

Advise and Consent Study Guide

Advise and Consent by Allen Drury

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Plot Summary

“Advise and Consent” is a political drama novel by Allen Drury. It was first published in 1959. It recounts the confirmation process surrounding the President’s controversial nomination to Secretary of State, Robert A. Leffingwell. Senator Bob Munson, Majority Leader, unexpectedly learns of Leffingwell’s nomination through the news media, having had no previous notification from the President, also of the Majority party. Leffingwell has the support of many in the Majority party, especially the liberal wing. Most notable in his support is Senator Fred Van Ackerman. Some conservatives line up against Leffingwell, while some members of the Minority party wish to learn more about him before making up their minds. Chief in opposition to Leffingwell is the very conservative Minority Senator Seabright Cooley of South Carolina.

No matter where Senators fall on Leffingwell, nearly all are perplexed by the President’s desire to rush the nomination through confirmation and how little the President has consulted with anyone. Nevertheless, Munson falls in line to rally the Senators. He believes he will have more than enough votes to get Leffingwell through. The media is nearly completely behind Leffingwell. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to consider the nomination. A subcommittee is formed to specifically question and discuss Leffingwell. Senator Brigham Anderson is put in charge. Anderson, of the Majority, has serious reservations about Leffingwell’s liberal attitudes toward foreign policy.

During the subcommittee hearings, even members of the Majority are dismayed to learn that Leffingwell emerges as a candidate determined to achieve peace at any price. He is willing to make serious concessions to the Russians to do this. When asked where he would draw the line, Leffingwell will not say. Leffingwell goes on to stun even more members of the subcommittee when he says that he will never advise the President to go to war unless the United States is attacked first. This is too much for many members of the Majority, who believe all cards should be on the table when dealing with the Communists.

As the hearings unfold, evidence is brought forth regarding Leffingwell’s past as a professor at the University of Chicago. A telegram has been received which states that Leffingwell was a member of a small Communist cell determined to bring Communism to America. The telegram’s author, Hebert Gelman, appears before the subcommittee to testify that he was also a member of this cell. Leffingwell cross-examines Gelman, saying Gelman cannot be trusted due to Gelman’s history with nervous breakdowns. Gelman argues that another man, James Morton, could prove Leffingwell’s membership. Between Gelman’s evidence and Leffingwell’s submissive attitude toward the Communists, Anderson emerges as one of Leffingwell’s chief opponents. Anderson believes the past is important, but it can only be forgiven if the individual is genuinely apologetic. Leffingwell is not apologetic, but he argues he loves the United States and will see her through challenging times.



Cooley manages to track down James Morton. The President and Leffingwell's closest supporters realize they are in trouble. Liberal Supreme Court Associate Justice Tommy Davis, a backer of Leffingwell and friend of Anderson, steals a photograph from Anderson. The photograph is of Anderson and another man in Honolulu while Anderson was on leave during World War II. While the particulars of the photograph and its accompanying inscription are not revealed in the novel, it is compromising enough for Davis to ascertain that Anderson had a brief homosexual liaison. Davis gives the photo to Munson, who is enraged that Davis would stoop to such levels. Munson himself, however, refuses to destroy the photo. He hands it over to the President when the President learns of its existence from Davis.

Anderson is then threatened with exposure by Ackerman over the weekend if he does not back down from opposing Leffingwell. Each threat gets worse until Anderson's wife is told the truth. Cooley and a few others learn the truth of the situation. The very conservative Cooley vows to stand by Anderson no matter what. Anderson, knowing he morally cannot back down from Leffingwell, sorry for his past, and horrified at what will become of his wife and daughter in the scandal that will undoubtedly ensue, commits suicide. His death rocks the country. The President, Munson, and Davis all realize what they have done.

Cooley and Majority Senator Orrin Knox then move to destroy Ackerman and defeat the nomination of Leffingwell. In his second term, the President plays his final card. He will back Knox for President in the coming election. Knox rejects this offer. Ackerman is censured by the Senate as Knox becomes the principal Majority party player and top opponent to Leffingwell. Working with Vice President Harley Hudson, Cooley, and numerous others, Knox manages to defeat Leffingwell's nomination overwhelmingly. That night, the President suffers a massive heart attack and dies. Hudson becomes President and names Knox as Secretary of State. Knox is speedily confirmed. He and an American delegation travel to meet with the Russians in Geneva.



Part I: Bob Munson's Book

Summary

Chapter 1 – Fifty-seven year-old U.S. Senator from Michigan, Robert “Bob” Durham Munson, Senate Majority Leader, wakes up in his room at the Sheraton-Park Hotel in Washington, D.C., to learn through the Washington Post and Times Herald that the President has named Robert “Bob” A. Leffingwell to be Secretary of State. Munson is stunned because he has been working closely with the President to steer his programs through the Senate, and the President has not bothered to tell Munson about Leffingwell. Munson cannot understand why the President would choose a controversial figure like Leffingwell. Munson also knows that there will be tough opposition from Senator Seab Cooley of South Carolina to Leffingwell’s nomination.

Munson calls the President. The President defends Leffingwell, saying he has a good brain, good character, and tremendous ability. He is the best administrator in government. The President also contends he has been considering Leffingwell for six months. Munson points out that Leffingwell is not well-liked and Seabright “Seab” B. Cooley will oppose the nomination. Munson explains he himself would have opposed Leffingwell if given the choice. The President contends this is exactly why Munson was not informed. Munson then calls Minority Leader Warren Strickland in Silver Spring, Maryland. Strickland reveals that there will probably be between at least seventeen and twenty nay votes against Leffingwell –including Strickland himself. Munson believes the whole process will take some three weeks.

