



Executive Orders

Tom Clancy

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A runaway Jumbo jet has crashed into the Capitol Building in Washington, leaving the President dead along with most of the Cabinet and Congress. Dazed and confused, the man who only minutes before was confirmed as the new caretaker Vice-President is told that he is now President of the United States.

President John Patrick Ryan

But how do you run a government without a government? Where do you begin? Ryan knows that the eyes of the world are on him now - and many of them are unfriendly. In Beijing, in Tehran and even in Washington, there are those eager to take advantage. Soon they will make their moves; soon they will present Jack Ryan with a crisis so even he could not imagine it.'

Executive Orders Details

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From Reader Review Executive Orders for online ebook

Christopher Slater says

This book is the pinnacle of the Jack Ryan series of novels. We finally see Jack Ryan, reluctantly and tragically, become President of the United States. He hates it, and sees it as a curse. The problem is that he is good at it. The very fact that he doesn't want to be there makes him all the more appealing to the voters in the book and to the reader. Of course, his reluctance is seen as weakness by other world leaders, and some try to take advantage of the situation. Their mistake. This book takes the Jack Ryan series to its ultimate height. As a Tom Clancy fan, I was naturally drawn to this book, but even if I were not a fan, I think this would have been a huge hit with me. Clancy wrote this book, and most before it, with an amazing degree of realism. So much of what happens in the books could easily happen in the real world, and that is what makes them so good. That is also what makes them so complex. Reality is complex, therefore so are Clancy's novels. This particular addition to the series struck just the right balance of politics, intrigue, military adventure, and even science to keep you turning page after page of this massive volume. If you have ever read any of the Jack Ryan novels, then you must read this one. If you have never read one, get one of the earlier ones. Otherwise, Executive Orders will be a bit of a spoiler.

Ed says

I think this is one of Clancy's top 5 novels - right up there along with "Hunt for Red October," "Without Remorse," and "Cardinal of the Kremlin." It describes the first few months of Jack Ryan's presidency, and the challenges he must face as other nations as well as those around him test the new chief executive. These include: trying to rebuild the government after the former President and the entire legislative branch and supreme court are wiped out in the suicide attack which destroyed the capitol; the legal challenge from the recently-resigned Vice President who has decided that he didn't really resign; a kidnap attempt on his toddler daughter, and a terrorist attack using a weapon of mass destruction instigated by a middle-eastern dictator, to name only a few. As if these aren't enough problems, it begins to appear that a full-scale war is brewing which will affect the largest oil-producing region in the world.

This story gives the reader the most comprehensive insight into the character of Jack Ryan, delving into his conscience, his fears, and his relationships with those around him. It is the longest and most complex of Clancy's books to date, but also, without doubt, one of his most engrossing.

Colleen O'grady says

As usual with anything that Tom Clancy writes I am astounded at his breadth of knowledge of world affairs, the political no-how of nations including his homeland of USA. Once again he weaves this knowledge into a gripping tale of espionage, terrorism, fighting to do what is right against all odds. From the first Ryan novel Red October I have followed the efforts of Jack Ryan as an intelligence officer and historian, university lecturer and great thinker. This massive tome has kept me gripped to my seat as I want to know where Clancy will take Ryan and me next. Believe it or not, I have learnt much about the American President and his role for that nation. I am not finished yet of course, but already have given it a five star rating. And now its finished the five star rating remains. Clancy is a gifted story-teller and a great writer. He weaves his various characters together in time and space so I know exactly who is up to what, and eagerly read on to see

what happens next. Take the Mountain Men for example. Raring to go to do a serious mischief in Washington with a souped-up concrete mixture that's almost a time-bomb, and the person they were aiming for, the President, suddenly closes all movements between states because of an horrific infectious disease spreading across America and leaves them stranded. As their 'bomb' had a mixer full of manure, things got a bit smelly of course...great yarn. so now I am going to read Reflections of a Scientist by Henry Eyring. Something completely different

Rosalind says

Reading this was entirely an exercise in reading something that lies way outside my comfort zone. Why is it outside my comfort zone? Well, it's not aimed at me for a start; I'm a woman, and I'm not American. I knew what I was taking on; it's a thriller, by a mega-bestselling author who specialises in a particular kind of macho, flag-waving, Budweiser-swilling, big-dick, patriotic, all-action Americana. There's nothing wrong with that, of course, if the writing's good and knowing that I had every opportunity to avoid reading it in full knowledge of what it was. And besides I don't always conform to type. I love the spy thrillers of John le Carré and while your standard Action Movie leaves me cold (Bond films in particular because actually I'm quite fond of Fleming's original Bond books) I do have a big soft spot for The Dirty Dozen for reasons I've never fully understood. So, I was determined to see this one through.

