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HUFF  
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## None of My Business -- Or Is It?

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At first I think the contretemps in today's *New York Times* over the \$142 million memorial to Dwight Eisenhower is of no concern to me.

A little while later I find it nagging at me. Maybe because I saw battle in World War II, where we Allies were decidedly -- no one has ever said otherwise -- the good guys, and he was the Allied Commander.

And maybe because in the 23 debates between that string of candidates for the Republican nomination for president of the United States, there wasn't a single invocation of his name or his legacy. Nothing pissed me off more than that my Commanding General in WW II and two term President, Dwight David Eisenhower, was totally ignored.

It is the architect Frank Gehry's design for the Eisenhower Memorial that is in contention. Frank Gehry, who gifted Los Angeles with its Walt Disney Hall, one of the greatest, most joyous constructs as seen from without or experienced from within. Also the Frank Gehry whose Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, was judged to be "among the most important works of Contemporary architecture."

"I want to know how we came up with this monstrosity," said Representative Tom McClintock (R) of California, as quoted in today's [New York Times](#). "If I were to place pictures next to it of the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson memorial and the Washington Monument," he continued, "and ask, 'which thing doesn't belong with the others?' the answer is self-evident - which speaks volumes..."

Oh, yes, it speaks volumes. Frank Gehry is among the greatest of Contemporary architects. No one, I'm sure, admires more the work of the men on whose shoulders Gehry rode in on than Frank Gehry himself. But he is among the greatest of Contemporary architects. He is of today, not yesterday, and his art stretches toward tomorrow. How could we expect a head buried in the past to understand that?

When Brigadier General Carl Reddel, the executive director of the memorial commission said "...this memorial will serve to educate and motivate young and old American citizens and international visitors," it's tomorrow's young and young at heart to whom he was referring.

"Members of the Eisenhower family and others," the *Times* article also states, "object to the memorial as an inadequate representation of the former president's significant achievements." That clashes for me with Mr. Gehry's original concept, which from his words I infer was a desire to trace the journey of a barefoot boy from Kansas to the twin pinnacles of his success as a warrior and the leader of a great nation.

That would be the very best way to illustrate President Eisenhower's significant achievements, it seems to me.

We veterans of WWII and everyone who remembers this gentle man with the giant fist, the president who kept us out of conflict after conflict, often against the advice of those around him, have an investment in how he is remembered.

And THAT he is remembered.

Eisenhower was the rarest of the rare -- a warrior and a victor who, at the same time, taught us humility by example.

In his farewell address, there was no way Dwight Eisenhower could have spoken these words if he didn't place his countrymen's interests above all else.

"Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together."

My God, how much I have admired and how grateful I've always been for the expression of that sentiment. So maybe my hero's memorial is my business.

I like Ike. I LOVE his legacy.

Norman Lear