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NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20560

Dept. of Aeronautics
February 3, 1994

Paul Metro
78 Dalton Pl.
Edison, NJ 08817

Sample of Smithsonian Correspondence

Dear Mr. Metro:

Thank you for your letter to Dr. Harwit. He asked me to reply. Since Dr. Harwit came to the Museum in 1987, it has been one of our highest priorities to find a way to display this historic aircraft for the fiftieth anniversary. The restoration of the "Enola Gay" began even before the Director's arrival, in 1984, and we are approaching completion of that tremendous job--the largest restoration ever done in our shops--in 1995. (The job may have gone on longer than expected because of its complexity, but the Garber Facility is indeed in the last stages of finishing the remaining components.) Unfortunately, we have found that it is infeasible to assemble the restored sections of the aircraft in 1995, because it is too large to fit within the Museum downtown. Now that we have finally received approval from Congress for our Extension at Washington Dulles Airport, we will assemble the aircraft there. However, we will have to raise large sums of money to build the Extension, so this will not happen before the year 2000 at the earliest.

In the meantime, we plan to open an exhibit on the fiftieth anniversary of the atomic bombings in May 1995, using the forward fuselage of the "Enola Gay," along with other artifacts. This exhibit will give due weight to the viewpoint of American veterans, along with other viewpoints. Its aim will be to provide an historically accurate account of the background of the Pacific war, the decision to drop the bomb, and the bombings themselves. Honoring the service of Allied soldiers, sailor and airmen will of course be a part of this exhibit, as will an unflattering account of Japanese aggression in the Pacific.

Thank you again for your interest in the National Air and Space Museum.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. J. Neufeld".
Dr. Michael J. Neufeld
Curator