Anyway, the premise of this 900-page doorstop is something like this. CIA spook and alleged family guy Jack Ryan becomes President by accident after a Japanese airline pilot flies a 747 into a packed Capitol (yes, really!) wiping out both houses of Congress, the Supreme Court and a goodly part of the Washington establishment. Yes, it's a Tea Party wet dream! Meanwhile, in another part of the forest, the demented leader of Iran takes advantage of the situation to take over Iraq and launch an invasion of Saudi Arabia with the wildly improbable cooperation of both India and China. And to complicate things, also attempts to kidnap the president's younger daughter and start an epidemic of haemorrhagic fever amongst America's car salesmen (you feel like shouting "Yay!" at that point)

Ok, it's fantasy stuff (Le Carré always has the ring of authenticity, not least because he was a real spook while Clancy was an insurance salesman) and that's fine if it's well-written. The big problem is that it's *appallingly* badly written. To be fair, Clancy knows his stuff about military hardware and he's obviously done his homework about life in the White House; in fact those are the most interesting bits although still a poor substitute for The West Wing. The rest is just dismal. Violence? I wish there was some. For great stretches nothing happens at all except digressions on Clancyan hobby-horses like why the US tax system needs reform. There's no humanity; we keep being told how much President Ryan loves his family but we never see any evidence; he never takes time to read his youngest a story, or play with his son, or have conflicts with his teenage daughter. In fact by the end of the 900 pages we know hardly any more about the children than we did at the beginning. There's the endless pauses while the author stops to explain some trivial point to his braindead readership (hey, naval parlance still talks about a ship 'steaming' even though a modern ship's engines don't do it that way, isn't that amazing, tell Ripley's Believe It Or Not at once!) Foreigners, of course, are meekly compliant and admiring (Russians, would you believe?) or sinister, devious, comic-book villains (Gadzooks! My master plan has been foiled again by those pesky Americans!).

Worst of all, though, is the sickly sentimentality of it all. The triumph of Mom's Apple Pie, beer and franks at the Ball Game and the Grand ol' Opry, with the mean streets of South Central LA and West Baltimore kept well out of the way in the Free Speech Zone. Hell, they love their President so much there's not a whisper of a protest even when the unelected President Ryan overrides the constitution to impose a ban on crossing state

lines. I can think of one president who'd be glad of a tiny fraction of the cooperation from his truculent nation. And no, I'm not being unpatriotic: the US is a foreign country to me, I'm an alien there (I've been told as much in no uncertain terms) and owe no allegiance to Old Glory.

Ok, it was an experiment, and I'm glad I read it. But I don't think I'll be going back that way any time soon.

Corey says

Holy shit! Not only was this the longest book I've read by Tom Clancy, but the longest book I've read, period! But I quote Yoda from the Star Wars Saga, (Size matters not, judge me by my size, do you?).

Executive Order picks up right where Debt of Honor left off, a jet deliberately crashes into the US Capitol, killing the US President, and thousands of other people. Now Jack Ryan, who was elected Vice President right before the attack and now he's sworn in as the next President of the United States. Now Ryan has to address the Nation and rebuild the Senate and everything else that was long, whilst having to deal with terrorism in Saudi Arabia, and also a deadly Ebola Virus outbreak.

The plot involving the Ebola Outbreak was interesting and at the same time disturbing, I still have to read the non-fiction book The Hot Zone. Towards the end I found myself skipping pages through like the tank battle between the Americans and the terrorists because they kept going back and fourth and I just thought it was more lengthy than it had to be, but other than that, the book was just non-stop thrills.

