

SPEECH BY: Robert Morgan
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To: Dedication of Frank R. Long
Memorial Field

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DEDICATION OF FRANK R. LONG MEMORIAL FIELD

We are here tonight to honor Frank R. Long, who devoted his entire life to young people, both in the classroom and on the athletic field; and who selflessly gave of himself to his family, his friends, his community and his nation.

There is a quotation I like that reads:
"Nothing ever built arose to touch the skies unless some man dreamed that it should, some man believed that it could, and some man willed that it must."

In Frank R. Long's life, I am sure he would have substituted the word "boy" for the word "man" and the quotation would have read, "nothing ever built arose to touch the skies unless some boy dreamed that it should, some boy believed that it could, and some boy willed that it must."

He was an educator who wanted to insure that the young had a harmonious development of moral, intellectual and physical capabilities, but he did not believe in sacrificing any one of these for the other.

He believed that sports is a part of education and helps achieve a proper balance between action and thought. And he had the foresight to know that education is not merely an accumulation of information, but education is also an integral part of developing character and that knowledge without character is dangerous.

He began teaching in the Clay County School System in 1938 at the fantastic salary of \$96 a month and this was paid for only eight months. We in my generation remember that during these years this nation was slowly recovering from the greatest depression the country has ever known.

But this was the profession that Frank R. Long chose so his wealth was not the wealth of material things, but rather his riches were those he accumulated by giving of himself. He offered constructive guidance to the young—not only in academic matters, but matters of personal concern—he cared about them.

To Frank R. Long, there was no such thing as a generation gap as he made it his business to see that no such gap developed. And he practiced what all of us should carefully remember and do: "that children of all ages have one thing in common—they close their ears to advice and open their eyes to example."

In our impatience with the demands of youth today, we sometimes forget that their demands may hide a frustrating experience, a groping for the right path and they are in the middle of the frightening process of breaking the parental cord. Youth is a time of ferment—a time of questioning.

Let us adopt Frank Long's philosophy—patience and understanding and caring. They do need us—they need us more than ever.

They need us to tell them to turn down the noise of the amplified rock band because they are, in truth, becoming a deaf generation—even as they fret about the technological noise pollution.

They need us to save them from this adolescent nonsense about drugs before they inflict upon themselves casualties far more savage and tragic than any in Vietnam.

They need us to complement their ideas and youth with our experience. They need us to provide the road map that leads from where we are to where they want to go—a road map drawn with enough wisdom to avoid the breakdowns of excessive and innocent idealism.

They need us to remind them that there are some things which when once broken, once mutilated, can never be replaced or mended.

I believe that we have never produced a generation of young people with greater awareness of the problems about them or greater concern for the welfare of mankind.

Because of this greater awareness—this greater concern—their needs are not the same as our generation, nor are their needs the needs we had when we were their age. Each generation is as a new day when the sun comes over the horizon—a new cycle.

To my generation I say be responsive to change. To our youth here tonight I ask them to remember there are bonds which tie us to the past and give meaning to the present—for democracy and freedom—the principles upon which this nation was built are not new. They are as old as time itself.

Several generations ago, the early Americans with your courage and determination—your forebears—created a foundation so that these principles could be the principles of this nation.

We are approaching, I believe, a great period in our nation. I am not one of the forespeakers of doom. I believe in our youth, our new generation. I share the faith of North Carolina's Thomas Wolfe when he wrote this passage of anticipation and hope:

"I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfillment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land, is yet to come.

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"I think the true discovery of our own democracy is still before us. And I think that all these things are certain as the morning, as inevitable as noon. I think I speak for most men living when I say that our America is Here, is Now, and beckons on before us, and that this glorious assurance is not only our living hope, but our dream to be accomplished."

Frank R. Long was an example of the kind of man that makes this country great. He was one of our solid foundations.

It is with honor and pleasure that I read the inscription on this monument for it was his creed.

DEDICATED TO FRANK R. LONG
FOR A FULL MEASURE OF HIMSELF TO: HONESTY IN SPORTS,
DEVOTION TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH, SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY,
GENUINENESS IN FRIENDSHIP;
TO THESE AND MORE, LINGER WARM MEMORIES OF "OUR FRIEND."