Munson calls Senate Majority Whip Stanley Danta of Connecticut. His daughter, Crystal, answers, agreeing to have lunch with Munson and speaking briefly of her approaching wedding with Hal Knox, son of Senator Orrin Knox. Senator Danta then gets on the phone. He agrees to feel out their party’s senators. Munson wants Danta and Senator Knox to come for lunch as well. Knox is considered a loose cannon, but a good man. Munson then calls Leffingwell who will not come to the phone. Instead, Leffingwell tells his maid to tell Munson there will be a press conference at ten-thirty. Munson knows that Leffingwell won’t speak to him because Leffingwell gives the appearance of being above the political fray. It aggravates Munson who reflects on Leffingwell’s last post in the previous administration as chairman of the Federal Power Commission. Even Senator Brigham Anderson of Utah, known for his patience, had gotten fed up with Leffingwell during the appointment process.

Munson reflects on Leffingwell’s aspects. He is liberal. Most of the media loves him and defends him. He is easily able to sway public opinion. As powerful as Leffingwell is with the public, Seab Cooley is with the Senate. Munson then calls the aged Cooley. Cooley is ready to go to war over Leffingwell primarily over an insult thirteen years before when Leffingwell called Cooley a liar in an open committee meeting. Cooley can’t understand why the President would nominate Leffingwell. Munson says he can’t, either. Cooley ends up hanging up on Munson.



Chapter 2 – Munson goes downstairs to visit with Senator Victor Ennis of California, and his wife, Hazel. Ennis explains that his colleague, Hollywood darling junior Senator Raymond Robert Smith, is for Leffingwell, as is Hollywood. Meanwhile, junior Senator Lafe W. Smith of Iowa is having a sexual affair with a young female clerk on the House committee. Over in Chevy Chase, junior Senator Walter F. Calloway of Utah is rehearsing his opposition to Leffingwell while his wife makes breakfast. Junior Senator Powell Hanson of North Dakota, staying in Georgetown, begins the morning by playing the violin for his children at their request while his wife, Elizabeth, prepares breakfast. There are some twenty-one senators who stay in Georgetown –the “Georgetown Group” –including thoughtful Elizabeth Ames Adams of Kansas, noisy Kenneth Hackett of Wisconsin, gracious John Able Winthrop of Massachusetts, and others.

Taylor Ryan of New York, Murfee Andrews of Kentucky, Rhett Jackson of North Carolina, and Julius Welch of Washington state consider economic arguments for the coming debates. Not everyone is in Washington. Royce Blair of Oregon is preparing for an address to the Portland Kiwanis Club, while Tom August of Minnesota is on vacation in South Carolina. The first senator to comment on Leffingwell is Hugh B. Root of New Mexico in Albuquerque, as he heads for a plane for Washington, D.C. Root says he opposes Leffingwell, and that the Senate should not waste its time and energy on such a stupid nomination. Senator James H. La Rue of New Jersey, battling cerebral palsy is next to speak to the press, opposing Leffingwell’s nomination based on Leffingwell’s views on world affairs.

In a plane over the Atlantic heading to the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in Stockholm, John DeWilton of Vermont, Henry H. Lytle of Missouri, Alec Chabot of New Hampshire, and Leo P. Richardson of Florida receive news of Leffingwell. Richardson appears to be the only passenger on the plane fully in support of Leffingwell. Lytle worries about the fate of the Israelis while DeWilton worries about his own political fate. Meanwhile, Harold Frye of West Virginia and Clarence Wannamaker of Montana discuss Leffingwell with the wives of the British and French ambassadors, Kitty Maudulayne and Celestine Barre. Junior Senator Fred Ackerman of Wyoming is sleeping in after a Madison Square Garden night rally for COMFORT, the Committee on Making Further Offers for a Russian Truce. Courtney Robinson, senior Senator of New Hampshire, is annoyed with the President’s choice, knowing it will cause a mess.

Brigham Anderson calls Orrin Knox about Leffingwell. Knox is opposed to Leffingwell. Anderson says he agrees with Leffingwell on some things, but not on others. Both men worry about the press’s reaction to their probable opposition. They, like all the members of the Senate, know that they will soon have the responsibility to determine not only Leffingwell’s fate, but the fate of the country and the fate of the world.

Chapter 3 – In the lobby of the Sheraton-Park, Munson and Ennis say good morning to Cooley. Ennis explains that Leffingwell’s nomination has them worried. Their offer to share a cab to the Old Senate Office Building on Delaware Avenue with Cooley puts Cooley in a good mood, and he happily says hello to passersby as they leave. During the drive, Munson reflects on how his grandfather served in the Senate. Munson himself is a former gubernatorial candidate and U.S. Congressman. Munson is a widower, his



wife May gone six years before from cancer. She had been a dutiful political wife and ally. While their marriage was not passionate, Munson had never strayed. At the Senate Building, Cooley pays for the cab.

In his current role as Majority Leader, Munson has seen the beauty of America as he has traveled around for political reasons and speaking engagements. He knows the American people seem uncertain of the future because of the Cold War and atomic weapons. Liberals have been too weak and given away too much to the Russians, while conservatives have often been too strong and unyielding. The press has been too lazy; the scientific community has been too arrogant and uncaring; and, the military has been beset by internal jealousy. Munson believes that everyone is to blame. He also believes that America has been given grace by God. In the present moment, Munson sees the Cold War less as a choice between survival and death, but dying sooner or dying later. Leffingwell will be instrumental in the state of the nation and the state of the world. The responsibility of the Senate in determining his fitness and position will be critical.

Chapter 4 – Munson arrives at his office. He regularly works days as long as eighteen hours. Munson knows that as the majority party, he can count on about thirty votes on almost any issue. He must round up another twenty or thirty depending on the situation. Senators act based on idealism and personal ambition, and Munson will have to bargain based on this. The bargaining that will come has five principal players: The President of the United States, The Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, the Speaker of the House, and the Minority Leader. Lafe Smith, meanwhile, realizes the Midwest will not go for Leffingwell.

