

**Your on the  
Street Reporter**



**Uyless Black**

**Presidential Places**

**Dwight D. Eisenhower: Childhood Home and Museum**

## Presidential Places

George Washington	Birthplace
Andrew Jackson	Home and Grave
Abraham Lincoln	Home, Museum, and Tomb
Herbert Hoover	Childhood Home, Museum, and Grave
Harry Truman	Birthplace, Home, and Museum/Library
Dwight D. Eisenhower	Childhood Home and Museum
Ronald Reagan	Museum and Grave
Richard Nixon	Childhood Home, Museum, and Grave
George H.W. Bush	Museum/Library
William Clinton	Childhood Home
William Clinton	Museum/Library
George W. Bush	Museum/Library

Reflections on Visits to Presidential Places: Government Graft

Pending:

George Washington	Mount Vernon
Thomas Jefferson	Monticello
James Madison	Montpelier

And others as I travel America

## Presidential Places

Hundreds of books, movies, and television programs are available about the homes, libraries, museums, birth, and burial places of America's Presidents. I cannot hope to replicate these works, nor do I wish to. My hope is that the essays in the *Presidential Places* series offer different and humorous perspectives about several of America's revered historical places.

Many of the places we visit in this series are called *libraries*. They are unique places containing historical information about America in general and specifically about an American president during his time in office.

Here is one definition of such a library: "A repository of historical information, where many books are kept."

Here is an alternate and more accurate definition: "A repository of historical information, where many books are kept away from the public."

Here is another definition of a presidential library, "A library, whose contents are forbidden to be examined by people who paid admission to enter the library and examine its contents in the first place. Therefore, Disneyland-like exhibits are created to placate the crowd."

A fourth definition: "Thinly disguised attempt to bolster the public image of a former President."

These definitions are acceptable to those who flock to presidential places. After all, presidential places are crowded places. The visitors must be curious about White House dinner menus, presidential pins, catchy campaign slogans, first-ladies' gowns, and other artifacts of American politics. Because these places vary in how they are named, I use the words *museum* and *library* interchangeably. It appears most of the places have buildings and rooms that serve both as museums and libraries.

In each of these places I visited, I had my fill of political drivel. But of more importance, I witnessed a deep sense of pride the site creators have about these places. And time and again, I beheld the thankfulness and patriotism of American citizens who were aware, while knowing America's faults, that the country offered a better way of life than many other nations. Even with tongue in cheek, I carried away a sense of American citizens' reverence for America and for America's Presidents' contributions to this legacy.

It is my goal in *Presidential Places* to provide you with some lesser-known and humorous aspects of Americana as well as a sense of the pride and patriotism of the sites' creators and visitors.

Unless otherwise noted, the cover page depicting the face of a U.S. President is sourced from Google.

**Presidential Places**  
**Dwight D. Eisenhower: Childhood Home and Museum**  
**Report One**

**October 8, 2006**

Hello from Your on the Street Reporter. Last night, we stayed at a motel outside Kansas City, Missouri, and today, your reportage team stopped in Abilene, Kansas, to visit the boyhood home of Dwight D. Eisenhower. We also toured his tomb and the Eisenhower Museum.

When passing through Kansas City, I thought about an undertaker who did business here in the earlier part of the last century. My recollection comes to me because I spoke about this man when I was on the lecture circuit. My talks were not about funeral homes or embalming fluid, but communications switches, a tool as vital to our society as the corner saloon.

The talk went like this:

Almond Strowger thought the local telephone company switchboard operators were patching calls away from him to another undertaker in the city:

"Number please."

"Hello. I just discovered my brother's dead. Found him in his basement."

"Would you like to be connected to an undertaker?"

"Yeah, and hurry. He's been down there for a while."

