
Book Review

Weapons and liaisons: the spook novel as lie

by Robert Zubrin

Death Beam

by Robert Moss
New York: Crown, 1981
\$13.95 416 pages

Toward the end of March 1981, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and the *Executive Intelligence Review* put out a warning to President Reagan that terrorist networks controlled by British intelligence circles were planning an assassination attempt against the President. Immediately, British Secret Intelligence Services agent Robert Moss and his allies went into high gear to discredit LaRouche, urging the White House to ignore the warnings. Less than a week later, President Reagan was shot.

Now, Robert Moss has come out with a novel projecting that the assassination attempt against the President was carried out by forces associated with Soviet military intelligence. If one comprehends the above information, then one understands all there is to know about Robert Moss and his best-selling spy thriller *Death Beam*. The novel, like the man, is a lie.

Shoveling aside for a moment the mountain of British geopolitical propaganda that weighs the book down like a ton of sin, the plot of *Death Beam* is quite simple. The Soviets, led by the evil Marshal Safronov (who has a claw for a hand), are planning to put a huge neutron-beam weapon into orbit, which they will use to exterminate America and perhaps the rest of the free world. Fortunately, the Mossad has a friend in the East German intelligence service, who joins forces with Israeli intelligence to sabotage the weapon. This discredits Safronov, allowing his opponents in the Soviet KGB to overthrow and execute him, saving the world and allowing the Great Game of geopolitical warfare to continue. According to Moss, the Soviets are inhuman and evil, and the only realistic view of the world is as a struggle for survival between America and the U.S.S.R. This is just an extreme version of the cold-war ideology the British cooked up after World War II in order to recruit the United States to replace Nazi Germany as the British-controlled marcher lord to be sacrificed in a war of mutual annihi-

lation with the Soviet Union. So far, so dull. But a few of the specifics are interesting.

First of all, the "death beam" itself. Aside from the fact that Moss's science is incompetent, since neutron beam weapons are technologically unfeasible and would be incapable of penetrating the earth's atmosphere from space if they were ever put in orbit, it is quite true that an x-ray laser placed in orbit could represent a strategically decisive anti-missile capacity. Such laser systems are considered to be within the near-term capabilities of the Soviet military, while the somewhat further off possibility of an orbiting gamma-ray laser might represent an actual capability for widescale destruction of land areas.

The blockage of U.S. research in these areas does represent a grave threat to America's national security, both because the United States will soon fall behind the Soviet Union in the achievement of the generation of weapons and defensive systems that is to replace the nuclear age, and because of the depressing effects on the civilian economy of national investment decisions that favor "in-width" military production rather than research and development at the frontiers of science.

According to Moss, it is the liberals and the pro-Soviet softies who have stripped America of its advanced military capabilities such as that represented by beam weapons technologies. He is lying. In fact, both the U.S. space program and basic laser research have been systematically wrecked over the past 10 years by no other institution than Robert Moss's Heritage Foundation, and its associated Mont Pelerin Society circle of "fiscal conservatives." To be precise, as recently as last year, Moss's Heritage Foundation went so far as to suggest that the Space Shuttle program be abandoned. If one day Americans face death from the skies, they can blame Robert Moss and his friends.

There is another interesting feature of *Death Beam*. While all the Soviets are evil in Moss's tale, the ones he encourages his readers to root for are in the KGB. To some, the sympathies of the supposedly conservative Moss for the Soviet intelligence service may come as a surprise. Perhaps it has something to do with the commanding role played in that agency by such of Moss's fellow British agents as Kim Philby and Donald Maclean, or with the fact that Moss's Heritage Foundation is riddled with KGB moles, as *EIR* has documented.

Finally, the interesting locales in which Moss places his characters includes the Hotel Carlyle of midtown Manhattan, where *Death Beam* begins. According to persistent and widespread reports, the Carlyle has served as the site for blackmail setups against diplomats and other influentials, sometimes involving the use of young boys. The Carlyle is also reportedly a favorite New York City hotel of Henry Kissinger. Did Moss ever meet Henry at the Carlyle? One of *Death Beam's* sex scenes features an aging KGB agent and a little boy.