On January 30, 1995, the Right chalked-up another victory in the low intensity conflict that educational and cultural institutions in the United States have been stewing in over the past five years. Their latest win on the "culture war" front came when Michael Heyman, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, announced his decision to cancel an exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum which had become the focus of a national controversy. The centerpiece of this exhibit was to have been the Enola Gay, the airplane that dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. That airplane represented for Air and Space Museum curators an important turning point not only in the history of aviation, but in the history of humankind, and they attempted to mount an exhibit that described the events leading up to the flight of the Enola Gay, the devastation the atom bomb's explosion wreaked on the city of Hiroshima, and the legacy of continued development of atomic weapons.

In attempting to tell these stories, museum curators came up against two powerful foes -- the personal memories of World War II veterans, and an array of organizations having either direct or indirect ties to the military including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and ultimately the U.S. Congress. Veterans expressed their opposition to the exhibit individually and collectively to the museum, to elected representatives, and to the media. An organization called the Air Force Association initiated and sustained organized opposition to the exhibit.

What does this fight between museum curators, historians, veterans, and the military have to do with librarians? What makes the Enola Gay controversy a "library issue"? What does this affair have to do with you, an individual librarian, or your library? And we might as well ask it now because someone certainly will sooner or later -- should the American Library Association be renting a room in a big Chicago hotel to allow this discussion to take place?

The cancellation of the National Air and Space Museum (NASM) exhibit is a library issue for several reasons:

1) It's a library issue because this is a case of censorship and librarians are professionally committed to opposing all forms and instances of censorship.

2) It's a library issue because libraries are institutions dedicated to the well-being of a democratic society and are responsible for informing their users about acts of censorship which threaten to erode our democratic rights. National and local media coverage brought the Enola Gay affair to the attention of millions of American, thus making the issue worthy of the attention of libraries nationwide.

3) It is also a library issue because, if the professional expertise of curators at the Smithsonian can be shackled so easily, if the Smithsonian's funding can be threatened by special interest groups, then who might be next? The Library of Congress? Your library? And how many instances of these debilitating controversies will it take before museums and libraries begin to practice self-censorship?

4) It is a library issue because the hidden heart of the fight between the Air and Space Museum and its opponents was about who
should have the power to influence public opinion and, thereby, win access to the public purse.

5) Finally, it is a library issue because ALA itself became a victim of the aftershocks, when the text for an exhibit about the Enola Gay controversy sponsored by ALA's Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) and Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT) was itself censored!

Before I elaborate let me briefly introduce the participants in the Smithsonian controversy and provide a sample of the sort of criticism lodged against the museum.

First, the curators. In preparing an exhibit that would commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in a museum devoted to the history of aviation technology, an exhibit that would feature an airplane that played a central role in bringing that war to a close, NASM curators decided to provide the public with an opportunity to learn about the scientific, political and military processes that culminated in the Enola Gay's mission. They also wanted to examine the subsequent consequences of those processes with the intention of demystifying the story of the atomic bomb for the millions of people expected to visit the museum. So much of what the public knows about WWII has come via Hollywood, through war stories of veterans, from often incomplete or biased accounts written by scientists and government officials who participated in the events, and from historians and journalists interested in promoting one "spin" or another on the war. Air and Space Museum curators drew on the best historical scholarship available on the topic to allow the public to develop a more comprehensive understanding of these events and also an appreciation for the nuances and complexities of historical investigation. The curators knew full-well their exhibit would generate debate, and being of the school that views debate as essential to knowledge and democracy, they did not shrink from presenting the facts of the Enola Gay's story as they are most fully understood today.