Almon came to the conclusion he was losing business to a competitor across town; a man named Smithson. During his profit/loss analysis, he discovered a couple of switchboard operators for the Kansas City telephone company were named Smithson. Demonstrating the adage, "Necessity is the mother of invention," Strowger invented the *automatic (non-manual) telephone exchange switch*. His creation put an entire occupation out of business, gave him more dead bodies to bury, and gained him a place in the Telephone Switch Hall of Fame. Currently, he is the only member.

If you think this lecture was scintillating, you should have heard my presentation on the history of copper wire.

**The Interstate Highway System**

Traveling on Interstate 70 to Eisenhower's home reminded me Dwight D. Eisenhower was the principal instigator of the Interstate Highway System built. During his early days in the Army, he traveled coast-to-coast with a convoy of military vehicles. He was put-off by the delay in getting across the country and was especially vexed about waiting for hundreds of traffic lights to turn green.

Right? No, just testing your knowledge of The History of Traffic Lights. In those days (1919), traffic lights were not yet a pain-in-the-ass in most parts of America. What actually delayed him

were hundreds of speed traps, and the resultant stops to bribe local judges to let his convoy go through town. Something like today's Sunni and Shiite checkpoints at Iraqi roads. But there, they don't extort you; they shoot you. Speaking of shooting, one of the differences between Dwight Eisenhower and George Patton was: Ike would have paid-off the judges. Patton would have shot them.

It took Ike 62 days to make the trip.<sup>1</sup> Well, 61 days and 21 hours, as he crossed three time zones. Anyway, after returning from World War II, and experiencing the speed and efficiency of Germany's autobahns...what was left of them...he thought the United States' security might be at risk if the country did not have a high speed freeway system. Ha. Look what it did for Germany. But we must move on. If you want to know more about this highway, see the sidebar at the end of this report.

### **The Eisenhower Home**

In 1892, a two-year-old Eisenhower moved with his family from this birthplace in Denison, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas. When he was eight years of age, his father purchased for \$1,000 a Victorian style house, along with a large barn.<sup>2</sup> Here, Dwight lived with his parents and five brothers until he left for college at West Point. A picture of this house is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The childhood home of Eisenhower in Abilene, Kansas.**

Dwight David, like Harry S. and Uyless D., had problems with his name when he was a lad. He was first named David Dwight. But his mother, Ida, did not like the first name of David. She was against anyone calling him "Dave."<sup>3</sup>---which leads one to wonder why she named him David in the first place. I suppose she thought Dwight was preferable to Dave, but no matter; he was soon nicknamed Ike.

My first keen recollection of this man, beyond vague memories of his name bandied about when I was a child, was during my junior high school years. My brother, David---whom, to the possible chagrin of Ida, we called Dave---came home for a visit. Returning to his job, he left assortments

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<sup>1</sup> "Interstate Highway System," Microsoft's Encarta.

<sup>2</sup> *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Presidential Perspectives from the National Archives*, National Archives and Records Administration, 1955, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nancy D. Myers Benbow and Christopher H. Benbow, *Cabins, Cottages, & Mansions: Homes of the Presidents of the United States* (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 2005), 58.

of decadent east coast stuff at our home in rural New Mexico. Arcane Yankee artifacts, such as Ethel Merman records. Until Dave left his mementos with us, I had never listened to a stage play musical. Hank Williams was not into Broadway scores and Little Jimmy Dickens was happy strutting his very small stuff on the Grand Ole Opry stage.

Could that woman blast out a song! One day, I played her music on the family record player. Out her voice came, through a technologically advanced 1953 combination woofer/tweeter speaker, singing magically---and mainly---through her nose:

*They like Ike!  
And Ike is good on a mike.  
If it's Ike, your chief can go on a hike,  
'cause they like Ike!*

I dredged this verse up, somewhere in the recesses of my gray matter, from listening to a song over fifty years ago. I've probably forgotten the words, but we know Mark Twain advised about being too accurate about one's writing. As anon once said, "Recollecting inaccurately beats not recollecting."