Dolly Harrison, socialite millionaire widow of Phelps Harrison and resident of Georgetown, prepares for a party that night at her home, Vagaries. She knows important things are always discussed at her parties. She is thrilled about the timing of the President's decision to finally name Leffingwell the replacement to Secretary of State Howie Sheppard. Meanwhile, the President of General Motors in Detroit calls Senator Roy B. Mulholland to argue against Leffingwell's nomination. He tells him that GM will be watching him and Munson. Fry, in New York, runs into a member of the Saudi delegation. The Saudis wonder if American policy toward the Middle East will change with Leffingwell. Fry explains that it will. Krishna Khaleel, Indian ambassador, speaks with Fry on Leffingwell, calling Leffingwell an interesting man. Khaleel says that his appointment, like human nature, could be both good and bad. Fry is annoyed at Khaleel.

Bob meets with Mary Hastings, his administrative assistant, to dictate a form letter to gauge the reaction of the people to Leffingwell. Word comes that Leffingwell has canceled his press conference due to a touch of the illness. On his way to a committee, the press asks Brigham Anderson what he thinks of Leffingwell. Anderson says that although he has concerns about Leffingwell, he will not take an official position yet until all aspects are explored. Meanwhile, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Thomas "Tommy" Buckmaster Davis is on the phone with the general director of the Washington Post, telling him that liberals must give their total support to Leffingwell. He wants the Post to endorse Leffingwell. Other papers refuse to endorse or reject Leffingwell



outright, telling the Senate to do their job carefully. The United Auto Workers president calls Munson to encourage him to back Leffingwell, saying they are both willing to help and will be watching.

Vice President Harley Hudson is upset that the President hasn't told him about the nomination of Leffingwell. Tom August, head of the Foreign Relations Committee, tries to make Hudson feel better. Hudson relates how he has been waking up in the middle of the night, worried it is a premonition. Vasily Tashikov puts together a briefing cable to be sent to Moscow about unidentified actions that should be taken if Leffingwell is confirmed. British Ambassador Lord Claude Maudalayne tells his wife Kitty that he is not registering his opinion on Leffingwell to keep people guessing. Leffingwell is too much of an unknown for the French ambassador, Raoul Barre. Barre is troubled by this, as is Maudalayne.

Munson discusses Leffingwell with Dolly. He knows that if the British and the French are unhappy with Leffingwell, and the Russians are happy with him, there is a problem. Meanwhile, press members stalk the halls seeking opinions on Leffingwell. They find Cooley and Orrin Knox in a heated argument on an issue of economics. They do not interrupt. After the press moves on, Knox reminds Cooley that his opposition to Leffingwell must be more than just personal. Word comes from the President of a special committee meeting to be held the following day featuring an appearance by Leffingwell, and a confirmation vote to come in the Senate on Monday afternoon. Munson is perplexed that the President thinks the issue will be solved over the weekend but agrees to try anyways.

Chapter 5 – The press speaks with Strickland and Munson, asking them where they stand on votes for Leffingwell. Munson explains that they have some. Strickland says that Leffingwell will ultimately be confirmed, but that there will be a long debate on the subject because of the serious times in which they live. The Senate Chaplain, Reverend Carney Birch, convenes the Senate. Harley Hudson tells Munson that the President can count on him. Attendance is called and business begins. Munson, Knox, and Danta meet with Hal and Crystal for lunch. Knox is pressed for support with respect to Leffingwell. Crystal tries to redirect the conversation to the wedding, but the appearance of Brigham Anderson stops this. Anderson and Knox both decide to cancel weekend plans for the special committee.

Back in the Senate, Munson seeks a unanimous-consent on the pending Federal Reserve bill. Senator Paul Hendershot counters that the problem with the Senate is rushing through everything. Munson insists that no one is trying to rush anything through. Hendershot wonders what the point is behind Leffingwell's nomination. Munson recognizes Cooley's influence behind Hendershot. Cooley himself then questions Leffingwell's nomination. Lafe Smith then questions Cooley's questioning of the President's nomination. Cooley insists the President should give them a patriotic American for Secretary of State, and earns a round of applause from visitors in the gallery. Munson reminds the Senate that serious consideration, not dramatic speeches, are needed in this instance. Anderson agrees, saying they must consider the nominee himself. Cooley goes on to call Leffingwell evil and says that he must be rejected.



Off the floor, Charles Abbott of New Hampshire offers support to Munson if Munson can guarantee an atomic subcontract for the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Powell Hanson is enraged at Cooley's rhetoric. Munson promises support to Cecil Hathaway of Delaware, Ed Parrish of Nevada, and Rhett Jackson of North Carolina in exchange for their backing on Leffingwell. Winthrop of Massachusetts thinks Cooley is overdoing it. Munson continues to seek out votes and support.

Chapter 6 – The night comes with the promise of snow. Dolly begins receiving guests, including Bob Munson and Khaleel. Khaleel tells Munson that India is generally for Leffingwell, with some reservations. Only in time will the Indian government fully make up its mind. Munson then seeks out Howard Sheppard, outgoing Secretary of State, and his wife Grace. Munson compliments Sheppard on his performance. Sheppard opposes Leffingwell, but Munson baits Sheppard with a promise for the soon-to-open post of Special Ambassador to the UN if Sheppard backs Leffingwell. This enrages Sheppard, who wants no part of backroom politicking. Munson strongly encourages Sheppard to think it over. The French and British ambassadors are sought out by Munson for their opinions on Leffingwell. Khaleel joins them, as well as a handful of U.S. Senators. When Munson sends for the Russian ambassador, all are surprised.

Vasily Tashikov joins the group. Senator Fry mixes drinks for them. It is revealed that all governments have some doubts about Leffingwell, but the Russian opinion is still not known. Khaleel argues that the Indian government sees no reason to distrust the Soviets. This stuns the American Senators. Tashikov then says that they believe there will be no difference between Sheppard and Leffingwell. Munson suggests that the United States might try a move at accommodation with the Soviets under Leffingwell. This interests Tashikov who later tells his government that the Americans are softening. Lafe Smith seeks out an attractive young lady at the party to go home with.

