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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4303
March 22, 1995

COMMITTEES:
WAYS AND MEANS
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REGENT:
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Secretary I. Michael Heyman
Smithsonian Institution
1000 Jefferson Drive SW
Washington, D.C. 20560

Dear Secretary Heyman: *Mike*

As you may know, the American Legion has been requesting that congressional hearings be held to look into the recent controversy regarding the Enola Gay exhibit and the overall current state of the Smithsonian Institution. I have enclosed a list of questions they sent to Congressman Clinger, which was also sent to me. They suggest these questions be asked at these proposed hearings. Since hearings, if they are even held, are down the road, it may be beneficial to the Smithsonian to answer these questions now so as to put to rest many of the concerns as soon as possible.

The questions are as follows:

1. To what extent did the now canceled exhibit conform to the charge of the Smithsonian Institution, as stated in 20 USC, Ch. 3 Para. #80? NASM officials respond to that requirement to present "the service and sacrifice of America's service men and women as an inspiration to future generations" applies only to the National Armed Forces Museum -- which was never built. However, the language in the cited section clearly states that "*The Smithsonian Institution shall...*" Absent case law to clarify the intent of the legislation, no prevailing interpretation of that language exists, it appears that NASM is citing an interpretation designed to free their hands from responsibility as probably intended by Congress.
2. To what extent did the municipal museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki enter into a prior agreement with NASM concerning the now-canceled exhibit? It was reported in the Washington Times, without verification or citation, that a prior, four-point agreement was extant. We have not been able to put our hands on that agreement. The Mayor of Nagasaki, in an AP dispatch published around the nation last month, is reported to have said if NASM will not display "their exhibit," they will find another museum that will. This tends to underscore the significance of the Nagasaki Peace Museum catalog, which parallels the original NASM exhibit beyond an extent explicable by coincidence.

WILLIAM E. COOPER

3. How often, when, and why did NASM Curators travel to Nagasaki and Hiroshima in connection with this exhibit? We know that curators and the Director made at least three trips to Japan in connection with the exhibit, the first occurring in 1988.
4. What is the significance, if any, to NASM Director Martin Harwit's travel to the Netherlands in early December 1994?
5. Why did NASM fund the exhibit totally from non-appropriated funds?
6. Were there specific donors for the exhibit? What is the source of the non-appropriated funds?
7. Why was Michael Neufeld, a Canadian National, hired by NASM? What are his philosophical and political underpinnings?
8. Why was Tom Crouch, an early aviation history specialist, assigned as curator? Why was he assigned to curate the American History Museum which focuses on the internment of Japanese American Citizens? Why is there language in the American History exhibit that is verbatim that which is contained in NASM's now-canceled exhibit?
9. Why does Martin Harwit maintain an astrophysics laboratory in NASM, devoting sums and personnel to that endeavor, and dispatching staffer to Europe on related business when the Smithsonian already has a similar lab in Cambridge Massachusetts?
10. Have the military veterans who are on staff as historical consultants and acknowledged military historians in their own rights been systematically excluded from the decision making on such exhibits as the one at issue?
11. Why did curators rely on historians only from the revisionist school, such as Bird, Alperovitz, Bernstein, and why did curators not contact established experts in the era and the key people involved.
12. Why did Harwit fire docent Frank Rabbit, for speaking about the exhibit?
13. Has it been Harwit's intent since his hiring to "radicalize" and "redirect" NASM? Does revision confirm to the charge and intent of Congress?
14. What comprises the exhibit now touring Japan, entitled "The Smithsonian's America"?

15. What is the status of the companion volume on the now canceled exhibit? How does secretary Heyman intend to stop this? What will happen to the 10,000 copies said by an unidentified spokesperson at the Press to exist? Do they? If so, have they been distributed to anyone? How will they be recalled?
16. Does Secretary Heyman intend to honor his promise to cancel all related materials? More, important, is he positioned properly to effectively control the actions of NASM personnel?
17. How has the Enola Gay controversy effected fund-raising?
18. Why does one major corporate donor insist on anonymity, despite the Institution's offer of on-exhibit acknowledgments to all donors?
19. How many subscribers have withdrawn their membership and financial support? What is the extent of the loss?
20. Are the safeguards and oversight sufficient to ensure the Smithsonian Institution uses taxpayer dollars in the way that Congress intends?
21. Why did the Institution send all complaining members a "form letter" that falsely implied no problem with the Enola Gay exhibit?

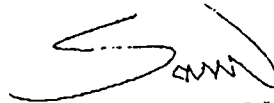
I, too, have some questions I would appreciate being answered.

22. Why do Smithsonian personnel have business cards that have their name transcribed in Japanese on the back of them?
23. With regard to new employees, what is the hiring criteria with regard to background and experience in the air and space field? Is any on the job training occurring instead of hiring qualified and experienced personnel?
24. Are any NASM staff currently teaching in the Washington D.C. public school system? If so, how is this funded?
25. Have NASM personnel participated in visits to space shuttle launches? If so how often, and how are they funded?
26. Is it true that Mr. Harwit is working on a book addressing strategic bombing? If so, how is this funded, is it going to be an official Smithsonian publication and what will the review process be?

27. How many people are currently employed by the NASM? How many are directly involved in restoration, preservation and display versus those involved in administration and side studies? Please itemize.
28. Why was the script of *The Last Act, The Atomic Bomb and the End of the World War II* advertised in the Smithsonian's Spring Catalogue after I had been told by Under Secretary Newman that this advertisement would have a "cancelled" mark through it?

I think answering these questions will help put this unfortunate situation to rest. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



SAM JOHNSON
Member of Congress

SJ/dm

Enclosure