

NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
14675 Lee Road
Chantilly, VA 20151-1715

Director's Note

Number 2005-18

24 August 2005

DECLASSIFICATION OF POPPY PROGRAM

I am pleased to announce a recognition ceremony to honor the key contributors and participants of the Poppy electronic intelligence (ELINT) satellite reconnaissance program on 12 September 2005 at 9:00 a.m. in the J.D. Hill Auditorium at National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) Headquarters. The ceremony will also serve as the official announcement of the declassification of the fact of the Poppy program and selected information about the program.

Poppy was the successor to the nation's first ELINT satellite, known as "GRAB" (Galactic Radiation and Background). Originally developed by the Naval Research Lab, Poppy became a multi-agency system when the NRO was established in 1962, shortly before the satellite's first launch. The Poppy system was designed to detect land based radar emitters and support ocean surveillance. In its seven launches spanning from 1962 to 1971, Poppy made tremendous contributions to the nation's security during an especially perilous era.

A model of a Poppy satellite will be unveiled at the ceremony. All personnel are invited to attend. An exhibit featuring a Poppy satellite and the story of Poppy will be on permanent display in the lobby of Tower 4 in the near future. In addition, all employees should review the forthcoming security guidance and declassification guide to learn what information was declassified.

//signed//
Donald M. Kerr