



Mr. Walter J. Boyne
Director
National Air and Space Museum
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D. C. 20560

Dear Mr. Boyne,

After carefully considering your request for release of a camera to the National Air and Space Museum for your new exhibit, "Looking at Earth", I must regretfully inform you that I cannot fulfill your request. Best wishes for every success with your new exhibit.

Sincerely,

William J. Casey

Declassified and Released Pursuant to E.O. 13526

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

on NOV 26 1997

DRAFT



STAFF COORDINATION SHEET

TO	ACTION	SIGNATURE (SURNAME), GRADE AND DATE	TO	ACTION	SIGNATURE (SURNAME), GRADE AND DATE
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[REDACTED]

SURNAME OF ACTION OFFICER AND GRADE	SYMBOL	PHONE	TYPIST'S INIT	SUSPENSE DATE
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
SUBJECT: National Air and Space Museum Request for a Satellite Reconnaissance Camera				DATE: 25 May 1984

The National Air and Space Museum submitted a request to the DCI for a "satellite reconnaissance" camera to include in a new exhibit scheduled to open to the public in the spring of 1986 (Tab 1). DDS&T forwarded the request to the Staff (Tab 2) after supplying the DCI with an interim response (Tab 3). There are at least [REDACTED] existing sets of hardware that would be candidates for this request:

- 1) A CORONA Camera mockup at NPIC
 - Late 60's to early 70's technology
 - Built by ITEK/GE
 - Suspected to be the subject of the request

2) [REDACTED]

3) [REDACTED]

4) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

There are several arguments against releasing any hardware:

- While the "fact of" satellite "photoreconnaissance" for use in monitoring arms control agreements is unclassified, satellite reconnaissance for intelligence purposes remains classified by NSDD-42.

(cont'd)

-- While it may be possible to write the history/explanation of the system to stress the arms control purpose, it is not clear whether the Air and Space Museum would accept a DCI mandated statement or write their own version.

-- Even with DCI approved statement, viewers would probably assume the camera also performed an intelligence mission.

-- The CORONA [REDACTED] predate formal arms limitation agreements.

- Unless the demise of the DISCOVERER or SAMOS program were used as the ending date of the program, the continuation of DISCOVERER or SAMOS as "some other program" would be revealed, indicating a "covert" U.S. reconnaissance program, fueling speculation and possible inquiry into the details of that program.

- Appearance of the camera would increase media attention and request for details, as well as FOIA requests for such information as:

- Identity of camera manufacturer
- Type of film
- Release of photography
- More detailed history of program
- Details of current programs/capabilities used to verify treaties

[REDACTED]

- Appearance of hardware may signal to briefed and previously briefed individuals a relaxation of security posture regarding satellite photoreconnaissance activities with resultant increase in media articles, books, speeches about details of U.S. efforts. Current difficulties in maintaining security of satellite reconnaissance activities (i.e., leak problem) argue against release of hardware.

- Appearance of hardware may allow an adversary to fill in gaps in knowledge that remain regarding this program. May falsely signal a change in U.S. policy with regard to satellite reconnaissance.

- There is no tangible benefit to the NRO by release of candidate hardware.

The arguments for releasing this hardware include:

- Documentation of this type of activity for historical purposes.
- Citizen's "right to know" what the Government is doing in space.

To our knowledge, the only previous release of related hardware was the first successful reentry vehicle from DISCOVERER which is on display. The reasons for it's release are believed to be to demonstrate the U.S. technology accomplishment of recovering an object from space. However, the description included with the display is believed to contain the word "Reconnaissance."

Since candidate hardware is being preserved in-place, it will be available at a later date should history and conditions warrant. The attached memorandum to the DCI recommends against release of the camera at this time. Programs A and B concur in this position.



Copy No. [REDACTED]

NOTE FOR: [REDACTED]
Security Officer

SUBJECT: Air & Space Museum's Request for the Release of a Satellite
Reconnaissance Camera

Per our conversation last week, attached is a copy of the Air and Space Museum's request for the release of a satellite reconnaissance camera, and a copy of the DCI's interim reply. I'd appreciate your giving us a ruling on this after coordinating as necessary with OD&E.

[REDACTED] would like us to get a response out as soon as possible. Could you get back in touch with me by 18 May to advise of the status of the request? My secure line is [REDACTED]

Thanks very much.

[REDACTED]
EA/DDS&T

[REDACTED]

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CONTROL SYSTEM ONLY

ADDS PROCESSED
Date Initials [initials]



Executive Registry

62-1811



APR 24 1984

Mr. William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Casey:

The National Air and Space Museum is currently preparing a new exhibit entitled "Looking at Earth" which is scheduled to open to the public in the spring of 1986. The display will trace the development of Earth observations from the earliest balloon photos of the 19th Century, through aerial photography, to today's complex satellite imagery.

One section of the gallery, highlighted by a U-2 aircraft, will deal with reconnaissance. In 1977, Michael Collins, our former Director, discussed with your agency the possibility of our acquisition of a satellite reconnaissance camera. I would like to include the camera or a similar instrument in the exhibit if it would be appropriate to declassify it at this time. I would greatly appreciate any assistance your agency could provide on this matter.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Walter J. Boyne
Director

cc: D. Lopez





Mr. Walter J. Boyne
Director
National Air and Space Museum
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D. C. 20560

Dear Mr. Boyne:

I have asked the Department of Defense to look into the possibility of releasing a camera to the National Air and Space Museum for your new exhibit, "Looking at Earth." As you know, the security implications of declassifying such equipment must be carefully weighed. Rest assured that your request will receive every consideration. I will be back in touch after a decision has been made.

Sincerely,

William J. Casey

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

19 March 1979

NOTE FOR [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Declassification of CORONA

A formal reply to [REDACTED] memorandum is at the right for Dr. Mark's signature. It is self-explanatory. We have informally kept [REDACTED] of NPIC advised as to our actions. Background material, going back to 1970, is attached beneath the [REDACTED] request.

Recommend Dr. Mark sign the letter to NPIC.

[REDACTED]
Colonel, USAF

Action Officer: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Memo from [REDACTED] NPIC, Subj: Exhibit for Smithsonian Institution...Smithsonian has again verbally requested the CORONA display...request NRO Security Staff inspect this hardware to make determination if it should still be classified...believe related photography should not be provided until completion of the current studies on decompartmentation/declassification

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION/STAFF IS WORKING

OK - H.

~~SECRET~~
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CONTROL SYSTEM
N13-B-7
FILE

(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 ([redacted])

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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