

April 7, 1994

MEMO TO: Monroe Hatch

Info: Goss, Aubin, Marrs

SUBJECT: Analysis of Air & Space Museum Script

FROM: John Correll

As requested, here is a detailed analysis of the 559-page National Air and Space Museum script, "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War." Among the findings of our content analysis are these figures:

- 49** Photos of Japanese casualties
- 3** Photos of American casualties
  
- 5** Photos of Japanese military members in military role
- 65\*** Photos of American military members in military role (*\*JTC correction; see analysis*)
  
- 302** Total text pages in script
  - 3** Text pages with references to Japanese atrocities
  - 66** Text pages on Hiroshima/Nagasaki "ground zero"
  - 13** Text pages on Japanese casualties, suffering, damage from earlier B-29 missions
  
- 25** "Ground Zero" photos featuring women, children, mutilated religious objects
- 13** "Ground Zero" artifacts related to women, children, religion
  
- 2** Text pages on Japan's search for a diplomatic solution
- 4** Text pages on US avoidance of a diplomatic solution
  
- 1** Aggressive, anti-American statements by Japanese
- 11** Aggressive, anti-Japanese statements by Americans

Can such ratios be a coincidence? Details on these and other findings are in the attachment.

*SIGNED*  
JOHN T. CORRELL

Analysis of "Crossroads" script  
Prepared by: John T. Correll  
April 7, 1994

### **Missing: Balance, Context, Objectivity**

This content analysis examines various aspects of "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War," an exhibition script dated January 12, 1994, and circulated by the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution. Two considerations should be borne in mind in regard to this paper:

1. This analysis is a supplement to — not a replacement for — our March 15 report. That report is our basic statement of the problem.
2. This is not a checklist for "fixing" the script. This analysis merely identifies items that can be specified or quantified and which help to illustrate the problem. Other factors, such as the decision to build the program around the atomic bomb, give the exhibit a particular orientation. Point changes at the margin can have only a limited corrective effect.

Examination of the Smithsonian's own script, along with other factors we have reported, substantiate our belief that:

- The exhibition as planned lacks balance and historical context.
- It is designed to play on emotions.
- It is part of a pattern in which the Smithsonian depicts US military airpower in a negative way.

Please note that the January 12 Smithsonian script analyzed here is the one incorporating what we described in our report as "major concessions to balance" when compared with previous exhibition plans by the museum.

■ **Relative Attention to Casualties.** Our March 15 report explained how the exhibit distorts the historical balance by taking the last six months of the war out of context and by focusing on Japanese casualties and suffering. An example from the script:

- 49** Photos of Japanese casualties
- 3** Photos of American casualties

**REFERENCES.** Japan: 100 14, 35; 400 1(4), 12, 13(2), 21, 22(5), 25(3), 27(2), 29(4), 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38(2), 41(3), 42(3), 43, 44, 45, 52(2), 56(3), 59, 65(2). US: 100 10, 24; 200 55. *Note on Annotation: Underlined number is script section. Next number is page in that section. Numbers in parentheses indicate multiple items on a page. Thus, 400 1(4) means four items on the first page of section 400.*

(Many of these photos are in what the museum's July 1993 concept plan called the "emotional heart of the exhibit" where "photos of [Japanese] victims, enlarged to life-size, will stare out at

the visitor." This photo count does not include "video testimony" from "bomb-affected persons," 400 23.)

Even with so lop-sided a ratio, a simple photo count understates the imbalance. Some images evoke stronger emotional reactions than others. The picture of American dead on Iwo Jima (100 12), for example, is almost antiseptic when compared to the grisly photo of Tokyo fire raid casualties (100 35). The images in the "Ground Zero" section — where the curators advise parental discretion — are likewise shocking.

---

■ **Emphasis on Women and Children.** The museum director has stated that it is "happenstance," not a deliberate ideological twist, that women, children, and mutilated religious objects are so prominent in the "Ground Zero" section (400 1-66).

- 25 "Ground Zero" photos featuring women, children, mutilated religious objects
- 13 "Ground Zero" artifacts related to women, children, religion

Here is a more detailed breakout of these numbers:

- ▶ Children: 14 photos, 8 artifacts
- ▶ Women and children: 3 photos
- ▶ Women: 5 photos
- ▶ Mutilated religious objects: 3 photos, 5 artifacts

If anything, the prominence of women and children is even greater than this, since sex and age of individuals in other "Ground Zero" casualty photos cannot be determined from the script and photocopies of the graphics. The curators are also "considering" a model of the Hiroshima Girls' High School for a display case in the center of the "Ground Zero" section of the exhibition. (400 31.)