Right up there with The Hunt for Red October, Patriot Games, and Without Remorse. Classic Tom Clancy! PS, those of you who like Tom Clancy and haven't yet read Debt of Honor yet, I highly recommend reading that one first before picking up Executive Orders.

Jerome says

Jack Ryan and Tom Clancy may have reached their pinnacle of achievement with this book. However, this book is definitely not the place to start the series; as a minimum, The Hunt for Red October, Patriot Games, and Debt of Honor should definitely be read before this book.

Jack, due to the events detailed in Debt of Honor, suddenly finds himself President of the U.S., a position which he never aspired to and in which he feels decidedly uncomfortable. But, good former Marine that he is, he quickly buckles down to the demands of the job - a job that rapidly spawns seemingly endless problems and complications. In detailing these, Clancy weaves an incredible number of sub-plots together: an assassination of the Iraqi President and the amalgamation of that country with Iran, an attempt to kidnap his youngest daughter, a biological attack on the U.S., a heat up of the continuing dispute between the two Chinas, an attempt by the former Vice President to remove Jack from office, and multiple attacks on his integrity by the news media. This is where Clancy shines, as each of these sub-plots is probably strong enough to be a novel in its own right. They all have strong dramatic elements and are not only plausible, but

frightening in just how close they are to events in the real world that have occurred since this book was written - so much so that the notion has been put forth that certain terrorist elements got the ideas for their deeds from this book and Debt of Honor.

Jack is well drawn. His reactions to situations and problems make sense for the type of man he is, and Clancy does a good job of making the reader empathize with him. Most of the other main characters are shown with enough depth to make them real, though it definitely helps if you have read the prior novels in this series, as some of the background for these characters was presented earlier, and is not re-hashed in this book. However, most of the characters are not excessively deep, and it is very clear who are the 'good guys' and who are the 'bad', which perhaps is a good thing in a thriller.

The battle scenes are typical Clancy, filled with a great number (quite accurate) technical details - perhaps too much so, as at times the picture of just what war is really like gets lost in all these details. Also somewhat of a detraction is the fact that the 'good guys' have too easy a time of it; it seems like all their plans are precisely accomplished, with few of the screw-ups and surprises that always happen in real conflicts. Which leads to the other fault with this book - it really is too long, and a fair amount of it could have been cut without losing the impressive tapestry effect.

Some may object to the political viewpoints expressed in this novel, as they are decidedly on the right of the spectrum. But Clancy does a good job of detailing why these viewpoints should at least be given some careful thought by all Americans. Here we find good rationales behind limiting the power of the press under certain circumstances; the necessity for maintaining both a strong military and a strong intelligence network; cases where the power of the President may need to exceed the powers granted by the Constitution; when diplomacy is appropriate versus military action (and just how much diplomacy is dependent on having the military power to back up stated positions). It is just these viewpoints that elevate this book from a blockbuster adventure novel to one with substance. A quick perusal of any newspaper today will show exactly the points Clancy makes here, from the obvious 'slanting' of the reporting to the need for a military that is second to none.

Shane Phillips says

I could not finish this book. 12 hours into the audiobook and I could take no more. I guess I am just not a fan of Clancy's writing. Such quotes as "he loaded the papers into his briefcase, most of them were useless" and a 13 minute diatribe on what secret service agents are thinking. I bet you could edit out 30% of this book and still get the story across.

Don Stanton says

I first read it in 1996 when it came out....My reaction then was ho hum.

I just finished it again. The man was 5 years before 9/11. Wow, did he call it or what?

The things that he speaks about are exactly about what is happening in Europe and America today.

I like very much his style of flipping from entity to entity. It truly gives the perspective of multiple plots running simultaneously. It could be confusing to those with a eighth grade reading ability.

I read one commentary for a non American who probably doesn't read the news or understands what is truly

happening in the world today or her country hasn't been attacked at all since 1996. She ignorantly equates the them of the book to 'The Men at Work' "Macho Macho Man." If she really read this book she would have seen plenty of "Macho Women," from other countries.

I heartedly recommend this book for those with at least an High School education, any background in history that has more than 10 years in depth.

Definitely not for the PETA, Code Pink crowd.

