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**THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION:  
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE**

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1995

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION,  
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in Room 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ted Stevens, chairman, presiding.

Present: Senators Stevens, Ford, and Pell.

Staff Present: Christine Ciccone, Deputy Chief Counsel; Mark C. Mackie, Chief Counsel; Virginia C. Sandahl, Chief Clerk; and Kennie L. Gill, Special Counsel for the Minority.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TED STEVENS, CHAIR-  
MAN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ALASKA**

The CHAIRMAN. I want to welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses, General Charles Sweeney, the only pilot who flew on both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki missions and was the commander of the Nagasaki mission; Colonel Charles Cooper, the director of publications for The Retired Officers Association; Mr. Herman Harrington, the chairman of the National Internal Affairs Commission of The American Legion; Mr. R. E. Smith, national president of the Air Force Association; and Mr. Bob Manhan, assistant director of legislation for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The hearing today and the one next Thursday on the Smithsonian's future management practices are held as a result of the controversy over the Smithsonian's *Enola Gay* exhibit originally scheduled to open this month. Museums play a crucial role in our society. The processes of our democracy enable succeeding generations to judge actions taken by those who exercised sovereign power before they arrived. Museums are essential to this process and we must preserve the artifacts of our past. Those artifacts, together with facts proven at the time of the decisions, permit judgments of history to be fair and unbiased.

We are here today because the Smithsonian decided to present an interpretation of the history of the *Enola Gay's* historic flight. The veterans in this country reacted strongly, for good

reason, to the scripts that emerged from the Smithsonian. In the 50 years since World War II ended, and recently, there has been a constant erosion of the truth of what really happened during that war. This type of erosion is one of the reasons that the Holocaust Museum, which was built with private funds, is so important. It is there to ensure that history is not rewritten and that the atrocities committed against Jews and others in the Nazi death camps will never be forgotten.

On March 24 last year I initiated, along with Senator Ford, who was chairman then, Senator Dole, Senator Helms, Senator Cochran, and Senator McConnell, a letter to Dr. Harwit, the director of the Air and Space Museum at that time, expressing our concern that the Smithsonian's *Enola Gay* exhibit not lead to a revisionist view of history. It is not clear whether our concerns were taken seriously by the museum. It was only a couple of months after our letter that the proposed script attracted national attention due to the efforts of veterans groups.

This week we remember one of the most devastating periods in world history. We are here today to review what went wrong with the Smithsonian's process, particularly what led the Smithsonian to propose a view of the events that took place at the end of World War II that is contrary to the memory of those who lived through the war.

There are two people who have worked diligently over the last year to provide this committee, veterans, and the public with information on the exhibit. I want to express our thanks to Mr. Frank Rabbitt, a volunteer guide of 9 years at the Smithsonian's Paul Garber Restoration Facility. Mr. Rabbitt, who is here in the audience, is partially responsible for uncovering the museum's bias in the original scripts and bringing that bias to the attention of this committee.

In addition, we are indebted to Colonel Robert Schuh who provided the committee with other information and guidance. Unfortunately, the colonel met a tragic death last week. His family should know our thoughts are with them and we thank them for their efforts to continue the colonel's work.

A number of veterans groups have been involved with this issue. Due to time constraints they cannot all testify today. However, we have asked those organizations to submit written statements which will be included in the official hearing record.

[Additional statements are included in the Appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Next Thursday we will receive testimony from the Smithsonian, and an individual who is both a scholar and a historian. The purpose of these hearings is not to tear down the Smithsonian but to ensure continuing public support of that great institution. This committee has oversight jurisdiction of the Smithsonian. I believe it is our duty to preserve the Smithsonian as the central depository of the artifacts of our Nation's history. I think the public should know that we waited

until now to hold these hearings at the specific request of the Smithsonian. We delayed them at the Smithsonian's request.

Our first witness is General Charles Sweeney. We are going to hear the testimony of all of the witnesses first and then we will ask questions from the panel. Gentlemen, would you take the seats at the table and let me call on my good friend, Senator Ford.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WENDELL H. FORD,  
RANKING MEMBER, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE  
OF KENTUCKY**

Senator FORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief. Since its founding more than a century ago the Smithsonian Institution has created exhibits about a great number of subjects and events in its effort to carry out the provisions of James Smithson's will "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." As might be expected of an institution with such a broad mission, some of its exhibits may be controversial and raise concerns or objections by some people.

Last year I heard from people who were concerned about the proposed *Enola Gay* exhibit. Many of those who expressed concerns were veterans of the Second World War whose lives were especially affected by the events to be covered by that exhibit. I was impressed by the sincerity and depth of the feeling of those who conveyed their concerns to me. I felt that their concerns should be brought to the attention of and addressed by the Smithsonian.

Consequently, last year I joined with you, Mr. Chairman, as you already stated, and other members of this committee in a letter to the former director of the National Air and Space Museum regarding this exhibit. We requested that the Smithsonian be sensitive to the memory of those who gave their lives for our continued freedom. Although the Smithsonian has substantially revised the proposed exhibit some questions remain unresolved.

