

46th IAA HISTORY OF ASTRONAUTICS SYMPOSIUM (E4)
History of Italian Contribution to Astronautics (3A)

Author: Dr. Luigi Bussolino
Bussolino and Associates, Italy

PROFESSORE BROGLIO AND THE SAN MARCO PROGRAM

Abstract

The Italian history of space activities is starting thanks to a farsighted aeronautical engineer, university professor as well as inspector of Italian air force Who anticipate the time coming but mainly was able to convince politicians to support him and his ideas in a period of difficulty such that after the second world war And the first years of the new republic. He had also specific capabilities in the field of aeronautics and astronautics , appreciated by people in USA such as Prof. Bruhn and Dr Dryden later coming NASA Director, To convince NASA to provide for free their launchers in support to scientific researches on the upper layers of the atmosphere and launch for them satellites into space. From an ingenious range derived by a marine platform for oil drilling duly transformed in a launch and command center. This was the genesis of "San Marco" project the first Italian program for designing satellites and launching them into space starting from the Wallops Islands American range. First but later on from the range in the sea in front of city of Malindi in Kenia. The Italian technicians was coming so experienced that after the first launch of an Italian Satellite with a Scout launcher from Wallops Islands in December 1964 (at this time Italy was the third power to launch a satellite into space after Russia and United States). Several launches were directly managed by this sea platform. This was the beginning of the "San Marco" project and the apogee of Prof. Broglio who with his capability made Italy able to stay in the range of the main power in the world. The paper will present the detailed story of the SAN MARCO as well as the problems that Prof. Broglio had for imposing his ideas also against the national industries that were not involved in the plans for space activities.