

OAH RESOLUTION

Changes Made

Two major papers, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, weighed in on opposing, but not necessarily opposite, sides of the controversy. On August 14, a *Washington Post* editorial took a political swipe at the exhibit's content by pointing out the museum officials' inability to see political opinions at the heart of the controversy.

were made to Unit 400, "Ground Zero: Hiroshima... and Nagasaki..."; and minor wording changes were made to Unit 500, "The Legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

Continued opposition to the August draft caused Harwit to decide to work directly with a veterans group. In September museum officials met repeatedly with representatives of the Ameri-

OAH EXECUTIVE BOARD PASSES TWO RESOLUTIONS AT ITS OCTOBER 22, 1994, MEETING

- THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS CONDEMNS THREATS BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO PENALIZE THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION BECAUSE OF THE CONTROVERSIAL EXHIBITION ON WORLD WAR II AND THE DROPPING OF THE ATOMIC BOMB. THE OAH FURTHER DEPLORES THE REMOVAL OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND REVISIONS OF INTERPRETATIONS OF HISTORY FOR REASONS OUTSIDE THE PROFESSIONAL PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA BY WHICH MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS ARE CREATED.
- IN VIEW OF RECENT ATTACKS ON THE INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF AMERICAN MUSEUMS AND THE FREEDOM OF HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF MUSEUM CURATORS, THE OAH WISHES TO JOIN WITH OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS IN DRAFTING A STATEMENT OF RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY OF AMERICAN MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES. TOWARD THIS END, THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AUTHORIZES THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO APPROACH OTHER RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS WITH A VIEW TO ASSEMBLING A TASK FORCE THAT WOULD DRAFT SUCH A CODE. THE DRAFT OF SUCH A CODE OR STATEMENT MIGHT BE CIRCULATED AMONG PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REVISED WITH A VIEW TO ITS ULTIMATE ENDORSEMENT BY ASSOCIATIONS AND MUSEUMS.

Like most academics, the *Post* opined, Smithsonian officials assumed all thinking people would come to agree that presenting differing perspectives on a controversial issue would suffice in the place of unobtainable objectivity. Three weeks later a *New York Times* editorial defended the museum. Suggesting that the process, not the content, was at issue, the editorial observed that the museum ought to be free from interference from members of Congress.

In the meantime, Air and Space curators re-

can Legion, an organization whose leadership seemed open to working with them. Suggestions from the Legion led to a new draft, in which the introductory exhibit, "The War in the Pacific," was integrated into the main exhibit as unit 0.

On September 22 the Senate agreed to a resolution expressing its concern about the appropriate portrayal of the men and women of the Armed Forces in the

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