Chapter 7 – A special Saturday meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee is called by Tom August. The Herald Tribune carries word of the conclave at Dolly's party okaying the Leffingwell nomination. Munson will not confirm or deny this to curious members of the press. Senator Arly Richardson asks Munson about events as well since he was absent due to a meeting with the Federal Trade Commission. Richardson is undecided on Leffingwell. August calls to order the meeting. Sheppard is called as the committee's first witness. Sheppard explains he has had frequent encounters with Leffingwell, and that Leffingwell is fit for the office.

August gives a biographical sketch of Leffingwell. He is a native of Binghamton, New York, attended the University of Michigan, Harvard Law School, taught public administration, ultimately rising through various appointments to the Federal Power Commission, various international groups, is married to Louise Maxwell, has a son and daughter with her, and resides in Alexandria, Virginia, with no political party affiliation. Sheppard then answers various questions on Leffingwell, saying NATO governments approve of him, is a good administrator, and that Leffingwell is loyal as anything to the United States. Anderson asks questions about the nomination selection, wanting to know what other names were suggested to the President by Sheppard. August says such a list of names is not in the interest of the committee. Anderson goes on to



question Leffingwell's views on the Soviet Union. Sheppard says that Leffingwell also believes in neither being too casual or too strict with the Soviets.

A letter from Leffingwell is then read. The letter explains that Leffingwell will be happy to appear in person and that some of the views he expresses should be done in executive session because they involve sensitive and secret information. A vote is then called for executive sessions. By a margin of one, the committee opts for a closed session. Cooley then bursts into the room, saying he and many others would like to testify. Cooley agrees to a subcommittee to do this.

Analysis

"Advise and Consent" is a political drama novel by Allen Drury, first published in 1959. It recounts the confirmation process surrounding the President's controversial nomination to Secretary of State, Robert A. Leffingwell. Such is the nature of politics, which becomes a dominant and consistent theme throughout the novel. Bob Munson unexpectedly learns of Leffingwell's nomination through the news media, having had no previous idea that such a change was going to occur. To the reader, this rightfully appears strange the President, a member of the Majority party, should not consult with Majority leaders, or enlist their help prior to nominating a Majority individual for Secretary of State. The President's desperate rush to get Leffingwell confirmed is noteworthy.

The novel begins as Munson begins to rally the troops and strategizes how best to confirm Leffingwell. The party must stand by their President. While party names are not explicitly given, the philosophical adherences of characters are clearly modeled on American political parties. The President, Munson, and the Majority are Democrats, with many of them being liberal. Cooley and the Minority are Republicans, with many of them being conservative. Some, like Cooley, are very conservative. Others, like Ackerman, are very liberal. A far larger number, like Anderson and Knox, appear to be conservative on some issues, but liberal on others. Political philosophy will have its strongest bearing on the Leffingwell nomination process and the Cold War hostilities. Ackerman immediately lines up behind the liberal Leffingwell; Cooley immediately moves to oppose him.

Munson appears to initially have all the advantages when it comes to Leffingwell's nomination. Leffingwell is liberal, the media is largely liberal, and the Majority party is left-of-center. The public at large approves of Leffingwell, who also has unflinching support from the President and organizations like COMFORT. It appears at first as if Leffingwell, despite his elitist tendencies as an academic, will be a foregone conclusion. Indeed, Cooley –who first appears as Leffingwell's principal opponent –has no major qualm against Leffingwell apart from the liar incident.

Despite political differences, the members of the U.S. Senate get along quite well. Here, friendship emerges as an important theme. Munson (chiefly responsible for getting Leffingwell confirmed) and Cooley (chiefly concerned with getting Leffingwell rejected)



share friendship and a cab ride to the Senate Office Building. Members of both the Majority and Minority Party get along well personally. This comradery will be important later in the novel. It is striking that dissension will come not in party rivalry, but rather between factions within the party. The Majority party will end up going to war against itself by the end of the novel.

Cold War relations between the United States and the Soviet Union also come into play thematically early in the confirmation process. It is apparent that countries like England and France side with the United States. Though they see the United States as a bulwark against Communism, they are quick to cast doubt on America's ideas and actions. The country has been given to self-doubt, which is dangerous in the present time. In dealing with the strong-armed Soviets, Munson believes, America will need a strong Secretary of State who will know when to give and when to take. Sheppard insists that Leffingwell is such a man. Others, like Cooley, have doubts that Leffingwell can be effective. Munson and Cooley, however, both worry when the Soviet Union seems to approve of Leffingwell.

As the novel unfolds, it is clear that honor matters to the members of the U.S. Senate. Honor emerges as an important theme. Each of the Senators is quite serious about doing their job. While many want to consider Leffingwell before deciding for or against him out of a sense of personal honor and a sense of honor to their office, others like Ackerman and Cooley take their sides early on, out of a sense of honor to their office and to themselves. Cooley, though opposed to Leffingwell, nevertheless has a strict code of honor which will allow Leffingwell a fair chance in a subcommittee hearing. The Senators wish to do everything morally and legally, thus bringing honor on themselves and on the traditions and role of the United States Senate. However, this will soon change.

Discussion Question 1

As the novel begins, it appears as if Munson will have an easy time of getting Leffingwell confirmed. Why? Who appears to be Leffingwell's chief opponent? Explain.

Discussion Question 2

Despite the President's failure to consult with Munson on Leffingwell's naming, why does Munson commit to getting Leffingwell confirmed?

Discussion Question 3

Honor is an important action for the Senators. Choose three Senators mentioned so far in the novel and explain an instance where they have shown honor.



Vocabulary

vehemence, unprincipled, coalition, supercilious, prejudice, vindictive, vigilance, unmitigated, unwarranted, sardonic, tremulous, ineffable, prescience, acerbic, brusquely, asperity, inexorable, senile, pretentious, inscrutable, indubitable, persiflage, perspicacity, belligerently, amicable, noncommittally, jovially, imputations, allegations, ostentatiously, chortled, expeditiously, sedately, effluvium, concomitant



Part II: Seab Cooley's Book

Summary

Chapter 1 – Monday morning rolls around. Seab Cooley prepares for the fight against Leffingwell. Various committee meetings must occur first, all of them business as usual. Many of the committees are focused on things like defense spending or internal improvements, such as bridges and dams. At last, the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee gets underway in the Caucus Room. Cooley considers that his entire career has been leading up to this moment.