The next participants were individual veterans. Most of the individual WWII veterans who signed petitions and wrote letters to elected representatives demanding the exhibit be changed -- and then canceled -- never saw the exhibit script and only knew about it from TV and radio reports, newspaper editorials, articles in U.S. News and World Report and Air Force Magazine, and in communications from membership groups like the Military Order of the World Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Order of Daedilians, Retired Officers Association, Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., and American Ex-Prisoners of War. Most of these groups portrayed the NASM exhibit as a desecration of the Enola Gay, an offense to the sacrifices made by Allied troops who fought in WWII, and a further example of "political correctness" in American public institutions. Believing what they were told, the vets rallied to demand that the exhibit show respect and honor for the men who had fought the war.

Finally, the military. The third participant in the battle over the Enola Gay were organized groups of former and current military men, civilians and members of Congress. Foremost among these was the Air Force Association (AFA), a group founded in 1946 by General Hap Arnold to promote the creation of a permanent Air Force. (Not coincidentally, the NASM was founded that same year, also by General Arnold.) The AFA led the campaign against its sibling, and publicly presented itself as an advocate for the vets who, AFA claimed, were being betrayed by a museum that was established and directed by federal law to honor them. The AFA does represent veterans -- in part. But, while it assists individual members in locating old buddies, in sprucing up resumes and in decorating the den...
with oil paintings of "flying fortresses," it also represents the interests of its 250-some industrial affiliates. Among these: American Cyanimid, AT&T, Boeing, Corning, Digital Equipment Corp., Eastman Kodak, du Pont, GE, IBM, Honeywell, John Deere, Learjet Corp., Lockheed, McDonnell Douglas, Rolls-Royce, Texas Instruments, Thiokol, Unisys and Westinghouse -- all military contractors, and all members of what President Eisenhower dubbed the military-industrial complex. **Air Force Magazine** -- the AFA's equivalent of ALA's *American Libraries* -- advertises the products of these companies, announces trade shows and conventions which, also like ALA, include huge exhibits featuring the "tools of the trade" (Stealth bombers, Apache attack helicopters, F-16s etc.) and vigorously lobbies Congress for increased public funding for military research, development, and production.

What was the nature of criticisms against the Enola Gay exhibit? A good example comes from a spokesman for the 20th Air Force Association who wrote to Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, in July 1994. "As now planned, [the Enola Gay] exhibit will be a national disgrace. It will slander President Truman and his military advisors ... make victims of the Japanese and racists (if not cowards) of Americans, and leave ENOLA GAY'S crewmen as national outcasts ..."

A reading of both the first and final exhibit scripts reveals that:

First, Truman was not slandered, but he and his advisors were shown as having more than just the saving of American lives on their minds when deciding to use the atom bomb. Two other elements entered into their decision -- the postwar political leverage that a demonstration of this new weapon would have in U.S. relations with the USSR, and the need to justify to Congress the $3 billion spent on the top-secret Manhattan Project. All three elements in the decision to drop the bomb were well documented in the exhibit from primary sources.

Secondly, the people living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, most of them Japanese, were indeed victims. They were the first, and so far the last, victims of a direct atomic explosion. The exhibit did not portray the entire Japanese population as victims of U.S. aggression.

Third, the original script included material on the internment camps in the U.S. for Japanese-Americans, material on anti-Japanese propaganda, and noted the stereotypes many Americans had of the Japanese. The final script made no mention of the internment camps, but did retain material on both U.S. anti-Japanese propaganda and Japanese anti-American propaganda.

Fourth, the charge that the exhibit would "leave the Enola Gay's crewmen as national outcasts" does not stand up when one looks at the exhibit. While it is true that the crew were depicted as receiving special treatment during the war and having a bit of rambunctious fun on occasion during their intensive training, the *official historian* of the Air Force declared that the original script's presentation of the crew was "good." In no way did the exhibit even suggest that the crew of the Enola Gay was to blame for the horror of Hiroshima or for the subsequent growth of the potential horrors of more powerful atomic weapons. The curators did not use the exhibit to make any moral judgments, or -- as many charged -- to apologize to Japan for the use of the bombs.

