

You have contributed to our process of trying to bring about some change in the management practices of the Smithsonian and I want to thank each of you for attending here today. Thank you very much.

Whereupon, at 10:43 a.m., the committee was adjourned.

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

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1995

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m., in Room 301, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Ted Stevens, chairman, presiding.

Present: Senators Stevens, Warner, Cochran, Ford, Pell, and Feinstein.

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, CHAIRMAN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ALASKA**

The CHAIRMAN. Let me make a preliminary statement here, if I may. Part of it is procedural. We have had a decision now from the Supreme Court that indicates that unsworn statements before the Congress cannot be the subject of further action. I intend to send a letter to all of the chairmen and ranking members of Senate committees to put them on notice that, in my judgment, that means that if there is any question that might be raised concerning testimony, that my advice to them—and I think my good friend, the Vice Chairman and Senator from Kentucky, will join in this—that the advice is that witnesses appearing before the committees who have not been sworn in as we have, should be. Members of Congress and Federal employees are under oath when they appear before our committee. We will start the practice of asking witnesses who appear before this committee to take an oath.

Again, I want to say, I believe that members of the Federal Government have taken an oath, as we have taken an oath, and are subject to prosecution if we do not testify truthfully here. I hope that those who appear before us will understand. It is my intention to ask witnesses who have not taken an oath, as employees or otherwise, to take an oath. I remind those who

appear before us that they are under oath when they testify if they are members of the Federal Government.

Our first witness this morning is the Honorable Sam Johnson, who is a member of the Smithsonian Board of Regents. Professor Edward Linenthal, Professor of Religion and American Culture at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh will follow Congressman Johnson. Mr. Linenthal served on the advisory board of the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

We shall also hear testimony from the Secretary of the Smithsonian, Michael Heyman; Dr. Tom Crouch, the curator on the *Enola Gay* exhibit; and Dr. Maxine Singer, chairman of the Commission on the Future of the Smithsonian.

Now this is the second hearing which we have called regarding the Smithsonian's future management practices. Last week we heard from several veteran's groups. I want to reiterate what I said at that hearing last week. These hearings are not being held to tear down the Smithsonian. We believe, I believe, it is our duty to help preserve the Smithsonian as the central depository of the artifacts of our Nation's history.

Those artifacts, together with the facts proven at the time of the decisions, permit judgments of history to be fair and unbiased. They allow succeeding generations to learn from history and to question it.

What happened with the *Enola Gay*, in my judgment, is that the Smithsonian produced an exhibit that was not fair or unbiased. It was a revisionist view of the events that took place at the end of World War II. Some of those individuals who took part in those events, and I am one of them, are still around to challenge the Smithsonian's account.

The exhibit resulted in an intense public controversy and has created a chasm, again in my opinion, between a major segment of the public, particularly the veterans of this country, which account for 26.5 million people. That is approximately 10 percent of the population and when you add their families and friends that number adds up very quickly.

In addition, the whole controversy has now resulted in the resignation of one of the Smithsonian's top officials, Dr. Martin Harwit, the director of the Air and Space Museum.

Sadly, the *Enola Gay* exhibit is not the first exhibit at the Smithsonian that has raised public concern. There were also the "West as America" exhibit, the "Etiquette of the Underclass" exhibit, and the "Buried Mirror" video that featured Carlos Fuentes. Each time that an exhibit shocks the sensibilities of the general public, support for the Smithsonian is diminished.

Approximately 85 percent of the Smithsonian's budget comes from the Federal treasury. The balance is from non-appropriated funds, such as private gifts and donations. Since the 1950's, the percentage of the Smithsonian's budget that comes from private sources has diminished from 31 percent to 15 percent. Each year

the Smithsonian projects its budget request and the request is consistently for increased Federal funding.

In 1992, the projection that was presented to this committee was that the Smithsonian would need \$1.1 billion in Federal money between 1992 and the year 2001 to fund their projects. Since that time, they have lowered their projections, but at the same time the portion of the Smithsonian's budget that comes from private sources continues to drop. In a time when we face in this country, and particularly here in the Federal Government, severe budget cuts, the Smithsonian will be in greater need of increased private donations to sustain its operations.

Eroding public support threatens the ability of the Smithsonian to continue to be the central depository of our nation's artifacts. It is my hope that these hearings will set the record straight, and quiet down this controversy concerning this exhibit and the events of the past.

We want to provide the Smithsonian with a public forum to explain what went wrong with their management practices, and to reassure us that steps have been taken to correct what I would call the revisionist and politically correct bias that was contained in some of these exhibits of the past, particularly the original script for the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

I hope that will be done, and if it is done, we will put this behind us.

