths and weaknesses of the activity carried out.” “After taking part in an activity, I want to keep repeating the experience. Social activities leave a positive impression and great benefit, fostering a desire to get involved again in the future.”
Strategy through collaboration with external parties	“In addition to internal strategies, PMR also optimizes the strengthening of social care character through collaboration with external parties such as PMI, the local health center (Puskesmas), and social organizations. This collaboration enriches students' experience because they learn directly from volunteers and health practitioners. In blood-donation activities, for example, PMI is present not only as a technical provider but also to provide motivation and understanding of the importance of donating blood. This fosters students' sense of pride in being part of a larger social movement.”

The program-planning strategy is as follows: the first step taken by the school together with the PMR advisor is to design activity programs in a structured manner. Activities such as unit training, first-aid material practice, health-team duty during the flag ceremony, blood donation, fundraising, and social action are arranged into annual and semester agendas. This planning is consistent with [20], which emphasizes that character strengthening is a planned and systematic effort that touches every aspect of students' lives. With a well-prepared plan, PMR activities are not merely incidental but become a continuous program that consistently educates students.

The second strategy concerns the method of delivering moral messages. As explained by [2], PMR at SMA Negeri 1 Balai emphasizes three main approaches: (1) case projects with reflection, applied in disaster-simulation activities, first-aid training, and health practice, in which students are invited to reflect on the social meaning of every action they take, such as the importance of helping others, cooperating, and being responsible; (2) direct experience (learning by

doing), clearly seen in students' involvement in blood-donation drives, health-team duty during ceremonies, and other humanitarian social activities, through which the value of social care is not only understood cognitively but also felt emotionally and translated into action; and (3) role modeling, embodied by advisors, teachers, and PMR seniors, whose discipline, care, and sense of responsibility inspire students to imitate such behavior in daily life. These three delivery strategies align with [5]'s emphasis on habituating moral values through real action rather than knowledge alone.

Beyond planning and method, a strategy that is strongly emphasized is the habituation of social care values in routine activities. Every PMR activity is consistently infused with the value of care, such as cooperation during unit training, a sense of responsibility while serving as the ceremony health team, and empathy during blood-donation drives or social service. This habituation supports [7]'s view on the indicators of social care, namely empathy, social action, and fundraising. By making these activities routine, students are trained to make social care part of their personal character.

Another strategy is to expand cooperation with external parties such as PMI, health authorities, and the surrounding community. This collaboration provides authentic experiences that enrich students' moral learning. For instance, blood-donation activities conducted in cooperation with PMI give students the opportunity to learn directly about the meaning of humanitarian solidarity on a wider scale. This is consistent with [8], who states that broad social experience strengthens the formation of social care character.

The final strategy is periodic evaluation and reflection. At the end of every activity, the PMR advisor and members jointly assess the program's implementation, both from a technical standpoint and in terms of the character values instilled. This reflection is important so that students recognize the meaning of every activity they have carried out. In this way, students not only see the activity as routine but also understand the value of social care embedded within it. This strategy aligns with the project-and-reflection approach described by [2] as one of the effective ways to deliver moral messages.

When related to the theoretical framework, the optimization strategy applied at SMA Negeri 1 Balai is consistent with the principle of character strengthening according to [20], namely that it should be planned, comprehensive, and experience-based. The strategies of program planning, habituation, role modeling, direct experience, and evaluation demonstrate continuity between theory and practice. This also supports [6]'s view that social care character is formed through a consistent process of learning and real experience.

Thus, the optimization strategy for strengthening social care character through Prokas Pelaket at SMA Negeri 1 Balai combines systematic planning, varied methods of delivering moral messages, routine habituation, external collaboration, and reflective evaluation. These strategies make PMR activities not merely an extracurricular activity, but a comprehensive and contextual vehicle for shaping students' social care character.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Balai on the process of strengthening students' social care character through the moral message of Prokas Pelaket in the Youth Red Cross (PMR) extracurricular program, this study confirms that PMR at SMA Negeri 1 Balai is a strategic and effective vehicle for strengthening students' social care character. Through the Prokas Pelaket approach – case projects, direct experience, and role modeling – students gain not only theoretical understanding but also real experience of social care values through various social actions and activities. Despite constraints such as limited facilities, time, and external support, the optimization strategies implemented by the school and the PMR advisor have succeeded in ensuring that the

character-formation objectives are achieved. Accordingly, PMR activities at this school have been shown to fully support the implementation of the government's Character Education Strengthening (PPK) program, particularly in the aspect of social care.

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