



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Corona ITEK Collection

2017

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Corona ITEK Collection
Identifier:	NASM.2016.0033
Date:	(bulk 1964-1996)
Creator:	Itek Corporation
Extent:	0.45 Cubic feet ((6 containers))
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Image(s): Corona ITEK Collection

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Peter Brown, Gift, 2016

Preferred Citation

Corona ITEK Collection, Accession 2016-0033, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

In early 1958, a few months after the Soviets launched the first Sputnik, President Eisenhower authorized a top-priority reconnaissance satellite project jointly managed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the US Air Force. It was to launch into orbit a camera-carrying spacecraft that would take photographs of the Soviet Union and return the film to Earth. The secret spy satellite was dubbed Corona by the CIA. To disguise its true purpose, it was given the cover name Discoverer and described as a scientific research program. From 1960 to 1972, more than 100 Corona missions took over 800,000 photographs. As cameras and imaging techniques improved, Corona and other high-resolution reconnaissance satellites provided increasingly detailed information to US intelligence analysts. Dozens of companies and many thousands of people labored in secret to develop and operate the technologies for Corona. One of the companies was ITEK, whose spaceborne panoramic camera design revolutionized photo reconnaissance, allowing the Corona program to be successful.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of the following Corona ITEK items: The Corona Camera System: Itek's Contribution to World Stability by Frank J. Madden; photograph of the Corona-ITEK; "The Item," ITEK's internal employee newsletter, August 1974; agenda for a Corona and ITEK program, 1995; Lens Element #6 drawing; Housing Magazine drawing; Camera Body Frame drawing; Center Frame Weldment drawing; and Ball Screw Assembly drawing.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Cold War
- Espionage
- KH-4 (Corona) Reconnaissance Satellite

Types of Materials:

- Photographs
- Technical drawings