Chapter 2 – As a young man, Cooley was noted for his gift for oration and for his humble origins: one of seven children of a storekeeper living in poverty, ultimately having to care for his mother and siblings after the death of their father. A local wealthy aristocrat, Colonel Tom Cashton, paid for Cooley's education in the hopes that Cooley could benefit the area and the South at large. A number of people encouraged Cooley to run for Congress after the sitting Congressman retired. In office, Cooley is well-loved and well-respected by his constituents. Over time, he gained such power nationally as well.

Chapter 3 – Munson gets a call from the President. The President has learned the confirmation process will last beyond Monday. Munson relates that a lot of Senators are opposed to Leffingwell, but many others are willing to be convinced of Leffingwell. Others, like Fred Van Ackerman, are all for Leffingwell. Munson also confirms that Sheppard should be given the NATO job. He also confirms that the President should skip the usual Thursday press conference. The President thinks a National Security Council meeting and the correspondent's dinner Thursday night will be excuse enough to do so. Justice Davis is happy to see that the Washington Post and many of the editorials in other newspapers endorse Leffingwell. Davis wonders what else he might do to help the liberal cause and Leffingwell.

Harley Hudson paces nervously, wanting to help the President and Munson, but frustrated at how little he has been told. He is also worried about the President's health. Sheppard stops in to see Hudson. Sheppard is similarly frustrated at not being told anything, either. He reports that Tashikovi and Khaleel want to see Hudson. It is possible they are concerned the President may die. Hudson and Sheppard agree that the President needs to rest some and that a meeting with the Indians and the Russians will occur sometime the following week.

Cooley greets Leffingwell with a handshake at the subcommittee. Anderson and Winthrop know the meeting will be as pleasant as it first seems. Anderson convenes the meeting. Deference is given to Leffingwell to speak first. Leffingwell takes the oath. He vows to work with the Senate as Secretary of State and to seek God's guidance in all that he does. This earns applause from the audience. Questions are then addressed, beginning with Knox. Knox questions Leffingwell's attitude toward the Soviet Union and



brings up a speech Leffingwell had made with respect to “outworn principles of the past”. Leffingwell says that America must change her standards with the times. For example, making the Russians prove good faith before being dealt with is something requiring reconsideration.

Cooley questions the nomination process. He wants to know how Leffingwell was informed of the President’s nomination at 8 o’clock in the evening on Thursday night when newspapers did not carry the news until the Friday morning edition. The official announcement was not made until later in the day on Friday. The point is passed over. Knox questions Leffingwell on his forthcoming book, “Do We Really Want Peace? A Program for America” and on the principles Leffingwell thinks are outdated. Leffingwell thinks they should not let suspicions get in the way of peace. The United States must rise above its mistrust and impatience and see things the way the Soviet Union sees them. Knox is stunned, wanting to know how many concessions have to be made. Leffingwell counters that the only other possible option is war.

Winthrop and Cooley want to know on what terms Leffingwell would favor talking to the Russians. Leffingwell won’t give terms, saying these things are between a President and a Secretary. Cooley asserts this will be a betrayal of the country. Winthrop moves to have Cooley’s entire statement stricken from the record. Anderson rules the motion out of order. Leffingwell insists the question about terms is unanswerable, because circumstances change. Cooley insists Leffingwell is being evasive and cannot be trusted. He wants to know why Leffingwell is being evasive. Meanwhile, Van Ackerman and Danta look favorably upon Leffingwell, COMFORT, and the idea of meeting with the Soviets. They decide to drop in on the subcommittee.

Munson requests Dolly fill in for him on the subcommittee. Dolly agrees to do so. The wives of the French and British ambassadors are invited as well, as both observers for their husbands and companionship for Dolly. Meanwhile, Richardson continues to press Leffingwell on answering questions. Richardson probes Leffingwell on his associations while teaching at the University of Chicago. Richardson says a telegram has come in from one of Leffingwell’s former students, Herbert Gelman, which asserts Leffingwell associated with a Communist group far to the Left politically. Leffingwell does not remember Gelman, saying that any line of inquiry to the university will only produce good reports of Leffingwell’s character. Leffingwell wonders if anyone has bothered to try to find Gelman. Richardson reports he cannot be found. Leffingwell counters that Gelman may not actually exist. Leffingwell wants an apology. Richardson says things will stand as they are for now.

Richardson wishes to know how America could extricate herself from the position that the Soviet Union need not fear force from them because America would not strike first. Leffingwell states that such a position is not a good position to take, but that concessions could be made to avert striking first. Richardson wishes to know at what point too many concessions would be too many concessions. Leffingwell says he will never recommend war to the President. Richardson notes that whereas he would avoid war until necessary, Leffingwell will take peace at any price. Van Ackerman believes that Leffingwell is being crucified.



Leffingwell asserts that there are signs that the Communists are warming toward the West and have a desire to negotiate. Senator DeWilton says these are beliefs rather than specifics. Leffingwell argues that such things are always a matter of faith. Hope and faith mean the possibility of a new start, separate from the past. The past should not be dwelt upon at all. De Wilton presses for specifics. Leffingwell cites Russian willingness to consider the advisability of working out a graduated disarmament and a pledge to peace. DeWilton does not consider these real concessions or specifics. He says the media and the people are too in love with Leffingwell to see his evasion, which makes Leffingwell angry for the first time. DeWilton charges that Leffingwell knows nothing about the Russians.