**Taking Care of his Bro.** Dwight's father worked as a mechanic for the Belle Springs Creamery. After Ike graduated from high school, he also worked at this dairy to help put an older brother through college. Ike chose fee-free West Point for his college education because he did not want his brother to be obligated to reciprocate Ike's sacrifice. Cool.

The Eisenhowers were a close-knit family. Their ancestors came to America in 1741 from Germany and lived for many years in Pennsylvania. They belonged to the River Brethren sect, an offshoot of the Mennonites. The Mennonite legacy persisted into later generations, so Ike received "strong religious training,"<sup>4</sup> including ideas about pacifism and "turning the other cheek." I mention this part of Eisenhower's background because of his statements and actions while serving America as a soldier and a U.S. President. A topic we explore later.

The trip through his childhood home was a trip back into time. The National Archives and Records Administration is responsible for taking care of the place, and they do a splendid job. For example, they have no restrictions on chewing gum or taking pictures inside the house. They were flexible about logistics, although they did ask us to stay on plastic walkways, and not to touch anything. Reasonable requests.

The tour guide talked about the furnishings in the home. She mentioned a radio was given to Ida by her sons during World War II, so she could keep track of Ike's maneuverings in Europe. The guide informed us a telephone, seen in Figure 2, was installed in 1913. Ahem readers, notice the absence of a dial pad, indicating the presence of a switchboard operator somewhere in the city. Pay attention! A quiz follows.

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<sup>4</sup> *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Presidential Perspectives*, 3.



**Figure 2. The telephone of yesteryear.**

- Being an expert on things telecommunications, I offered, "That was early to own a telephone."
- "They were ahead of their time."
- "Where's the television?"
- "Ha! Not that far ahead."

She explained the bathroom was added after the Eisenhowers had bought the home. She informed us Ike shared a bedroom with two brothers, that the parents slept in separate beds, yet still managed to have a large family. ...OK, I added that last clause. Anyway, it was a fine tour. As we exited through the kitchen door, the guide encouraged us to take-in the museum, which we visited next.

### **They liked Ike.**

Eisenhower was an immensely popular President, but I remember the take on him from the Eastern Establishment was that of a milk toast. One who kept away from controversy, a man who played too much golf and spent too much time painting. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. said of Ike, "When he was president, most Americans cherished the national hero reigning benignly in the White House, a wise, warm, avuncular man who smiled a lot and kept the country calm and safe."<sup>5</sup> "

Hmm. "...a... man who smiled a lot." "Avuncular.": Defined in the dictionary as, "like an uncle." If ever there was a condescending statement about a U.S. President, this is it. However, I find the idea appealing, especially given some of the politicians that sat in the Oval Office after Ike's time.

Schlesinger speaks of a man who....let's let Ike speak for himself, "The United States never lost a soldier on the front or a foot of ground in my administration. We kept the peace. People ask how it happened...By God, it didn't just happen, I'll tell you that."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> J. Richard Gruber and Dennis Medina, *We Like Ike: The Eisenhower Presidency and 1950s America*, Wichita Art Museum, 1990, 29.

<sup>6</sup> A quote from Eisenhower, taken from a wall display in the Eisenhower Museum.

Schlesinger was a critic, basking in scholarly tomes, who never held a job where the burden of leadership weighed on his academic shoulders. Yet he disses, avuncular-wise, a man whose organizational and leadership brilliance---coupled with a set of steel balls---led him to become a five star soldier during WWII. A man who managed the D-Day assault; who faced-down the USSR time and again during his "reigning benignly" years in the White House. Through all these times, he maintained a composure so cool it would have put Clint Eastwood to shame. Except, unlike Clint, Ike didn't sneer. He smiled and remained uncle-like. God love you, Ike. I do.

One last point. As mentioned, some critics said Ike played too much golf. I can relate. Twelve holes is my limit. After twelve holes---after spending half the day waiting for three other people to do something, which is usually very little---that's enough for me. But Ike played 18 holes. Thus, the criticism about his playing too much golf.

