

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
MAY 4-5, 1994**

RESOLUTION NO: 22

SUBJECT: SMITHSONIAN EXHIBIT OF THE ENOLA GAY

ORIGIN: INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

WHEREAS; The Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian is in the planning stage of an exhibit entitled "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War," where a portion of this exhibit will include a part of the B-29 "Enola Gay," the airplane used to bomb Hiroshima, and pictures and memorabilia from the pilot and crew, and

WHEREAS; In order for visitors to view the elements of this historic incident, they will need to go through an area, as described in the Smithsonian Exhibit plan as, portraying the desperate actions of the Japanese to defend their homeland from the brutal, vindictive, and racially motivated conduct of the War by the United States, despite the true nature of American action as response to the "Day of Infamy" and the defeating of a wantonly brutal aggressor found guilty of innumerable war crimes, and

WHEREAS; Visitors, after viewing the "Enola Gay" will then have to pass through the "emotional center" of the exhibit where the horrors and destruction of the use of the atomic bomb is depicted in such shocking realism that the plan notes parents might find some parts unsuitable for viewing by their children and warns "parental discretion is advised" and includes a collection of burnt watches, broken wall clocks and photos of victims in a variety of conditions, from death to the remnants of maimed and diseased bodies, and

WHEREAS; The function of the Air and Space Museum is prescribed by law as noted in Title 20, United States Code, Section 77a, states: "The national air and space museum shall memorialize the national development of aviation and space flight; collect, preserve, and display aeronautical and space flight equipment of historical interest and significance; serve as a repository for scientific equipment and data pertaining to the development of aviation and space flight; and provide educational material for the historical study of aviation and space flight.", and

WHEREAS; Title 20, U.S.C., Section 80a, further states: "the Smithsonian Institution shall commemorate and display the contributions made by the military forces

of the Nation toward creating, developing, and maintaining a free, peaceful, and independent society and culture in the United States. The valor and sacrificial service of men and women of the Armed Forces shall be portrayed as an inspiration to the present and future generations of America. The demands placed on the full energies of our people, the hardships endured, and the sacrifice demanded in our constant search for world peace shall be clearly demonstrated.", and

WHEREAS; The American Legion vehemently objects to the attempt to rewrite history being perpetrated by an agency of the United States without any control by the United States Government, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED; By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 1994, That The American Legion is concerned the planned exhibit entitled: "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War," as described in the Smithsonian Exhibit, dated January 12, 1994, plan is politically biased and is in violation of the prescribed direction and function of the Smithsonian Institution and the Air and Space Museum, and be it further

RESOLVED, The American Legion strongly objects to the use of the "Enola Gay," and the heroic men who flew her, in an exhibit which questions the moral and political wisdom involved in the dropping of the atomic bomb, and which infers that America was somehow in the wrong and her loyal Airmen somehow criminal in carrying out this last act of the war which, in fact, hastened the war's end and preserved the lives of countless American and Japanese alike; and, be it finally

RESOLVED; The American Legion express its objection of the planned exhibit at the Smithsonian by directing the National Commander to forward a copy of this resolution to the President, Congress and officials of the Smithsonian Institution.