For those of you interested in the details of the Smithsonian controversy, I highly recommend Mike Wallace's article "The Battle of the Enola Gay" from the May 1995 issue of *Radical Historians Newsletter*. 
In addressing the relevance this debate has to librarianship, I should hardly need to dwell on the censorship aspect of the affair. Librarians are opposed to censorship -- period. However, some will ask whether or not this was a case of censorship. Perhaps the NASM curators were biased or excluded important views on the issue. Perhaps their opponents did the museum-visiting public a service by forcing the exhibit's cancellation. Indeed, a colleague on the ALA Intellectual Freedom Round Table who assisted me in putting together the joint SRRT/IFRT exhibit, mentioned one day that ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom was not certain that this was a case of censorship. To those who suggest that this is not a case of censorship, there is only one response -- pressure from military, civilian, and government bodies denied NASM curators, experts in their field, the opportunity to tell the full story of the Enola Gay and the public was denied the opportunity of learning that story and judging for itself what to believe about it. Threats to the Smithsonian's funding, inquiries into the political views of NASM curators, and Congressional hearings are most clearly acts intended to censor.

Librarians must be prepared to oppose the next attempt at censorship in the "culture wars" and be willing to confront challenges to our own personal views and opinions. I could not help but be struck during discussions of the Columbus Quincentennial at the ferocity with which many librarians refused to entertain any notion about the impact of Columbus' voyage other than the one presented in the nursery jingle that "he sailed, and sailed, and sailed, and sailed to find this land for me and you." It is painful to have one's cherished beliefs questioned. Challenges to beliefs are challenges to self. But fear of change is dangerous in today's complex and troubled world, and individuals must be open to new ways of seeing. As custodians of one of the few public spaces in our society where intellectual and ideological challenges can be conducted in a safe environment, librarians must individually and as a profession be open to and learn to accommodate and become comfortable with the complexity, ambiguity, sophistication, nuance, logic and purpose of politics, culture and history. Librarians should be models of open-mindedness and courage in a society increasingly characterized by intransigence, intolerance, and mean-spiritedness.

Unfortunately, many librarians are feeling too beleaguered and ill-equipped these days to defend the library -- or museums or schools or professional associations -- as legitimate spaces for the debate of controversial issues. Certainly there are inspiring instances in which librarians courageously oppose would-be book-banners, but there are probably many more who avoid such confrontations by either quietly giving in to pressure or by practicing self-censorship in order to protect jobs and budgets. Libraries are under severe attack right now, the future of the library is in question, and we have a right to be protective -- but at what cost? Are silence and self-censorship appropriate in the face of a political movement whose primary commitment is to the "free market" and expresses this commitment by promoting economic policies that fund private enterprise at the expense of public services like libraries, schools and museums? One need only bring to mind the fact that the House of Representatives just last week voted on a budget that gives the Dept. of Defense $9 billion more than the Pentagon requested, $9 billion that will go into the coffers of the industrial affiliates of the Air Force Association! ALA's "Pass a Buck" campaign has been lobbying Congress to allocate from the federal budget a mere $1 per person of the U.S. population -- that's less than 3/10 of 1% percent of the "bonus" the House wants to give the Pentagon. Aren't the libraries of America worth 3/10 of 1% of the money the Pentagon says it doesn't need?

What is the relevance of self-censorship and the federal budget to libraries and the Enola Gay controversy? Here are two examples
that highlight ways in which libraries shrink from engaging in intellectual freedom cases involving powerful political forces.

The New York Public Library is celebrating its centennial this year. As part of the festivities it has mounted an exhibit called "What Price Freedom?" It is an excellent and beautifully presented exhibit that describes the struggles against ignorance, intolerance, and injustice of people such as Galileo, Oscar Wilde, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Margaret Sanger, the White Rose and the dissidents of Tiananmen Square. The exhibit celebrates human courage and describes the social ostracism, blacklisting, imprisonment and even execution suffered by individuals whose ideas challenged established power structures. However, the exhibit fails miserably in at least one respect. While NYPL uses contemporary illustrations of struggles for freedom from South Africa, China and the former-Czechoslovakia, it abstains from representing any recent threats to intellectual freedom here in the United States. The NYPL apparently could find no recent example of American censorship, so visitors might well leave the library's exhibit believing that the U.S. is free of any threats to our First Amendment rights.