In upcoming reports, we visit Ike's museum, his grandchildren, wife Mamie, and Richard Nixon, his Vice-President.

Your on the Street Reporter



### **Sidebar: Is the Interstate Highway System Worth It?**

The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways is an example of The Law of the Instrument, exemplified by a child, who picks up a hammer, and looks for something to pound. We drive more because we can. And with the Interstate, we drive a lot more.

Notion One: If the Interstate System had not been built, America would have one of the world's best train systems. Notion Two: *Workable* mass transit systems would operate in cities. Notion Three: America would be less dependent on oil despots.

The Interstate System was a gift to Standard Oil, Texaco, et al. For example: this writer. There is no way I would have made three trips across the U.S. in three years if the Interstates did not exist. The system is a hammer and, like a child, I pound it!

Sure. I could have taken a train, but our train system, weakened by unions, non-support from the general public and Congress, is a conveyance medium I reluctantly avoid. I could have taken the bus, but I'm scared stiff of bus depots. I could have taken a plane, but the airlines reserve most of their cargo space for non-passenger stuff---forcing me to leave most of my stuff behind.

A friend in the oil business tells me I'm all wet, that the Interstate System is a vital cog in America's productive industrial machine. Microsoft's Encarta Encyclopedia states, "This network of roads saves the United States billions of dollars each year in time and transportation costs."<sup>7</sup>

To my friend and Microsoft: Don't try to change my mind! I'm firmly in the camp of The Ignorant, Therefore Doctrinaire. Hmm. OK, let's do some numbers. Let's say the Interstate System did not exist, and I had to drive all the way across the U.S., through hundreds of towns and cities. Let's say I encountered 500 traffic lights and averaged 60 seconds delay at each (500 x 60 seconds = 30,000 seconds), or 500 minutes. Five hundred minutes is just over 8 hours. That's a full day of driving. And I've not added rush hour delays and other causes for traffic jams; conditions which the Interstate System tends to mitigate. Probably another full day of driving. So, in theory, the Interstate System saved me two days---at least.

I've changed my mind. I am now a member of The Informed, Therefore Doctrinaire camp. That stated, I do think we can agree on this notion: If America had not become dependent on the Middle East for oil, we would be living in a less dangerous and far simpler world. But hindsight is 20/20. And now... about the air conditioning industry conspiracy.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

**Presidential Places  
Dwight D. Eisenhower: Childhood Home and Museum  
Report Two**

**October 8, 2006**

Hello from Your on the Street Reporter. We are in Abilene, Kansas, taking in the childhood home and museum of Dwight D. Eisenhower, America's President from 1953-1961.

Ike was a two-term president. America has had only two other men who served eight years since Eisenhower was in office some forty years ago (Ronald Reagan, and G. W. Bush). Both Republicans. The only Democrat to hold office for two terms since FDR was Bill Clinton. And for Bill, he did not so much hold office his last term as his office held him, so to speak. But who's parsing nuances about holdings?

Eisenhower's Vice President was Richard Nixon, and Dick was Ike's preference to succeed him. But JFK came along; Nixon had to bide his time through the Camelot years and then Johnson's Great Society.

While researching for this report, I came upon a photo of Eisenhower and Nixon at the 1957 Inauguration Parade.<sup>8</sup> As seen in Figure 3, Ike had his grandchildren, Anne and David, at his side, while Julie and Tricia were alongside Dick.

A snapshot of Americana: Happy successful politicians with their virtuous offspring and the offspring of their offspring. Hmm. Something is amiss. Consider David's leer toward, it appears, Julie. And Julie's beguiling, off-setting looks---seemingly playing with a snow ball. Demure....yet deceptive.