Leffingwell demands to know how much longer he is to be subjected to persecution. Anderson demands things calm down, and Leffingwell apologizes for his outburst. Anderson also presses for clarification on Leffingwell's thoughts on war. Leffingwell confirms he is renouncing war except after being attacked first. Likewise, Leffingwell believes too firm a stand in dealing with Russians could stop any chance of peace. The subcommittee is put to recess until the following day.

Hal Fry and Khaleel meet up and discuss why the beauty of the world is misused by the people who live in it. Khaleel hopes Leffingwell can change things for the better. He worries that Leffingwell will not be confirmed. Fry worries that too often people question rather than take decisive action in situations. To Fry, Americans have been paralyzed with self-doubt instigated by enemies and friends. Americans question too much.

Chapter 4 – Brigham Anderson breakfasts with his young daughter, Pidge, encouraging her to eat her oatmeal. Anderson's wife is still asleep, prompting Pidge to think her parents have had an argument. Anderson denies this is true. Pidge tells her father she loves him, then goes to wake up her mom. Anderson then gives a ride to Justice Davis on the way into the capital. Davis wants to know where Anderson stands on Leffingwell. Anderson doesn't like Leffingwell's avoidance.

Cooley arrives in the Caucus Room for the subcommittee. Cooley fields some questions from the press, disagreeing with them when they say that Leffingwell was specific. Cooley notes the audience is bigger than normal. He says hello to Munson, who wants to know what Cooley has up his sleeve. Cooley can tell Munson is worried. As the hearing gets underway, Leffingwell begins by condemning his treatment by some the previous day, saying it could serve as a deterrent for others who wish to serve the country. He deems it "anti-intellectualism". Anderson disagrees, saying they live in serious times and the Senators genuinely care about their country.

Cooley begins. He starts by questioning Leffingwell's teaching career at the University of Chicago, including his residential address. Cooley questions Leffingwell about his Thursday nights. Leffingwell says most were spent pursuing the young woman that became his wife. Cooley suddenly asks who Walker and James Morton are. Leffingwell avoids the question by throwing out random names and asking who they are. Cooley asks Leffingwell the meaning of the phrase, "They'll understand in Dubuque", which Leffingwell calls nonsense. Cooley then calls a witness, Herbert Gelman. The room is



stunned. Gelman, a man of forty, takes a seat beside Leffingwell. He works for the Commerce Department. In the past, he worked for the Federal Power Commission. Gelman confirms that he and Leffingwell know one another by sight only. They are not friends. Gelman says that Leffingwell is not loyal to the United States and no man like him should ever be Secretary of State.

Gelman explains he was cast out of the FPC by Leffingwell under the false accusation of wrongdoing. Gelman insists it was actually because of things he knew. Gelman explains he was a student of Leffingwell's in Chicago. Gelman visited with Leffingwell on some Thursday evenings and was invited to a Communist cell, where Leffingwell's codename was "Walker". One of the other prominent members was a man by the name of James Morton, who wore a beard at the time. The password was "They'll understand in Dubuque". Gelman explains the password came from the old saying about the New Yorker Magazine, that it wasn't for the old lady in Dubuque. The cell believed, however, that the revolution would be so drastic that it would be understood even in Dubuque.

Senator Richardson questions Gelman's motives, saying that Gelman is leveling serious charges against Leffingwell. Other Senators question motive as well. Gelman says revenge is not one of them and that he is not crazy, either. Leffingwell, calls Gelman insane. He asks to cross-examine Gelman the following day. The subcommittee consents and adjourns for the day. Munson is stunned and wonders why Leffingwell hasn't fired back. Senator Van Ackerman comes bursting in, demanding the committee be reconvened, saying he has proof that the address of the Communist cell doesn't exist. Anderson says the committee has recessed at Leffingwell's request. Ackerman declares that Anderson is out to get Leffingwell and that Anderson and the others will get what is coming to them. That night, Cooley calls Munson about getting the President to withdraw Leffingwell's nomination. Munson reports he has already checked, and the President has refused.

Chapter 5 – The subcommittee reconvenes. Senator Richardson begins by saying that Gelman only took one class with Leffingwell and that 346 members of the faculty of the University of Chicago have endorsed a letter attesting to confidence in Leffingwell. Leffingwell begins his cross-examination of Gelman, asking if he could have simply been mistaken about not knowing Gelman, only to remember later. Leffingwell explains it would be difficult to remember one out of 1,200 students each year, year after year. Leffingwell explains records reveal that Gelman suffered a nervous breakdown during senior year. Gelman insists it was nerves, not a mental breakdown.

Ackerman intervenes to point out there is no building at 2731 Carpenter Street, the address given at which the Communist cell met. Gelman says he may have misremembered the address, but that there were definitely meetings on Carpenter Street. Leffingwell reminds Gelman of Gelman's testimony from the day before, which says the Communist cell meetings did not lead to any active plots against the United States. Leffingwell wonders what the point of the meetings was then. Gelman explains that it was to form a "new Communism", to apply the best parts of Communism to a new philosophy to be used in the United States –Leffingwell's idea. Leffingwell says Gelman is lying. Gelman insists he is telling the truth.



Leffingwell moves on to the Federal Power Commission. He reveals that Gelman was given the choice to resign over another nervous breakdown. Leffingwell tells Gelman he forgives Gelman because Gelman is not in his right mind. He says he feels sorry for Gelman as a result. He calls the attempt to smear his name evil and underhanded. Leffingwell contends he expected such actions from Cooley, but not from other members of the subcommittee. Leffingwell also wonders what harm has been done to his reputation. He says he forgives all those who have sought to wrong him and that he loves America and will do all he can for her. A vote is held off so the subcommittee can study the transcripts of that day's meeting when they are printed up.

