

This book is a work of fiction, nothing more. It is inspired by *Seven Days in May*, written by Fletcher Knebel and Charles W. Bailey ~~and published in~~ (1962). The story ~~concerns-is about~~ American military members and ~~some~~ politicians ~~plotting~~ to take over the government to stop the president from engaging in nuclear disarmament talks with the Soviet Union. Even as a young ~~aspirant with an eye on a military career~~, I found the premise far-fetched. The American military, after all, has a long and proud history of staying out of politics and yielding, without question, to civilian authority as prescribed by the U.S. Constitution.

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~~That does not mean~~ However, there have ~~not~~ been incidents where some in uniform ~~thought about-considered~~ taking steps to correct what they saw as wrong-headed decisions by the government they served. The most well-known ~~example~~ occurred on March 15, 1783, when officers of the Continental Army met to discuss plans to march on Philadelphia and force the Continental Congress to redress their grievances. In an act of selfless courage that exemplified his skills as a leader of men, General ~~George~~ Washington ~~was able to~~ put an end to ~~all their~~ thoughts of rebelling against Congress. ~~He did it by the simple means of~~ reaching into his pocket to retrieve a pair of spectacles to read a ~~recent~~ letter ~~he'd recently received~~ from Congress to the mutinous officers. When ~~he~~ Washington saw the expression on the faces of those who were ~~not aware~~ ~~unaware~~ he needed spectacles, he ~~is said to have~~ stopped to apologize, ~~saying~~ ~~remarking~~, "Gentlemen, you must permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown old and grey, but almost blind in the service of my country."

The idea that a group of general officers, no matter how well-meaning or powerful they were, could ~~bring down~~ ~~overthrow~~ the government of the United States on their own is ~~in my opinion~~, laughable. ~~That~~ But perhaps it's possible ~~does not mean~~ the ~~government of the~~ United States ~~government~~ could ~~not~~ be subverted from within. In the Nobel Prize winner's 1935 novel *It Can't*

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*Happen Here*, Sinclair Lewis tells of a U.S. president who ~~having assumed~~ assumes dictatorial powers, ~~and~~ is challenged by a revolt ~~in which from~~ a large portion of the Army ~~defects~~ defecting to the rebel cause. The premise upon which he based his book is the often forgotten fact that Adolf Hitler came to power ~~just three years before the book's publication by~~ using the electoral process specified in the short-lived Weimar Republic's Constitution. This happened about three years before the book's publication in 1935.

My story is, as I said, ~~is~~ a work of pure fiction. ~~Though I~~ have not worn a uniform in ~~over~~ more than twenty-four years, but I still stand by the oath of office I took when I received my commission on May 9, 1974, in Cadet Chapel at the Virginia Military Institute. This oath obligated me and every officer who has served this country for more than two hundred years to defend the U.S. Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

HW Coyle

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