Any of you been to France lately? I have. What a warm a fuzzy feeling it gives me to see two French Policemen with full automatic weapons walking amongst the crowds of passengers at the Gran Tran Gar in Lion. Talk about Macho...

Adam says

The amount of subplots in this book is both Clancy's strength and weakness. Between China, India, the UIR, and Kealty, I wasn't bored for a moment. I actually understood and cared about all of them, always wondering what's going to happen next. This is one of the few Clancy books where the plot is always moving and with relatively few chapters of Clancy spouting techincal jargon.

The action sequences in the book, especially toward the end, were much more like Red Storm Rising than the rest of the Ryanverse, which is good. Thriller books require action.

That said, Clancy still tries to tie up everything way too neatly. The Mountain Men subplot of two bubbas trying to kill the President is tied up at the very end without them even getting close to Ryan. Why include an unnecessary subplot that is killed in the crib? Plus, with 50 pages to go, China, India, the UIR, and Kealty are still problems. 50 pages later, they're wrapped up neatly and anticlimactically. I thought the writing of the Second Gulf War against the UIR was lazy; the US just happened to wipe out the combined armies of Iran and Iraq because...technology? And with the way Clancy likes to hint at what's to come in the next book, Kealty better come back with force because for all his bluster, he quietly defeats himself with no action on Ryan's part.

Ryan's also a mixed bag. I like the fact that for once, he's not the perfect goody two-shoes. He does not know what he's doing, he makes mistakes, and for once people actually think badly of Ryan which makes it better when he proves them wrong. The constant praise of Ryan in the previous books was grating.

But still, he is prone to his speeches and whining about morality and justice. A constant theme is "Ryan isn't like most politicians, he has feelings and values." Snore. That gets old really quick. And for God's sake, please stop with the supporting characters who are supposed to betray Ryan but can't because he's so gosh-darn wonderful (Holtzman, Ben Goodley, Ritter, etc.)

Also, I have no idea why Tom Clancy thinks that people won't trust Ryan because "he's killed people." We had no problem trusting Teddy Roosevelt, JFK, or George HW Bush. Roger Durling was trustworthy enough in Debt of Honor. But Clancy trots these strawman arguments like they're revelations of the supposedly super liberal society we all live in.

And speaking of liberal society, Ryan's speeches are all GOP/libertarian talking points. Yeah, Ryan says he's an independent. I think it's clear what party Clancy is really batting for. I don't care that Ryan is a closet Republican, I mind that his GOP talking points are passed off as independent. We get it, Clancy, you love

Reagan.

Still, I give it 5 stars because it had me on the edge of my seat the whole time. I hope Bear and the Dragon proves to be as good.

Matthew says

This was a 1358 page book - but it never felt slow and I was enthralled throughout.

While sometimes Clancy's military maneuver segments were a bit over my head, they were interspersed with enough other action to keep it moving.

A big thing I noticed about this book is that even though it was written in 1996, Clancy had a few plot lines that seemed like Nostradamus-esque foreshadowing to 20 years later.

Stewart Sternberg says

Tom Clancy believes in flat tax, military growth, keeping the judiciary constructionist, limited government, and reeling in a destructive liberal media.

How do I know this? Clancy spends pages on boring polemic doing his best Ayn Rand impression. What a sludge!

Oh, and this over thousand pages of text features an absurd number of characters and enough plots to choke Godzilla. There's an attempt on kidnapping his daughter, an attempt by Iran to take over Saudi Arabia, a case of weaponized Ebola, a group of militia determined to blow something up in Washington, a secret service agent who is a sleeper, the reconstruction of the government after its destruction, an attempt by a corrupt VP to wrestle power away..
..tired yet?

This novel was a mess. Period. A colossal disappointment.

Nolan says

In some ways, I hesitate to write about this book because it's been out so long that everyone who will read this kind of thing already has.

Master spook Jack Ryan has been sworn into the presidency minutes after a massive terrorist-sponsored explosion destroys the U.S. capitol building, killing nearly all of the members of Congress and the president. Ryan had been named vice president minutes earlier when a political scandal forced the resignation of the former vice president.

This is an edge-of-the-chair tapestry—not merely a story, but a veritable tapestry of plots and subplots—all dealing with how Ryan restores the government against huge odds while international powers seek to destroy

the nation from without.