Senator Ford, do you have an opening statement, sir?

Senator FORD. Just briefly, Mr. Chairman.

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

First, let me say I support your opening statement as it relates to swearing in of witnesses. Several of the committees on which I serve do that automatically, and I do not think it would be an extension too much of what is now the practice. So I will support that effort, and witnesses should be alerted to the Supreme Court decision.

Mr. Chairman, last week this committee heard testimony from a number of individuals and groups representing both active and retired military who had been involved, in various ways, with the development of the *Enola Gay* exhibit. That testimony raised some very disturbing issues about how the Smithsonian management went about soliciting input on this important exhibit and determining the scope of the exhibit.

I recognize that Secretary Heyman came to the Smithsonian at the end of this process. Testimony by some of the witnesses last week indicated that he made a valiant, though ultimately unsuccessful, effort to resolve this controversy and get the exhibit back on track.

I commend the Secretary for his efforts. However, I am afraid that the experience with the *Enola Gay* exhibit is not an isolated example and indicates a general misunderstanding of the relationship between the Smithsonian and the American public. Experiences such as that with the *Enola Gay* undermine the broad support for the Smithsonian and jeopardize its unique role, and I underscore unique role, as America's museum.

It is vital to the continued congressional support of the Smithsonian that the management flaws that led to this situation not be repeated. The Smithsonian must understand that, as an institution supported with Federal funds, it is ultimately accountable to the American public, whose lives and history its exhibits reflect.

I look forward to hearing the response of the Smithsonian to the issues raised last week, and the Secretary's proposals to prevent a recurrence of such a controversy in the future. It will also be helpful to our consideration of this matter to hear from the other witnesses who bring different perspectives to this discussion. The Smithsonian will not be able to move forward until we have fully aired these issues and management has taken steps to ensure that this situation will not be repeated.

I thank the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Feinstein, do you have an opening statement?

Senator FEINSTEIN. I do not, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Congressman Johnson, as I stated, I believe that we who serve in the Congress are all under oath. We will be happy to have your statement.

**TESTIMONY OF HON. SAM JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS**

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this very important hearing.

From what has been said already, I just want to emphasize that you represent those who fought for us in World War II and were able to respond to the *Enola Gay* episode, I think, more emotionally than some of the Americans who were not involved in that conflict. Being a military man, I appreciate the posture that you have taken and I thank you for your patriotic approach. I think that the Smithsonian does reflect, and will reflect in the future, the values that America so greatly loves.

Last summer, amid great controversy, I became involved in the development of the *Enola Gay* exhibit. I became involved because I was, like you, disturbed by the biased and unbalanced text of the script, and by the assumptions that were made by a few individuals questioning America's actions in ending World War II.

NEXT PAGE →

Through the tenacity and perseverance of Members of Congress, staff, veterans, and outside groups, a series of constructive negotiations were held and I felt that some progress was being made to rewrite the script. I was wrong.

The problems continued and were exacerbated by the uncooperative spirit of the museum's director and curators, and their inability to understand the reasons for the opposition toward the exhibit. It seemed that they were willing to disregard history in order to promote their own ideological agenda.

While the revised scripts did move closer to a balance, the museum director and curators persisted with their questioning of American intentions, while maintaining the innocence of the Japanese. When these differences could not be reconciled, Secretary Heyman, who became Secretary as you know only in September, responded quickly and responsibly. He cancelled the exhibit as planned and put himself personally in charge of revising the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

At that same time, I was honored when the Speaker appointed me to sit on the Smithsonian's Board of Regents. Unfortunately, over the past few years, I believe that the Board of Regents was not as diligent as it should have been in its oversight and guidance of the various museum directors, curators, and other Smithsonian personnel. We must remember that it is the Board of Regents in whose hands the Institution and all its museums have been entrusted, with the help of the Secretary.

Today, however, I am pleased to tell you that it is a very different Smithsonian than the one that existed just a few months ago. There is a renewed interest and energy on behalf of the Secretary and the Board of Regents that I am proud to be a part of.

Although we found that the *Enola Gay* was not the only exhibit that had been overcome by political correctness and revisionism, which you stated, I do want to stress that the majority of the exhibits at the Smithsonian are very impressive and historically accurate. I am confident that under the leadership of Secretary Heyman, the entire Smithsonian Institution will get back on track.

I would like to outline a few of the Secretary's reforms. First, he has initiated a full management review of the entire Smithsonian Institution. Second, he has taken a hands-on role by placing himself in the position to oversee and ensure that every exhibit is of the highest caliber. Finally, he has renewed and stressed that the Board of Regents take an active role in the operations of the Smithsonian. That is what has been the problem—there has been no involvement. I feel secure about the direction of the Smithsonian's future with Dr. Heyman at the helm.