These hearings will serve the useful purpose of providing a public forum for the presentation and consideration of the issues and concerns that were raised regarding the planning of the exhibit. Mr. Chairman, the issues raised in these hearings touch on broader issues of Smithsonian management. It is important that these concerns be aired so that this matter can be put behind us and the Smithsonian can continue to move forward. I hope that these hearings will be beneficial to all parties and serve as a basis for moving on with our relationship with the Smithsonian in a positive and constructive manner.

I thank you for the opportunity to make this statement.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. As I am sure most people realize, every member of this committee is either a chairman or ranking member of some committee. I know that Senator Hatfield has other committee meetings. Senator Cochran

expresses his regrets that he cannot be here. He is chairing a conference committee. I am not certain how many people will show up here this morning, gentlemen. It is a busy period for the Senate, but we do appreciate your coming to appear before us.

Let me state that we have asked witnesses to limit their oral presentations to 10 minutes. We will print your full written statements in the record. We are going to waive the time limit, however, for General Sweeney. We feel that his role is so historic in this matter, and both Senator Ford and I have read the statement he has given the committee. So with your indulgence, we are going to give the general complete leeway to present his statement in the way he wishes to do so, and put the 10-minute limitation on the rest of you if that is all right. Thank you.

General?

Senator FORD. That is called discrimination.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. That is discrimination, but in view of the historic role that General Sweeney played in this controversy, I would wish that the public at large could hear every word of what he has written, but it is even longer than 15 minutes. General, we turn the time over to you, please, sir.

**TESTIMONY OF MAJOR GENERAL CHARLES W. SWEENEY, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, RETIRED**

General SWEENEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I am Major General Charles W. Sweeney, United States Air Force, retired. I am the only pilot to have flown on both atomic missions. I flew the instrument plane on the Hiroshima mission, and 3 days later on August 9, 1945 commanded the second atomic mission over Nagasaki. Six days after Nagasaki the Japanese military surrendered and the Second World War came to an end.

Fifty years ago millions of my fellow citizens served our country in a time of national crisis—a crisis which engulfed our panel; a crisis in which the forces of fascism were poised to extinguish the democracies of the world. It was a crisis in which the forces of evil were clearly defined, or at least I thought so until last fall when I read the first accounts from the Air Force Association of the proposed script for the exhibit of the *Enola Gay* at the Smithsonian Institution.

It was obvious to me that the *Enola Gay* was being used to advance a theory about atomic missions and the United States' role in World War II that transformed the Japanese into victims and cast the United States as a vengeful aggressor engaged in a war to destroy an ancient culture. My first reaction was, as you can imagine, personal disbelief. I just could not believe that the Smithsonian, an institution whose very name signifies honesty and integrity in the preservation of American artifacts, could be so wrong.

Like the overwhelming majority of my generation I did not want a war. We are not a Nation of warriors. There is no warrior class, no master race, no Samurai. Yet during the years when my generation and our parents were struggling through the Great Depression, the Japanese were engaged in the conquest of their neighbors. That is an unfortunate fact of history. Without the slightest remorse or hesitation the Japanese military slaughtered innocent men, women, and children. In the end, they would kill over 20 million of their Asian neighbors.

The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, timed for Sunday morning to inflict the maximum loss of ships and human life, thrust the United States into a war in the Pacific whose outcome then was far from certain. Seventeen hundred sailors are still entombed in the hull of the U.S.S. *Arizona* that sits on the bottom of Pearl Harbor. Many, if not all, died without ever knowing why.

The fall of Corregidor and the resulting treatment of Allied prisoners of war dispelled any remaining doubt about the inhumaneness of the Japanese army even in the context of war. The Japanese military considered surrender a dishonor to one's self, one's family, one's country, and one's God, and thus they showed no mercy.

This was the true nature of the enemy we faced. This was the reality which President Harry Truman confronted as he considered sending yet even more American soldiers, sailors, and airmen into the horror of the war in the Pacific. Declassified transcripts of the secret codes which we had broken during the war and were available to President Truman and his military advisors underscore the Japanese attitude 50 years ago. The transcripts show the Japanese had no intention of surrendering unconditionally. They were stalling for time and fully prepared to continue to sacrifice their own citizens. And as time passed more Americans died.

The Japanese military was fully prepared to fight on, even after the Hiroshima mission. In fact, even after the Nagasaki mission, some Japanese military leaders were still advocating fighting on.

We know that in a pre-invasion meeting at the White House on June 18, 1945 Admiral William Leahy predicted to President Truman, based on the experience of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, 30 to 35 percent of the 770,000-man invasion force would be killed or wounded in the first 30 days of an invasion of the Japanese mainland. That calculates out to about a quarter of a million American men. President Truman remarked that the invasion would create another Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other; one of the most horrendous battles we ever fought. Now it would be expanded the whole length of Kyushu, the southern island of the four main islands of Japan.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed. General MacArthur's chief surgeon, Brigadier General Guy Dennett, estimated that in the 120-day campaign to invade and occupy only the island of