Chapter 6 – The afternoon session for the U.S. Senate gets underway. Fred Van Ackerman angrily calls for a quorum because Reverend Carney Birch has delivered a prayer Ackerman considers to be anti-Leffingwell. Munson is annoyed by this. Cooley tells Munson that someone like Ackerman needs to be destroyed. Munson agrees, but knows he must handle things carefully because he and Ackerman are on the same side. Munson challenges Ackerman, saying perhaps Carney had better be fired, but Ackerman will not go this far. He instead uses the prayer calling for sound judgment as evidence of an anti-Leffingwell atmosphere. Anderson challenges Ackerman, saying that Leffingwell has been afforded great courtesies and has not had his freedom to say whatever he wants impinged. Vice President Hudson also challenges Ackerman, which causes Ackerman to calm down some. He continues on in his defense of Leffingwell and attacks the behavior of the Senate.

Senator Elizabeth Adams rises and challenges Ackerman for proof. Ackerman challenges Adams's intelligence. Adams retorts that the proceedings have been fair, though Ackerman's opinions of them may be different. He goes on to say that any handicaps Leffingwell has are friends like Ackerman. There is laughter which enrages Ackerman, who says that Adams is hiding behind being a woman to make attacks. He goes on to challenge accusations of Communism made by Gelman against Leffingwell. To make things right, Ackerman wants an immediate vote to discharge the Foreign Relations Committee and vote on Leffingwell as a Senate body immediately.

Munson challenges Ackerman, saying the committee and its subcommittee have gone above and beyond to accommodate Leffingwell, including allowing Leffingwell to cross-examine Gelman. Munson argues against dispensing with usual Senate procedures. Dispensing with the procedures will set a dangerous precedent in which reasoned consideration are overcome by passion of the moment. Tom August rises to support Ackerman's motion. Orrin and Anderson oppose. With 86 Senators in attendance, a quorum is present and the vote is called for. It is split at 43 for, 43 against. Absent members are sent for.

The vote moves to 44-44. Vice President Hudson casts the deciding vote against the motion, which is then defeated. That night, Cooley carefully goes over the subcommittee transcripts and makes a phone call. He tells the person on the other end in Chevy Chase, Maryland, what the individual should do if the person wishes to preserve his honor and serve his country. Anderson then receives a call from a man who explains he was once known as "James Morton".



Analysis

As the novel unfolds, it is clear that Cooley's opposition to Leffingwell stems from more than just a personal insult against Cooley's character. Despite Cooley's sometimes eccentric behavior, his mind is sharp and his sense of honor is unblemished. It is through Cooley that the past emerges as an important theme, not only in the sense that Cooley believes his entire career has led up to the opposition of Leffingwell, but in that Leffingwell's own past does matter in the present. Leffingwell is seeking a public position, where his past will have bearing. Though a man is not necessarily doomed by the past, he is shaped by it. Leffingwell's hostile defense of his past –rather than an admission of wrongdoing –serves to add strength to Cooley's case against Leffingwell.

Leffingwell does not do himself any favors. It is through his testimony that the theme of Cold War relations again comes to light. His avoidance of specifics and his desire for peace at any price undermine the idea that he will be a strong Secretary of State in very challenging times. That the Russians are seeking to put men on the moon underscores the point that the United States is already falling behind. To men like Cooley, and to men like Anderson and Knox who begin to emerge as opponents of Leffingwell, strength is what is needed. Leffingwell likewise stuns many when he says he will never advocate for war unless the United States is attacked first. To many Senators, this is the equivalent of showing other poker players one's hand before trying to influence the game.

Further, Leffingwell's desire for peace is further strengthened beyond his disapproval of recommending war. Leffingwell is willing to make concessions to keep peace with the Soviets, but he cannot say just how far he would go before taking a stand against the Soviets. Leffingwell says he has hope for the future and that the past with the Soviets should be completely forgotten. This astounds many and the theme of the past's lingering effects on the present is demonstrated. Leffingwell is arguing not merely for a restart in relations with the Soviet Union by ignoring the past, but a restart for himself as well. However, that an unapologetic (perhaps past) Communist sympathizer like Leffingwell should be the one to deal with Communist Russia is too much for some to handle. Anderson here emerges as one of the leading opponents of Leffingwell. Anderson is of the same party as Leffingwell.

Leffingwell does not do well under questioning about his past. He denies things, skirts questions, and tries to cast doubts on Gelman's competence as a person and as a witness. Leffingwell alternates between playing a victim and being utterly confident in himself, between whining like a child and behaving professionally. Even some supporters begin to sour on Leffingwell, but the media, the President, and Ackerman remain committed to Leffingwell. The reader should note how increasingly dramatic and desperate Ackerman becomes as time passes and Leffingwell's confirmation process begins to drag out. Ackerman emerges as the novel's chief antagonist, a utilitarian liberal extremist.



In a negative example of politics, Ackerman tries to alter the Senate's normal process for confirmation, citing ill-treatment of Leffingwell. To do this, he dishonorably attacks members of his own party –including Anderson. Anderson defends the subcommittee's treatment, saying it has been both honorable and fair.

The question of Leffingwell here becomes not just a matter of Leffingwell's suitability for the office for which he has been nominated, but it is a question of honor in the process and treatment he has received so far. The reader sees that Leffingwell has received fair treatment, has avoided specifics, and has much to answer for about his past. However, Ackerman ignores this reality, relying on wholly personal and dishonorable methods to push Leffingwell through. Yet, this is too much for even people like Munson and the Vice President, both of whom vote against bringing Leffingwell's confirmation to a vote. However, this demonstrates just how closely split the Senate is on Leffingwell and the process.

Ultimately, it is Leffingwell's second principal opponent, Cooley, who discovers the true identity of James Morton. While Morton's identity is never explicitly revealed, it is clear Morton is close enough to the President and close enough to Leffingwell to derail the Leffingwell confirmation process. Cooley applies pressure to Morton to contact Anderson. The result will be the reopening of the subcommittee. While Cooley may be working behind the scenes to bring about a change in events, nothing he does is dishonorable or immoral. His pressure means that evidence to the truth will see the light of day and that it will all come out in an open session in public purview.

Discussion Question 1

Although Munson supports Leffingwell, Munson opposes Ackerman's call for an immediate vote on Leffingwell's confirmation. Why?

