

Dr. ADOLF K. THIEL -- interview 10-1-98

* "Dolf" Thiel was among those v.B colleagues who didnt approve of v.B's many efforts to P.R., sell, popularize the early space efforts among the general public, and he ~~is~~ one day he let v.B know it. (As NASA/MSFC historian Mike Wright wrote in Ala.Heritage mag. 2-part article in '98--and as Thiel confirmed & repeated to me in interview--:) "Thiel never forgot von Braun's response: 'He (v.B) said: "We can publish scientific treatises until hell freezes over. But unless we make people understand what space travel is, and unless the man who pays the bills is behind us, nothing is going to happen." ' "

* What was v.B's most outstanding personality trait?
"He was so charming. He charmed the pants off you. And he was absolutely convinced what he was doing was right."

Thiel left Hsv. & the team in spring of 1955. His specialty was guidance & control. He went with TRW Corp., at its Space Technology Lab. subsidiary. Knew Dan Goldin at TRW.

Thiel had been at Darmstadt University (before Peenemuende? Or at start of war?) -- During Peenemuende years, von B. & team worked w/ many scientists/professors at German universities...

* Thiel last saw v.Braun after v.B left NASA. "It was clear he was very disappointed over the way things had gone in Washington." He last saw him when both were visiting Ames Research Center, and they had dinner together.

NASA's George Low was born in Austria (was Jewish). "He resented von Braun."