This is a book that includes numerous subplots, and you jump from one to another instantly and without warning. If you let your mind wander during this one, you will miss crucial bits of information on which hangs the rest of the book. It will require your full concentration, and you'll have no problem proffering that, so well written is this book.

Clancy crafts this so as not to offend his readers too much; they won't agree with every decision Jack Ryan makes or every policy to which he ascribes, but it's written such that regardless of which side of the aisle you're comfortable being on, you'll cheer for the beleaguered president and those who want him to succeed.

There are horrifying graphic scenes in the book. You'll learn with chilling tension how easy it is for a terrorist to introduce deadly viruses into the nation. The horrors of Ebola are described graphically here. I read this while battling a respiratory thing, and it only served to heighten my sense of terror at the ease by which Ebola was introduced into the nation and the description of the disease's impact on various organs.

These plotlines are intricately woven. The military scenes here are classic Clancy. The descriptions are riveting and concise, and you can easily picture the battles in your mind.

As I wrote above, most of you who like this kind of fiction will have long, long ago read this. I feel sorry for people who perfunctorily write off Clancy's books. These are studies in intricacy, character development, and thought-provoking scenarios that will keep you up with your mind churning. I have to admit that I've been a bit jumpy at work the last couple of days. Any time someone sneezed or coughed, I found myself instantly asking, only partly in jest, whether this was the beginning of the new plague that is really only an airplane ride away from any of us.

If you've always intended to read this one-time bestseller turned military fiction classic, perhaps now is as good a time as any to do it. Clancy drops the F-bomb here several times, and the name of God is taken in vain rather frequently, as you might expect in a book whose characters are stressed-out military types. But it will remain with me for a long time to come.

Paul Hollis says

1358 pages yes 1358 of Tom Clancy and now the nightmare is finally over!!

This book took me a year to read, not because of its length but because it's incredibly boring for loooong stretches, I would set it aside for months at a time.

The beginning was good and the ending (the last 300 pages was gripping) but to get there you have to get through a 1000 pages of of the main character Jack Ryan, now president, whining and complaining about being president and the political process(if there was ever any doubt where Clancy stands, he makes it pretty obvious). Every few pages Ryan complains about the bad day he's had blah blah blah and bums smokes from people(come'on he's the pres somebody buy him a pack already!!)

Clancy threw in everything but the kitchen sink in this book, it's just too much.

This book is a perfect example of what is wrong with book publishing in the past decade. Editors (remember them?) are now afraid to say no to the big brand name authors and let them get away with some horrendous decisions. This book could easily have been cut in half and nothing missed. Or better yet made in 2 books.

C says

As I plowed my way through this during the past two months, west Africa experienced an explosion in Ebola Virus Disease, and ISIS started beheading Americans and Brits and committing genocide over in Mesopotamia. And, of course, there's the whole airplane-as-bomb prescience, for this book was written before 9/11.

Clancy was brilliant at laying out how possibilities can become realities in the area of foreign conflicts, and his books are very interesting except when I don't understand the vocabulary (sorry, I don't even know what AWAC stands for...I think it's a plane, though...). He also liked to give us satisfying comeuppances for the villains; sadly, such endings are not often realistic.

It would sure be wonderful if the current real-life Ebola epidemic would behave like Clancy's fictional outbreak. God speed an effective vaccine!

Oh, and did anyone else think of "Yes, Minister", the British comedy, while reading some of the interaction between Arnie Van Damm and Jack Ryan? :)

Brett says

This book is a serious contender for worst book I have ever read that is not by Dean Koontz. It is an excruciating almost 1400 pages of awful dialogue, shocking misunderstanding of politics, simplification of international affairs, right-wing propaganda, and the utter ruination of a once enjoyable, if kind of silly, character--Jack Ryan.

Maybe back in 1996, some people could be fooled by Clancy's ideas, but after the disastrous presidency of George Bush Jr., whose policies and thought process are often similar to Ryan's in this novel, this book is completely without credibility. When I would see it laying on my coffee table out of the corner of my eye, I kept mistaking "Clancy" for "Cheney". That should tell you everything you need to know about this one.
