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**NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE**

14675 Lee Road  
Chantilly, VA 20151-1715

17 May 2004

John Greenewald, Jr.  
The Black Vault Headquarters

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This is in response to your letter dated 31 March 2004, received in the Information Access and Release Center of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) on 29 April 2004. Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you requested a copy of the "Memo: Aerial Observation of Area 51 . . ."

Your request was processed in accordance with the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended, and Section 502 of the Intelligence Authorization Act of 2003. One document totaling one page was located. This record is being released to you in part. Material redacted is denied pursuant to FOIA exemption (b)(1) as properly classified information under Executive Order 12958, Section 1.4(c); and exemption (b)(3) which applies to information specifically exempt by statute, the National Security Act of 1947, 50 U.S.C. § 403-3(c)(7) which protects intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure.

The FOIA authorizes federal agencies to assess fees for record services. Based upon the information provided, you were placed in the "other" category of requesters, which means that a requester is responsible for charges incurred for duplication in excess of the first 100 pages of document reproduction costs in the processing of this request. You also expressed a willingness to pay all costs. In this case, no fees were incurred.

You have the right to appeal this determination by addressing your appeal to the NRO Appeal Authority, 14675 Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 20151-1715, within 60 days of the above date. Should you decide to do this, please explain the basis of your appeal.

If you have any questions, please call me, Acting Chief,  
Information Access and Release Center, on (703) 227-9128 and  
reference case number F04-0078.

Sincerely,



Linda S. Hathaway



Enclosure:  
Aerial Observation, Area 51

~~SECRET~~

Copy [redacted]

6 April 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR : Acting Chief, DPD  
SUBJECT : Aerial Observation of Area 51

1. John Parangosky and I have previously discussed the advisability of having a U-2 take photographs of Area 51 and, without advising the photographic interpreters of what the target is, ask them to determine what type of activity is being conducted at the site photographed.

2. In connection with the upcoming CORONA shots, it might be advisable to cut in a pass crossing the Nevada Test Site to see what we ourselves could learn from satellite reconnaissance of the Area. This coupled with coverage from the Deuce and subsequent photographic interpretation would give us a pretty fair idea of what deductions and conclusions could be made by the Soviets should Sputnik 13 have a reconnaissance capability.

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JOHN N. McMAHON  
Executive Officer, DPD

Distribution:

[redacted]

This document contains information  
referring to Corona

Declassified and Released by the NRO

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

on NOV 26 1997

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