

Printout from computer file. One name and some material deleted on second page because -- as the remaining context shows -- I was not absolutely sure on the point. The surrounding context is preserved to indicate the general nature of the deletion. jtc/jan 23 1995

November 23, 1993

MEMO FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting at Air & Space Museum

FROM: John T. Correll

At the request of Dr. Martin Harwit, Director of the Air & Space Museum, Monroe Hatch and I met over lunch November 19 with him and two of his colleagues, Dr. Tom D. Crouch, chairman of the Aeronautics Department and Dr. Michael J. Neufeld, curator of the Enola Gay Exhibit.

The expectation is that the exhibit will open in May 1995 and run for maybe seven months. At the time of our meeting on November 19, the July concept paper we had seen still reflected the plan for the exhibition, according to Dr. Neufeld.

We said the concept paper was not balanced, and that it did not provide adequate background or accurately depict the context in which the decision to drop the bomb was made. All three museum people (especially Crouch) said that the concept included all of these things. We said there is a huge difference in impact between a few words in the script and an emotion-grabbing artifact like a little girl's burned lunch box.

We also said the concept goes out of its way to spotlight Japanese suffering, with major focus on death and destruction as seen from the ground. Harwit said the exhibit would show GIs suffering as well. Correll asked if it would show GIs dead. Harwit seemed taken aback, did not answer. We made an issue of the emotional impact of the school child's lunch box and pointed out that there was nothing on the other side for balance. Harwit asked what we had in mind. We mentioned several possibilities of Japanese behavior.

Harwit dismissed those suggestions, saying the exhibit should not show Japanese atrocities because that would make Enola Gay mission appear to be one of revenge -- i.e., unfair to the Americans! (This was one of two instances when the Air & Spacers rejected content that we would regard as balance on the pretext that it was unfair to Americans.) Furthermore, Harwit (supported by Neufeld) said the airplane itself was a dominating "militaristic" and "macho" element in the exhibit. We challenged that interpretation, but Harwit said the Japanese would see it as he said. (After lunch, Harwit introduced us to a staff member, Jo Anne _____, who has been assigned to keep frequent contact with crew members of Enola Gay and Bock's Car, both for general liaison and to seek memorabilia for the exhibit.)

Neufeld acknowledged that his low US casualty estimate (20-30,000) was for invasion of the southern island only, and only for the first month at that. He said higher casualty estimates -- such as the often-cited 500,000 -- could not be used because veterans groups use a figure of 1-2 million (??!!) and would not be satisfied with anything lower. The solution, therefore, is not to use any casualty estimate -- conveniently eliminating the impact of a key point in the decision to drop the bomb. This, like Harwit's reluctance on Japanese atrocities, just happens to tilt the balance toward the point we believe they are really trying to make, and to which we object.

I understood [*name deleted*] (who was sitting next to me) to say that [*16 words deleted*]. Somebody across the table immediately introduced another topic, so I did not have a chance to confirm with [*name deleted*] that he had indeed said what I thought I heard.

Harwit heaped praise on enlightenment of the Japanese. He said one of the mayors (Hiroshima or Nagasaki) had almost been assassinated for saying the Emperor was wrong in not acting sooner to end the war. Harwit indicated the mayor may say something along those lines in his recorded presentation in the exhibit. Correll asked if either of the mayors intended to say that Japan had also been wrong in starting the war. (Of course not.)

After lunch, Harwit had the staff make photocopies for us of the exhibit gallery floor plan as presently conceived. He said this was tentative and not for general circulation. When asked about the "Conclusion" segment, Harwit said it was not final but would probably cover "radiation sickness" and evolution of the "nuclear arms race."

The word-for-word exhibit script will be ready around January. They will send us a copy for review and comment.