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~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

26 March 1979



MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER

SUBJECT: Use of CORONA Hardware as Smithsonian Exhibit

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum, Subject: Exhibit for Smithsonian Institution,
dated 19 Dec 78 (BYE-4015-78)

Since 1970 we have been interested in transmitting to the Smithsonian Institution phased out reconnaissance satellites that hold substantial historic value. To that end we have saved, in addition to the CORONA hardware that you hold, certain older reconnaissance satellites in storage at Vandenberg. While the issue of when to make the transfer to the Smithsonian arises periodically, classification guidance has thus far prevented release.

Concurrent with President Carter's decision to announce the "fact of" photo reconnaissance satellites was the decision that any and all "facts about" such satellites would remain classified. As such the CORONA hardware is still not an appropriate public display.

I delayed in responding formally to your request pending the outcome of the DCI's studies on declassification of satellite imagery. My thought was that if CORONA products were to be declassified the opportunity for declassifying CORONA hardware would become greater. Last week's NFIB meeting, however, rendered moot that strategy when it recommended against imagery release at this time.

Thus the CORONA, and other items like it, must remain classified with respect to public display.

Hans Mark

Hans Mark

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