---

■ **The "Naked Aggression" Factor.** In a letter to the *Washington Times*, Dr. Martin Harwit, museum director, said our assessment of the balance of the exhibit was inaccurate. He emphasized that "the exhibition describes the 'naked brutality' of Japanese forces in concrete terms, calling attention to the rape of Nanking, the treatment of POWs, the use of Chinese and Koreans as slave laborers, and the conduct of biological and chemical experiments on human victims." This breakout puts Dr. Harwit's "concrete terms" into context:

- 302 Total text pages in script
- 66 Text pages on Hiroshima/Nagasaki "ground zero"
- 13 Text pages on Japanese casualties, suffering, damage from earlier B-29 missions
- 3 Text pages referring to "naked brutality of Japanese forces in concrete terms, calling attention to the rape of Nanking, the treatment of POWs, the use of Chinese and Koreans as slave laborers, and the conduct of biological and chemical experiments on human victims"

**REFERENCES.** "Ground Zero": 400 1-66; B-29 effects: 100 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 46, 51, 52; 200 45; 300 27, 28, 29. "Naked aggression": 100 5, 43, 44, 50.

One of the four "naked brutality" items above is a peripheral reference in the context of an item about US interment of Japanese-Americans. That yields another measure of balance:

**2 pages** Text references to US internment of Japanese  
**1 paragraph** Text references to Japanese treatment of US POWs

**REFERENCES:** 100 42, 43, 50.

---

■ **Sinatra vs Suffering.** The impact of the war on the American home front is minimized. The script says that "For many Americans, combat in the Pacific remained a distant series of events," although it acknowledges — with stunning understatement — that "the cost of victory in American lives" was "a very real concern for all with loved ones in the Pacific." (100 38.) A few pages later, it tells how "American youngsters, with time on their hands and money in their pockets, transformed a New Jersey band singer named Frank Sinatra into the first teen entertainment idol." (100 41.) There is a photo of Sinatra. Visitors are unlikely to miss the counterpoint with grim images of the Japanese home front — death, hunger, privation.

---

■ **Relative Images of Militarism.** AFA has complained about the museum's tendency to depict Americans as ruthless invaders and the Japanese as desperately defending their homeland (with insufficient explanation why the homeland needed defense). The script (100 5) says that "For most Americans, this war was fundamentally different than the one waged against Germany and Italy — it was a war of vengeance. For most Japanese, it was a war to defend their unique culture against western imperialism." The script avoids showing members of the Japanese armed forces in military roles:

**5** Photos of military members in military roles  
**65** Photos of US military members in military roles

Taken as a whole, the exhibit emphasizes the military aggressiveness of the United States and minimizes the aggressiveness of Japan. One indication is the number of photos of servicemen on each side depicted in military roles. The American count is conservative. It does not include military personnel on the home front, the Joint Chiefs, research and development activity, GIs in recreational activities, drawings (section EG:300), the chaplain (340 74), etc.. Military members in captivity are not counted for either side, nor are any post-surrender photos.

**REFERENCES.** Japan: 100 18, 19, 21, 22; 300 24. US: 100 10, 12, 24, 34; 200 64; 300 1, 16, 17, 22(3), 24(2), 25, 26(3), 28(2), 30, 31, 33(3), 37, 41(2), 42(6), 43, 48, 52 (2), 54(2); 340 67(3), 68(2), 69(2), 71(2), 73(2), 75(4), 81(2), 87(3), 88(6).

---

■ **Aggressive Americans.** Even the expressions of enmity in this exhibit manage to cast Americans in the more belligerent role:

- 1 Aggressive, anti-American statements by Japanese
- 11 Aggressive, anti-Japanese statements by Americans

The single anti-American statement is quoted anonymously from *Manga Nippon* magazine. Absolutely no Japanese soldiers or officials make strong anti-American statements in this exhibit, although such statements existed in abundance. (The script reaches back to 1941 for the George Marshall statement [100 33], so there were plenty of Japanese polemicists to choose from.)

**REFERENCES.** Anti-American: 100 53; Anti-Japanese: 100 9, 13, 33, 36, 42, 44; 200 62; 300 20; 340 73, 82.

The example of American propaganda chosen ("Louseous Japonicas," 100 44) is an inflammatory cartoon, guaranteed to offend museum visitors of the 1990s. The agitation level of the Japanese propaganda item ("The Demonic Other" 100 53) is much lower. The script says one Anti-American item is yet to come. We hope it will be on a par with "Louseous Japonicas" if that choice is not changed.

-----

■ **Japan's Quest for Peace.** Japan's conciliatory image is further enhanced by another contrast in the script — the emphasis on Japan's reported wish to negotiate.

- 2 Text pages on Japan's search for a diplomatic solution
- 4 Text pages on US avoidance of a diplomatic solution

**REFERENCES.** Japan: 200 25, 26. US: 200 28, 30, 31, 49.

Japan's peace initiatives are said to have been frustrated by "die-hard militarists who wished to fight on" (200 26). By contrast, the script depicts the US and its leaders as unswervingly belligerent. "Most Americans despised the Japanese and it was difficult to back away from the policy of 'unconditional surrender' laid down by the Allied leaders in 1943," the script says (200 30).

-----

**Bomb Crews at Play.** Obviously, there is leisure activity for troops in wartime. Except for the pattern and the imbalance, therefore, it might not be remarkable that the exhibition script gives more than passing attention to leisure activities of the 509th Composite Group, the organization that dropped the atomic bombs.

- 3 Text pages referring to 509th beer parties, night life during training missions, other recreational activities
- 10 Photos of such activities by 509th

There are no similar photos of Japanese troops, who often took their leisure in notorious ways.

**REFERENCES:** 300 49(3), 50, 57(6).