

For the moment, however, may we respectfully urge that you use your good offices to help stay the infliction of such a garish monstrosity upon our Nation's beloved capital and the memory of the man it would seek to honor? At the same time, most Americans, we feel sure, would welcome dedicated effort by you and other culturally minded people to impose upon bright-eyed planners and designers a proper respect for the traditional in a part of our country where tradition must be held sacred.

[From the Washington Daily News, Jan. 10, 1961]

NEW IDEA IS GETTING UP STEAM—THREE MEMORIALS IN ONE?

(By Peter Edson)

A plan to bring together memorials to Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and other great Presidents as parts of the proposed National Cultural Center is being talked up here.

The idea has grown more or less spontaneously from general public criticism of the abstract art designs prepared for the two Roosevelt memorials in the last 6 months.

Mrs. Alice Roosevelt Longworth, T. R.'s daughter, said the celestial sphere design prepared to honor her father would desecrate the memory of anyone.

Similarly, Representative JAMES ROOSEVELT, Democrat, of California, F.D.R.'s eldest son, declared in what will probably be the greatest understatement of his career, "I have a feeling father would have been for something a little less modernistic."

With both of these examples of futuristic art on the pan, considerable feeling exists that something more living, more creative, and more useful to more people, something which contributes more to their enjoyment of life, would better memorialize the spirits of the two great progressive Presidents.

The proposal to combine the two Roosevelt memorials and possibly others into the Cultural Center was a somewhat natural development. It has met with a generally favorable response.

MARVELOUS

"I think it is a marvelous idea," says Representative Frank Thompson, Democrat, of New Jersey, one of the principal sponsors of the Cultural Center authorization legislation. "I think it would provide much more appropriate memorials to these two great men."

Representative Thompson called the Theodore Roosevelt Celestial Sphere design a junglegym when it was unveiled last summer. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., said the proposed memorial to his father was reminiscent of Stonehenge, the ancient Druid ruins in England.

Backers of these two separate projects object to incorporating the memorials to their heroes with others. They don't want the importance of the President they want to honor above all others subordinated by anything bigger.

They all seem to be trying to surpass the Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln Memorials, which would be difficult if not impossible.

CEMETERY ART?

One other criticism frequently given to Washington's "cemetery art," is that the city is already too full of monuments to the past and what it needs is more recognition of the future.

The answer to this offered by the new idea for the cultural center is that it is a concept big enough to honor a dozen Presidents—or all of them.

The idea of combining a number of memorials in the cultural center has not been placed before its Board of Trustees, which was appointed by President Eisenhower. Officials of the center decline to make any comment on the proposal because they don't want to be put in the position of trying to grab others' funds.

HOW MUCH?

Cost of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial has been put at \$4.25 million, all to be raised by public subscription.

The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Association has already raised and spent over \$800,000 for purchase of what is now called Theodore Roosevelt Island in the Potomac and for design of the celestial sphere to be erected at one end.