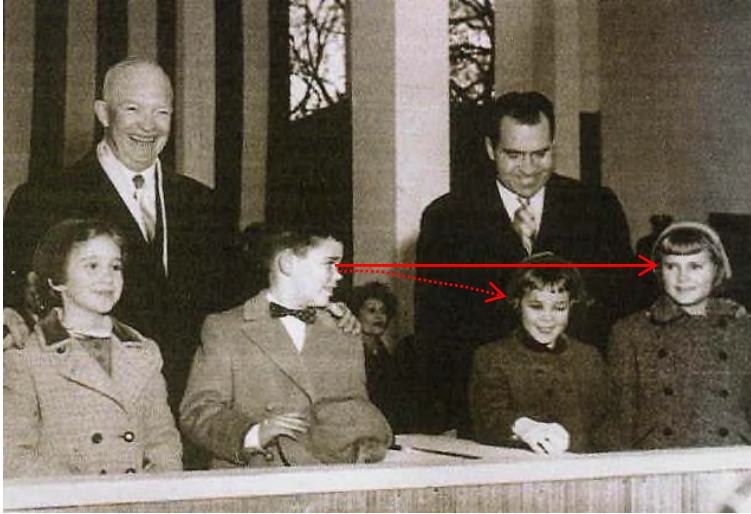


**Figure 3. 1957 inauguration scenes.**

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<sup>8</sup> Gruber and Medina, 68.

Something else is going on. Readers, do you see the fault lines of this supposed budding romance? Here it is: David is not leering at Julie. He's leering at Tricia! Look for yourself. To assist in your analysis, your Reporter has drawn two potential lines of sight out of David's eyes (Figure 4). Keep in mind that line of sight means a straight line from the eyes---demonstrated in the top red line. Not an arc---as shown in the bottom red line. Indeed, the bottom red line of sight is impossible, because it's dotted.



**Figure 4. "I only have eyes for you."**

We don't know what happened after this encounter. All we know is David and Julie got together, but David and Tricia did not. My hunch is that Tricia was not interested in David. She is seen looking to the parade, most likely at one of the military marchers.

You're welcome. It's my pleasure and responsibility to report facts, factual facts, and true facts, while at the same time, dispense with false facts. Now, on to less substantive matters.

### **Ike's Museum**

The Dwight Dave (ha, Ida) Eisenhower Museum is worth a stop off Interstate 70. Beautifully designed, rendered with a professional touch, it is worth the ride through Kansas. Oops! Mary, my Kansas-born friend...put away the gun. I was kidding about Kansas. Well somewhat. Nothing personal, but I like trees and mountains. Kansas is commonly called a plains state, so there you are. Anyway, be sure to reserve several hours for touring the museum. Its exhibits are many and varied. Figure 5 shows four displays exemplifying the diversity of the museum's collections.

During my journeys to collect these Your on the Street Reporter essays, and after having seen pictures of famous people when they were both young and old, I like to observe how a person's face and body change from youth to old age; especially the demeanor they take on in pictures of their later years.

Take the portrait of Dwight in Figure 5. Does he look uncle-like to you? Soldier-like? He appears well-fit and unpretentious. Why unpretentious? Because he is doing something 99.999% of the bald men in America *do not do* when posing for a picture, eating inside a restaurant, watching a movie, or sleeping: His hat is not on his head.



**Figure 5. Exhibits in the Eisenhower Museum.**

If you fit into the 00.001 % of America's male population who are bald and who do not worry you are bald, and therefore do not wear a hat when you shower, you are probably an unpretentious sort of fellow. After all, anon said, "A man of dubious self-confidence does a comb-over with his sideburns."

The museum contains a wealth of artifacts about America's history during the 1940s and 1950s. I learned many things while there. One was Ike's laid-back approach to the increased bullying of Senator Joseph McCarthy. I had forgotten his administration did not become involved to any great extent with McCarthy's Red Hunts. And for that he was roundly criticized by people such as the Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s of the country. Ike had this to say about McCarthy, "...nothing will be so effective in combating his particular kind of troublemaking as to ignore him."<sup>9</sup>

### **An Anomalous Soldier**

While looking over my notes taken during my visits to Ike's home and museum, I read my jottings about his pacifist upbringing. I had also written down some of the exhibit's newspaper headlines about his becoming one of America's most famous soldiers. I came away with the sense this man was, at heart, a reluctant warrior. He was no vainglorious Patton. No pompous MacArthur. No swaggering Bush II. He reminded me of a U.S. Grant, a modest but very competent soldier, one who knew war was sometimes necessary, but should taken on as a last resort.

