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Congress of the United States
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ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOSPITALS
AND HEALTH CARE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

August 18, 1994

Secretary Robert McCormick Adams
Smithsonian Institution
1000 Jefferson Drive SW
Washington, D.C. 20560

Dear Secretary Adams:

As a World War II, U.S. Navy veteran, whose ship participated in the invasions of Luzon, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa, I can hardly express how personally infuriating the continued controversy over the Smithsonian's reportedly biased exhibition of the Enola Gay is becoming. Those battles and other Japanese actions clearly demonstrated to President Truman the absolute necessity of using the Atomic Bomb to end the war against Japan without adding to the hundreds of thousands of AMERICANS already killed, disabled, injured or MIA.

Patriotic World War II veterans and their families are contacting me to express anger over this intellectually dishonest attempt at apologist history by academics in the Air and Space Museum. Those Americans consider your current plans an insult of unprecedented proportion in the guise of an accurate and objective exhibit. If you must have an exhibit rather than simply display the Enola Gay, it should focus upon the historical context within which the plane's mission was a part, including placing the ramifications of invading Japan itself in the complete context of the casualties suffered at all the preceding island invasions. You should not unnecessarily present a slanted version of the consequences of how the war ended. A comprehensive history of the Cold War can be left for another place and time.

In a recent exculpatory article Dr. Martin Harwit, Director of the National Air and Space Museum, complains about the "dilemma" the museum finds itself in because divergent but widely held views about these pivotal events results in a lack of national consensus on what to say. GARBAGE!!! The museum has manufactured its own dilemma by elevating a vocal but tiny minority of politically correct opinion to the level of the beliefs of an entire American generation in order to claim lack of national consensus.

Dr. Martin goes on to blame the WWII generation for subjecting their children and grandchildren to the consequences of the atomic bomb, stating that, "Next year these younger people, ...will have reason to celebrate the restraint that has prevailed for half a century in which no man, woman or child has been killed by an atomic bomb. They want to extend that record to all time." Dr. Martin obviously does not understand that his so-called "restraint" has been brought to pass largely by the WWII generation who were "younger people" during that war. Additionally, he seemingly blames the United States for needlessly developing nuclear weapons when in fact we knew the Nazis were also working on the atomic bomb. The prospects for future generations of Americans to avoid nuclear attack will be greatly improved if they learn the lesson WWII veterans know all too well - you cannot convince a potential adversary of the benefits of nuclear restraint if you are operating from a position of military weakness. America must stay strong.

Dr. Martin concluded the article by stating, "We have found no way to exhibit the Enola Gay and satisfy everyone." I submit he should not try to satisfy everyone. He should use the U.S. taxpayer dollars supporting his institution to do the democratic thing. Present divergent views to the degree they are supported by historical fact, but unapologetically favor the view most likely shared by the vast majority of Americans about the Enola Gay.

Please add my name to those in Congress you have already heard from in strongly urging a complete review of this matter.

Sincerely,



BOB STUMP
Member of Congress

BS/cdc