

Congress this year will be asked to appropriate close to \$10 million to build the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis selected from a similar competition 12 years ago. It would be a mistake to think that the Roosevelt Memorial need be hastily authorized. The Commission would do well to recognize the real task put to it and continue its efforts.

One reason to urge this course of action is the genuine interest and promise of many of the more than 600 designs submitted. These designs argue that our architects and associated designers have the capacity to resolve the profound cultural and esthetic difficulties of the modern memorial.

Full opportunity should be provided for public study and analysis of as many entries as possible and the public exhibition of the winning designs is the first step in this direction.

An initial review shows the selected designs grouped in several categories. The largest number are exploiting structural form, with sculptural overtones. Three of the most interesting plans attempting to overcome the flat site with a mound from which visitors can view the landscape.

Only one entry attempted much in the way of a formal plaza and relatively few put emphasis upon conventional sculpture or mural painting. There were also but few solutions offered that treated the 66-acre site as a park. Two proposals of special interest were by Schweiker and Metcalf (the only Washington firm to place) and a team headed by Robert Venturi.

Among the winning six, the perceptive design created by Rolf Miller deserves particular mention. It may be suspected that its quiet and modest appearance in the presentation would be significantly overcome when seen in its final form, as the dramatic perspective from the Virginia shore of the Potomac indicates.

This is not the time, however, to attempt a measured evaluation of the results of the competition but to react sharply and instinctively to the winning solution. As a structural concept and a sculptural form it is cold and mute.

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F.D.R. MEMORIAL

(By Betty Beale)

F.D.R. memorial models on display at the opening of the Corcoran Biennial tonight will draw a flock of interested and maybe heated observers. Francis Biddle, a member of the commission that chose the now controversial bookend slabs, will be there with his wife and the guests they will entertain at dinner beforehand. Among their guests will be Senator and Mrs. Hubert Humphrey, Senator Neuberger, Mr. and Mrs. Sumner Welles, the David Finlers, and from the commission, Representative Katharine St. George, Edmund Bacon, city planner of Philadelphia, and Jim Rowe.

Apropos of the new interest in making the monument to F.D.R. a living memorial by incorporating it in the National Cultural Center, Mrs. Biddle said that her husband originally had suggested making the memorial into a living one and had met with objections from some of the Congress.

How anyone could object to making an auditorium in the center a memorial to a President of the United States, with his greatest words engraved, not on some outdoor stones for a comparative few to see, but on the walls within where hundreds would see them at one time is hard to understand.

Each section of the center could be devoted to a President's memorial. The beautiful outer terrace facing Roosevelt Island could be Theodore Roosevelt's memorial. The grand salon in the center of the building might be F.D.R.'s memorial. The concert hall could be Mr. Truman's. And one of the sweeping plazas Mr. Eisenhower's.

Some heads may roll on the cultural center board of trustees when Jack Kennedy becomes President. It is understood that he is interested in the center and prepared to give it the impetus it needs by getting rid of some of the dead wood chosen by his predecessor.

Mr. Eisenhower, a military man, has never been particularly interested in the arts, to put it mildly, and progress of the center has dragged because of lack of dynamic leadership at the top.