I recorded these thoughts---with the help of readings cited in the footnotes---after I viewed exhibits, read old newspapers, and listened to Ike's speeches:

After the 1953 death of Joseph Stalin (six weeks after Eisenhower took office), the President thought a window of opportunity had opened to thaw the Cold War. In his

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<sup>9</sup> *Dwight D. Eisenhower : Presidential Perspectives*, 9-10.

April 1953 "Chance for Peace" speech, he said, "...the hunger for peace is too great, the hour in history too late"<sup>10</sup> for governments to shut out the possibilities of avoiding war with diplomacy. His gesture led to a temporary easing of tensions in these early years. Then, in an astounding display of international relations obtuseness, the Soviet Union botched their "management" of the 1965 Hungarian revolt, which had the effect of Ike's pulling back his olive branch.

His efforts toward talking and not fighting were judged by many as unsuccessful. Nonetheless, during his tenure, the USSR was kept in harness. And in the end, keeping the Soviet's despotic---in hindsight, comically ridiculous---dangerous nation at bay was a strategy that worked. The USSR, its societal fabrics woven together with the thread of hapless Communism, came apart at the seams. Ike was one President, among many, who pulled the yarn apart.

Almost lost in history is the "Eisenhower Doctrine," a commitment from America to help Middle Eastern countries combat Joseph Stalin and his ilk. Ike sent troops to Lebanon to help this country in the battle against Communism.

One more example (and my favorite of Ike's international actions): The Suez Canal Crisis. Ike came out against our allies, the British, French, and (can you believe it!) the Israelis for their attacks on Egypt because Egypt had decided the Suez Canal, what with the Canal being located in Egypt, should be managed by Egypt. Egypt did not want to reopen the Canal until it had some leverage about the matter. The Brits, French, and Israelis bombed Egypt because of Egypt's approach to a local matter. Ike said, *Back off! Stop bombing! And get of town!* They did.

This man defied stereotypes. I came across this statement, his first Presidential address to the United Nations, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed."<sup>11</sup> This from a Republican and a former five star general. Had I not known the source, I would have wagered my next Irish Coffee the proclamation was uttered by a Congressperson from a Blue District.

### **Liquidity Matters, So Does Debt**

Eisenhower was a conventional Republican, embracing philosophies I supported in my adult years. As one example, Ike's economic policies. He balanced the federal budget three of the seven full fiscal years he was in office.<sup>12</sup> In later years, when I began following politics, my complaint against the Democrats was their loose spending policies. Now, who can tell the difference? Democrat Clinton balanced the budget. Republican Bush II exploded it. Go figure.

While working at the Federal Reserve earlier in my career, I learned many of the policy-making economists and Board members feared high national debt might eventually undermine America's economic foundation. I've little background in macroeconomics, but I do think similarities exist

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<sup>10</sup> *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, Ibid., 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 13.

between macroeconomics (national) and microeconomics (my wallet). If I am in debt, my situation is pretty simple: I can't spend on something I might actually need. I can't borrow. I'm restricted in taking care of my infrastructure (roof repairs to my home, fixing my road). Increasingly, my options in life become limited.

I think the same goes for national debt. But my brilliant (and they were indeed brilliant) economist friends at the Fed also told me if a country continued with a healthy GNP growth, no problem, as it could service its debt. Same with me in my microeconomic world. As long as I keep money coming in, fine; I service my debts. But:

- "Hey, Harold, this guy's got a lot of debt. But he's got money coming in. Let's lend him some more money to cover his debt payments."
- "Sure, Horace. I love that interest. Just one point. He's not paid-down his principal for eight years. He's been taking on more debt with each year. Eh, what if his income, you know, sort of drops?"
- "He's in big trouble."
- "So are we."