While library curators in New York City were planning "What Price Freedom?" their museum colleagues in Washington DC were engaged in what will probably amount to be the biggest intellectual freedom battle in their personal and professional lives. Why couldn't NYPL curators have shown a little professional solidarity with their beleaguered Smithsonian colleagues by publicly recognizing in "What Price Freedom?" the price being paid over at the NASM? NYPL couldn't have hoped for a better current example of threats to intellectual freedom in the U.S. The case of Enola Gay curators might not be on a par with Galileo up against the Catholic Church, but it is certainly similar to the case of artist William Gropper, featured in NYPL's exhibit, who had a run-in with the witchhunt of Senator Joe McCarthy. Plus the Air and Space issue had the important distinction of being a battle that gives defenders of intellectual freedom the opportunity to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right place!

Of course, if asked, NYPL would argue that they couldn't possibly take sides on a current public controversy, after all libraries "aren't supposed to take positions." Well, silence is "a position." Perhaps if the NASM was located in Poland NYPL would have highlighted the case. Or perhaps 100 years from now, when it's "safe" to do so, NYPL will honor Martin Harwit, Tom Crouch and Michael Neufeld, for the price they paid in attempting to preserve intellectual freedom at one of our nation's premier museums.

NYPL didn't oppose the censorship taking place at the National Air and Space Museum, however, because it would have been awkward and might have jeopardized NYPL's relations with one of the Air Force Association's biggest industrial affiliates -- IBM. IBM's CEO, Louis V. Gerstner Jr., just so happens to be a member of NYPL's Board of Trustees and helps the library procure funding from corporate sources. NYPL can't very well bite one of the hands that feeds it, even indirectly.

The other library body that shrank from supporting the Smithsonian curators was ALA's Intellectual Freedom Round Table and the Office of Intellectual Freedom. However, before I describe this particular affront to intellectual freedom I must take us back to my earlier suggestion that the heart of the battle over the Enola Gay was a fight for public opinion in the guns-or-butter budget battle.

One of the most important elements of the NASM exhibit, though the military people didn't make a big deal about it, was the insight the exhibit provided on the "spin" given by government officials immediately after the war on their decision to drop the bomb. With
primary sources from government records of the time, the exhibit
detailed how, after the initial elation over the end of the war had
passed and the awe of the power of the atom bomb had subsided,
Americans learned of the horrible devastation caused by the bomb
and began to ask whether or not the use of such a weapon was
moral. In order to counter such questioning, and to garner public
support for continued development of atomic weapons, government
and military officials had to justify their actions. They did so by in-
flating American casualty estimates and said the atom bomb saved
hundreds of thousands of lives because an invasion of Japan had
been avoided. The exhibit informed viewers that U.S. officials
knew in the early summer months of 1945 that the Japanese were
prepared to surrender if the U.S. would agree to let their Emperor
retain his throne. The exhibit also described disagreements in 1944
and 1945 between leading government officials, military command-
ers and scientists over the question of whether or not to use the
bomb and who should have control over its development after the
war. In other words, the NASM exhibit exposed several of the
myths Americans have grown up with about the politics of the atom
bomb, and the military and multinational corporations that reap the
benefits of the power made available through such myths could not
tolerate the idea that a bunch of historians, at what is widely
considered the Air Force's own museum, would have the audacity
to challenge their virtual monopoly on mythmaking in America.

