

Krafft Ehrlicke's Vision

The late Krafft Ehrlicke (1917-84), space scientist and passionate advocate for space exploration, summarized his philosophy of astronautics in three laws (1957):

First Law. Nobody and nothing under the natural laws of this universe impose any limitations on man except man himself. Second Law. Not only the Earth, but the entire Solar System, and as much of the universe as he can reach under the laws of nature, are man's rightful field of activity. Third Law. By expanding through the universe, man fulfills his des-

tiny as an element of life, endowed with the power of reason and the wisdom of the moral law within himself.



Krafft Ehrlicke with a model of an orbital hospital.

NASA

The first law is astronautics' challenge to man to write his declaration of independence from *a priori* thinking, from uncritically accepted conditions, in other words, from a past and principally different pre-technological world clinging to him. This can be done. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of this country prove it.

—Cited in Marsha Freeman, *How We Got to the Moon: The Story of the German Space Pioneers* (Washington, D.C., 21st Century Science Associates, 1993), p. 297.