For certain, America's debt-holders hold a lot of greenbacks, thus they feel pressure to support the dollar and buy more of them. And they want to keep their export values attractive. But, and here's the rub: The longer they accumulate U.S. debt, the more they will eventually lose *if* the U.S. economy tanks. If it never tanks, if GNP continues a brisk pace of annual growth, no problem.

With America's increasing debt, with its associated burgeoning entitlement expenses, with the emergence of the Euro and Yuan in the last decade, ...if you think our present path is the way to go, I've got a deal for you. Its first name begins with Ponzi.

I have several of my best friends reading these reports who have more knowledge of macroeconomics stored in their lower brain stem than I have in my frontal lobes. I look forward to hearing from them on my illusion that systemic national debt is not cool.

### **The Domino Effect**

Ike was a Cold War Warrior. He believed the Soviet Union was trying to export Communism to all parts of the world---except UCLA, which was a done deal. Eisenhower also believed in the domino theory, a metaphor coined by the French in 1952. After the Battle of Dien Bien Phu (1954, in which the French were defeated by the Communist Vietnamh), he said at a press conference, "You have a row of dominoes set up; you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is that it will go over very quickly."<sup>13</sup>

The Domino Effect. We lost the Vietnam *Conflict*, but the Domino Effect didn't happen. And we won the Vietnam *War*, because, in the end, capitalism prevailed. Just consider: *Bush recently visited Vietnam. America is Vietnam's number one trading partner.* In the 1970s, no one in their right mind would have said, "Mark my words, in a few years, America will be trading with the Communists, and America's president will be paying a diplomatic call on their leaders."

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<sup>13</sup> From the Eisenhower Museum.

During the visits to the homes and museums of Eisenhower and Truman, this writer has tried not to fall into revisionism. I've offered reasonings on these men's decisions about Joe Stalin, Israel, McCarthy, the Suez Canal, and other historic events. Truth is, most of us were scared of the USSR and its weird, demented government. Even with its Iron Curtain, enough information leaked out to let us know the Communists had created a dangerous society. Reading *Dr. Zhivago* during my college years convinced me that the Communist Party was a sick apparatus.

But how could we know it would self-implode? That it would just wither into itself? Sucking down a few notable institutions it managed to create?<sup>14</sup>

Only in hindsight are we brilliant. Only in foresight are we insightful. For the present, we remain unaware.

And for this present time, I remain Your on the Street Reporter.

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<sup>14</sup> A fine health care system, for example.

**Presidential Places**  
**Dwight D. Eisenhower: Childhood Home and Museum**  
**Report Three**

**October 8, 2006**

Hello from Your on the Street Reporter. I am still in Abilene, Kansas, walking through the Eisenhower Museum, touring mid-20th century memorabilia, and reflecting on past times.

**Bucolic Ike**

So, what to make of Eisenhower? If we had more time, we could dwell on this subject. We could contrast him with other Presidents highlighted in this series. But such is the nature of reporting. Deadlines are deadlines, and we must leave these details to Arthur and his Schlesingers.

Let's wrap-up this segment of the report with a tour of one of the corridors in the museum devoted to Ike's favorite pastime (even more than golf): Painting. To gain relief from the pressures of his White House duties, Eisenhower would sometimes sneak into a room off the Oval Office to paint. He was modest about his skills with the brush, but Ike was modest about everything he did. I had forgotten Dwight was a talented painter. Take a look at Figure 6, and judge for yourself.



**Figure 6. Ike's paintings.**

I reluctantly left the home and museum of a reluctant warrior, a fine man, and a great patriot. I headed out onto one of Ike's Interstates, traveling America once again.

Your on the Street Reporter