I think we must be extremely mindful in our oversight and management of the Smithsonian Institution and its exhibits, because we are talking about our national museum. It is vitally

interpretations of the past according to new research and new insight? Are we not pleased when Ken Burns deepens and broadens, therefore revises, our understanding of the Civil War or the history of baseball when he allows so many forgotten people to speak? Do we not see this as an act of historical enrichment, reminding us of the fact that history is never as simple as it seems, but as complex, ironic, and therefore endlessly fascinating?

It was also troubling that our advisory committee and the museum failed to be more sensitive to the passions aroused by this story, troubling that the museum failed to respond publicly to the media caricature of script and curatorial motive, and troubling that the museum was willing to enter into negotiations with the American Legion, which had virtual veto power over the content of the exhibit. Museums, particularly public museums, have a responsibility to listen carefully to voices of various groups in the shaping of public exhibitions, but the integrity of the scholarly enterprise, be it in a book or a museum exhibit, that seeks careful rendition of the past, is threatened when any interest group becomes an arbiter of public history.

In recent years, many museums have succeeded in engaging visitors in conversation about controversial issues in order to help fill the much lamented "naked public square" in American life. The cancellation of this exhibit sets a chilling and dangerous precedent, if the message is that only "officially" sanctioned history is acceptable. With all due respect to Representative Peter Blute of Massachusetts, I am troubled by his comment about the *Enola Gay* exhibit. He said, "I don't want 16-year-olds walking out of there thinking badly of the U.S." Surely Representative Blute would agree that the presentation of history is not to function as therapy, used to puff up the self-esteem of individuals or nations. Surely Representative Blute would object to the very idea that there should be a patriotic litmus test for a public museum in the Nation's Capital, or that young people should not be confronted with the complexities of history. I am sure that Representative Blute would never mean to imply that such a test could lead to opposition for appropriated funds for the Holocaust Museum. There, visitors learned that Americans encountered and liberated the camps and many Holocaust survivors found a home in America. They also learn, however, about official anti-Semitism that kept thousands of European Jews from legally emigrating to this country. They learn that the *S.S. Saint Louis* was turned away from American shores in 1939, resulting in the deaths of many passengers in the Holocaust. At that museum, visitors are judged to be mature enough to be able to confront a complex story. Surely they had the ability to do the same at the National Air and Space Museum.

Unlike totalitarian countries, we never want to give fuel to the impulse to sanitize history, to turn away from engaging our

past in all of its complexity. This would be anathema to the democratic principles we all hold sacred. Surely, we can find ways to both honor the commemorative voice and respect the historical voice as we continue to create public history exhibits designed to both inspire and challenge.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. I noticed that two of our colleagues have arrived. Senator Cochran is also a member of the Smithsonian Board. Do you have a statement, Senator?

Senator COCHRAN. No, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Warner, do you have a statement?

Senator WARNER. I have one I would like to insert in the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN WARNER, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

I would like to thank the chairman for holding this very important hearing. As a member of the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents during the period in which the *Enola Gay* exhibit controversy developed, I worked closely with the Institution and with various military groups as they strove to resolve their differences. Progress was being made until mid-January of this year when discussions between the parties broke down and The American Legion called for the cancellation of the planned exhibit.

Following that, on January 20, 1995, Senator Dole and I wrote to Chairman Stevens requesting hearings focused on the controversy surrounding the *Enola Gay* exhibit. Ten days later, on January 30, 1995, Smithsonian Secretary Heyman announced that the planned exhibit had been cancelled and replaced with a smaller display featuring the forward section of the *Enola Gay* and a limited script.

The cancellation of the exhibit and all of the controversy surrounding it has, unfortunately, damaged the Smithsonian Institution's reputation. We now have a responsibility to the American people to ensure that such an incident never occurs again. We must then put this unfortunate chapter behind us and look to the future.

The Smithsonian Institution is a national treasure that belongs to us all. We must address the mistakes that were made, correct them and then immediately focus our attention on how we can all work together to strengthen the Institution. To do otherwise would be a disservice to all Americans.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Pell?

Senator PELL. No opening statement, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand you are writing a history on this controversy. Is that right?

Mr. LINENTHAL. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. A book on this whole subject we are exploring?

Mr. LINENTHAL. My own contribution will be a chapter of the history of this controversy in a book of essays that will explore other museum controversies, but will focus on the *Enola Gay* exhibit.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you believe that when the Smithsonian prepares an exhibit on an event in military history that military