

Tom Schwartz – Statement to the HAC

I would have preferred to say farewell personally to the members of the Advisory Committee, but as you know I was denied that privilege. Bob McMahon has agreed to read this statement, and I thank him for this.

Serving on the Historical Advisory Committee has been one of the highlights of my academic career. Especially in my first year it was a real joy to come to Washington for our discussions, and all of you are among my favorite people in the profession. I feel especially honored to have served with a chairman like William Roger Louis, a historian of exceptional brilliance and integrity.

However, I do think the committee must seriously consider the implications of my dismissal. If even the mildest criticism of the Historian's Office yields this response, what is the point of an Advisory Committee, or serving on the Advisory Committee? I also think that those members who represent the professional organizations – the AHA, SHAFR, APSA, ASA, and ASIL – should inform these organizations of the relative powerlessness of the Committee. Should they continue to appoint representatives that would of course be their choice. I am not sure where they would find such scholars, but I would suggest looking in North Korea, which requires the type of subservience and devotion to the Dear Leader that the management of the Historian's Office seems to prefer.