

Operation Paperclip (Büroklammer)

As is so often the case, events are forgotten and only kept alive when one stumbles across documents relating to them. Among them is one of many stories that have gone down in history and changed the world - including the secret Operation Paperclip carried out by the U.S. after World War II as part of the top-secret military project *Overcast*.

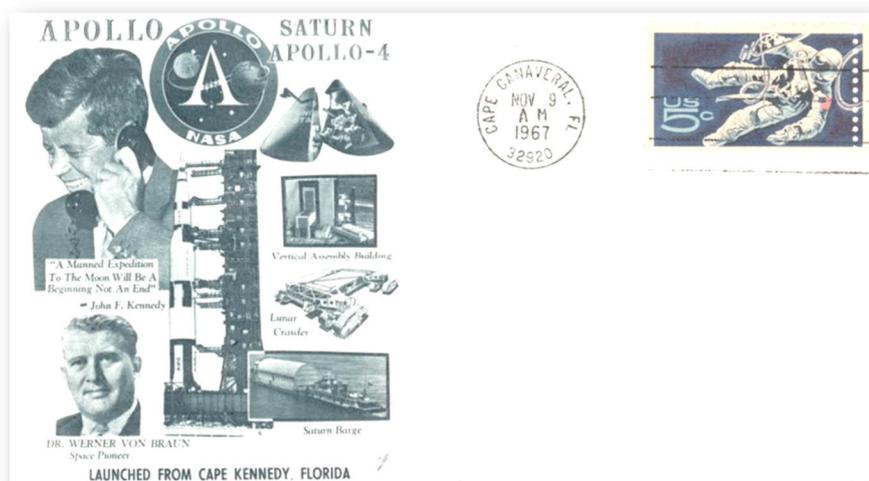
The U.S. realization that leading scientists from Germany had to be prevented from being carried off by the Soviet Russians led to the plan already during the war to capture this group of people after the end of hostilities and to bring them to the USA. Thereby Hitler's weapon systems (wing sweep, glide bombs, anti-aircraft missiles, rocket technology...) are to be used in the homeland of the Americans and the armament gap is to be closed - a gigantic robbery of knowledge begins.

The number of people is to be limited to 450 and the time frame to six months, convicted war criminals are to be excluded. In 1946 it becomes clear that some of them want to stay in the USA and bring family members with them. In addition, relaxations follow: Wernher von Braun's membership in the NSDAP and SS is justified, but technical qualifications remain important. The military-technical self-interest lets forget the inhuman conditions, forced labor and civilian victims of the immigrated Nazis.



St. Vincent and the Grenadines 1994:

- Holger Toftoy: American director of the project
- Kurt Debus: operations manager at Peenemünde - became director of the Kennedy Space Center.
- Arthur Rudolph: co-developer of the A4 rocket - involved in the development of the Pershing rocket in America
- Ernst Stuhlinger: works on control systems for the rockets - became director of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville (Alabama)



Probably the best-known participant in the Paperclip campaign was Wernher von Braun. He was director of the Army Experimental Station in Peenemünde and became the driver of the Apollo program in the USA.

Truman signs a declaration of principles on *the deployment of Austrian and German scientists within the framework of the Paperclip project* - and in October, the American public is informed, which mostly reacts with incomprehension.

100 rocket experts are initially selected from Wernher von Braun's team and accommodated in Landshut and in Bad Kissingen at the Hotel Wittelsbacher Hof. In the end, 127 specialists were selected - many of them had been working at the Army Experimental Station with its attached concentration camp until shortly before; in September 1945, the first of them arrived at White Sands, the experimental site of Fort Bliss. Gradually, about one thousand Germans and Austrians immigrate to the U.S. - in September 1946, President



Im Wittelsbacher Hof in Bad Kissingen werden deutsche Wissenschaftler nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs in Europa festgehalten – Japan ist noch nicht besiegt – die beiden Atombomben sind noch nicht abgeworfen.

With the scientists also the technology comes to the USA, among them several V2 rockets, rocket motors from Peenemünde; until 1951 66 V2 rockets are launched from White Sands, afterwards the launches are transferred to Cape Canaveral, 1958 - under President Eisenhower - the Mercury program begins, whose goal will be a manned flight to the moon.

All the victorious powers had similar goals: Great Britain (Operation Matchbox) tried to recruit naval experts, although the economic situation was not really conducive to imposing a

new forced home on former enemies. The British employed about 200 German scientists at the Buma Works in Australia to perfect fuel

production using the huge lignite deposits there. 160 scientists were deported with their families to the Soviet Union (Aktion Ossa-wakim) to the island of Gorodmlja in 1946; by 1951, about 3,000 had been allowed to return to the GDR. A small group of electronics specialists remained in Moscow and were able to work on the USSR's space program and help make possible the flight of Sputnik.



German Reich 1943
Military knowledge was to be withdrawn - the British also had a program in this regard



Australia 1947
The British use "withdrawn" German scientists to research fuel production by brown coal.

Weiterführende Literatur: Austria-Forum.org Operation Overcast.