ALA was meeting in Philadelphia just as the Smithsonian case was
making national news. The Social Responsibilities Round Table
suggested to the Intellectual Freedom Round Table that we co-
sponsor for the annual conference in Chicago an exhibit about the
controversy. IFRT agreed, and I, as SRRT's representative, volun-
teed to work with an IFRT member on the project. I became re-
ponsible for the text of the exhibit and the IFRT volunteer (then
the director of a special collection with exhibit mounting equipment
and materials) took on the exhibit's physical presentation. I sup-
plied the text and graphics, he brought the finished exhibit to
Chicago.

Well, the exhibit displayed at OIF's booth omitted most of the mate-
rial I'd prepared and, to my horror, slanted the entire content of the
exhibit by stating -- as if it were accepted fact -- the very viewpoint
that NASM curators had sought to expose as false. Namely, that
the atom bomb was used solely to save American lives. And my
IFRT colleague didn't even have the decency to inform me that he
thought any changes were necessary to the text.

Why did OIF question whether censorship was taking place at the
Smithsonian? Why did the IFRT member deliberately censor the
text I'd provided? Might this unwillingness within the library pro-
ession to defend intellectual freedom against attacks from powerful
corporations be widespread?

The point I wish to make in presenting these two instances where
librarians declined to seize the opportunity to support Smithsonian
curators against the military-industrial complex is that libraries must
learn to defend intellectual freedom even if it might threaten rela-
tions with corporate or government bodies. Otherwise we turn our
backs on those whose courage we (apparently) can admire only at a
distance. And worse, in not publically defending intellectual free-
dom we silently provide a veneer of respectability to those who
benefit from censorship and the ignorance it fosters.

At the Republican national convention three years ago, Pat Bucha-
nan said, "There is a religious war going on in this country for the
soul of America. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation
we shall become as the Cold War itself." Well, the industries that
made billions of dollars during the Cold War arms race, don't want
to lose, in the post-Cold War era, their cash cow, their golden goose that lays atomic bombs and other high priced, deadly and useless toys. So, they look for "Reds" in the Smithsonian, they hunt for "Commies" on campuses, and soon they'll be finding "terrorists" behind every bush, even those gracing the grounds of our libraries.

The "culture wars" continue, they are part-and-parcel of the age old struggle to control the resources of a society, to determine who has and who hasn't, and it is a fight not only for the soul, but more importantly for the mind of America. Librarians must defend the freedom of the mind to explore, to experiment, to question, to celebrate, to grow. The curators at the National Air and Space Museum wanted to contribute in one small way to the growth of the minds of millions of Americans. They were not allowed to do so and, unfortunately, it was the silence of many of us that allowed that to happen. We cannot remain silent or we will surely lose all that we hold dear.

HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI, THE ATOMIC BOMB, AND HISTORY: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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[Editors Note: The above article was presented as a paper at the Progressive Librarians Guild program in Chicago on June 24, 1995.]

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**IFLA AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

by Al Kagan

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the most important international professional organization for librarians. As the name implies, members are not individuals but library associations (such as ALA) and institutions (such as individual libraries). Although there is an annual conference, the governing body, the IFLA Council, meets only every two years at the annual conference. 1995 was a Council year.

In its early years, IFLA was mainly an elite European club, but more recently it has expanded to the point where most countries of the world are represented. Of course, it still takes money to travel to meetings so participants still form a privileged group. Furthermore, the IFLA Executive Board continues to be predominantly (but not exclusively) from Europe and North America. In addressing the needs of new members, the most recent "core program" established was Advancement of Librarianship in the Third World (ALP). In addition, meetings are more often held outside of Europe and North America. For example, since 1990, the meetings have been held in Stockholm, Moscow, New Delhi, Barcelona, Havana, Istanbul, and next year's meeting will be in Beijing.

As the organization has become more diverse and has met in more countries, new issues have confronted the established power structure. For example, the IFLA Executive could not prevent the IFLA Council from passing a 1985 resolution excluding South African apartheid institutions from membership. But the IFLA Executive was able to negate the central point of the resolution by failing to