

The Terror of Tyrants

Peter S. Fischer

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Blurring the line between fact and fiction has long been a popular device in doomsday novels, and television veteran Peter S. Fischer chillingly bridges that divide in his political thriller *The Terror of Tyrants*. The premise: A corrupt government controls the major media (“an informed public is a dangerous public,” says one of the higher-ups), implements executive orders without congressional approval, confiscates all firearms, fines and imprisons anyone who criticizes the administration, disables national telecommunications, and orchestrates a fake terrorist attack on a California coastal community in order to declare martial law, seize property, and authorize assassinations.

Fischer skillfully uses the platform of fiction to express his beliefs that America’s foundations of liberty have never been under greater attack than by an administration that embraces socialist ideals, a message which will resonate with his target demographic of readers whose fears of, and anger toward, government are escalating. While this topical story line is not intended to appeal to liberals, the historical context in which Fischer alludes to Hitler’s calculated rise to power and the evolution of fascism in other countries invites serious contemplation.

An incriminating tape, a pulse-pounding chase through the District, and two former colleagues brought together in a dark race against time—one of them near death from radiation poisoning—create an excellent showcase for Fischer’s skills with lean dialogue, plausible pacing, and compelling imagery. He writes, “Fighting the wind and the ever-strengthening rain, the little Cessna plowed ahead, clawing at the turbulence as it tried to maintain speed and altitude.” As with his earlier book, *The Blood of Tyrants* (2009), Fischer demonstrates a combined knowledge of Washington insider politics, military history, sociology, and psychology. His protagonists and antagonists are multilayered and respectively ignite the reader’s sympathies and abhorrence.

The author is not shy in his attempts at drawing parallels to the current president of the United States and to present-day national affairs. An image-conscious commander in chief asks his makeup and wardrobe people just before a speech, “How do I look? Denzel or Danny Glover?” A female police chief reflects on the sober realities of an economy unable to sustain its massive spending, 13-percent unemployment, and a collapsing government structure. One can also not ignore Fischer’s chronological account of President Obama’s first term, including that the novel’s president “managed to pass a health care bill formulated to effectively doom the country to a Socialist design.” Readers with political views similar to Fischer’s will find much to grab onto here.

From cover to cover, *The Terror of Tyrants* delivers sinister speculations, nonstop action, gripping game-changers, and no shortage of twists, all of which make this title mystery writing at its finest.

CHRISTINA HAMLETT (February 28, 2013)

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