Discussion Question 2

Do you believe the subcommittee has treated Leffingwell fairly? Why or why not? Do you believe Leffingwell has been professional through the hearings? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

For what reasons of foreign policy are many of the members of the subcommittee disappointed with Leffingwell? Do you believe their attitude or Leffingwell's attitude toward relations with the Soviets is correct? Why?

Vocabulary

compounded, unperturbed, suavity, ephemeral, largesse, foredoomed, vigor, arbitrarily, colloquy, ominous, deprecatingly, absolve, pettifoggery, derisive, precocious, efficacy,



quizzical, doggedly, contemptuously, instrumentality, rejoinder, premeditated,
malodorous, pathological, flamboyant, inflammatory



Part III: Brigham Anderson's Book

Summary

Chapter 1 – Spring is in the air. The tourists begin arriving. The news carries progress of the Soviet space program. Anderson considers how to go about planting his backyard garden, unable to shut out thoughts about the Soviet space program or Leffingwell for long. His mind is also on James Morton and the decision to reconvene the subcommittee. Despite the troubles he and the country face, Anderson is glad to be alive.

Chapter 2 – Anderson reflects on his life, being born into a prominent Salt Lake family, having a good physique, being popular with girls though finding it difficult to find the one. He reflects on spending time in the Air Force in World War II after college, receiving a leave he spent in Hawaii, and going into law and politics after the war. He married a shy, plain girl named Mabel. While Anderson's friend, Senator Lafe Smith, jumps from girl to girl, Anderson devotes much time to his wife and daughter. Yet, Anderson is unhappy with his life. Only in Honolulu was Anderson truly happy, but he knows he cannot ever visit the events of Honolulu again.

Chapter 3 – Munson speaks with the President by phone, checking on progress. Munson admits he doesn't have the votes for Leffingwell, yet. The President is worried about Anderson recalling the subcommittee and what Anderson knows that others don't. The President notes that barring a murder, moral conviction, or membership in the Communist Party, the President still backs Leffingwell wholly. The President is so committed he says he is willing to threaten Anderson to get Anderson in line. Munson says there is nothing that can be used against Anderson. The President says there is always something. Munson doesn't want to play that way. The President insists it is necessary. The President relents, though, saying Munson should try to work things out with Anderson. He tells Munson to bring Anderson and Ackerman to the White House for a drink and a talk. Munson then gets a call from Justice Davis who asks to come over and talk about the business with Anderson.

The press speculates about what Anderson may be up to, because calling an impromptu committee meeting is out of character. Some consider attacking Anderson even worse than they are already; most continue on in their unwavering approval of Leffingwell. The press asks Tom August about what Anderson is up to. August has no idea. The press thinks the fix is in for Leffingwell. Lafe Smith says there is no fix against him. Ackerman contends that Anderson is going to be run over because he is just trying to get in the way of history. Ackerman tells Smith that Anderson had better get out of the way, or he will be sorry.

Munson calls Anderson. Anderson explains the hearing is to things come out in public so the President is not embarrassed by a direct statement issued to the press which the President will be unable to react to without losing face. Munson worries about



Anderson's reputation in the press. Anderson says he doesn't have many skeletons in his closet. Anderson wants the President to withdraw the nomination. Munson says it is unlikely the President will do so. Munson asks Anderson if Davis is mad at him for anything. Anderson can't think of anything. Anderson is saddened by the fact that the Leffingwell situation has turned so personal and vulgar. Mabel worries for Anderson. Anderson assures her everything is alright. Mabel is still worried he will be hurt.

Cooley feels young and healthy despite being seventy-five. His discovery of the true identity of James Morton has delighted him. Cooley goes over the evidence. Leffingwell getting Gelman a job after the FPC in Commerce in the Bureau of International Economic Affairs means a relationship between Leffingwell and someone higher up in the BIEA. Cooley reflects on calling the suspected individual, addressing him as James Morton, causing the man to gasp and confirm the truth. Cooley reflects on telling the individual to then call Anderson and make a full confession to the subcommittee. Cooley knows that if Anderson does not act, he has other options.

Munson handles questions from the press, telling them that Anderson must have good reasons for calling a subcommittee meeting for the following day. The Senators on the subcommittee assemble to discuss the potential causes for the session. Knox believes that Anderson has something damaging on Leffingwell. August suggests dissolving and reforming the subcommittee with himself as chairman. The idea is immediately shot down. The Senators decide to release a statement to the press saying that Anderson's decision to reopen hearings is valid, but that it in no way implies they have reached a decision on Leffingwell or the wisdom of reopening.

Munson meets with Orrin Knox. Knox says word of the President's ill-health is all over town. He also knows it was the President who pushed August to reform the committee. Munson hopes the President and Anderson can settle things at the White House before the Correspondent's Dinner that night. At home, Pidge is worried about her parents fussing. Anderson tells her it is nothing to worry about. Mabel reports the press release of the committee to stand by Anderson. Mabel confirms that she and Pidge are behind him as well. It makes Anderson thank the Lord.

Munson meets with other Senators on the floor of the Senate before the session begins. He wants to conclude the session as quickly as possible, he announces, for he has other things that need tending to. The Senate convenes at noon. A prayer is held, the reading of yesterday's journal is dispensed with, and the Senate is put in recess at once. Ackerman, Clement Johnson, and Walter Turnbull are stunned. So is the press. Ackerman confronts Munson and Strickland, challenging their actions. He then goes to the press to claim the instant session as proof of secrecy and stealth against Leffingwell.

Ackerman charges that Anderson is trying to put Leffingwell in a bad light and that others are conspiring to help. Ackerman announces he would have moved once more to end the special committee's consideration of Leffingwell had the Senate's regular session actually gone on. Ackerman says he has enough votes to do so. Ackerman



explains that COMFORT will be staging a rally beginning at 8 PM at the National Guard Armory to support Leffingwell and oppose corruption in the Senate.

Mabel meets her husband with Pidge, grateful that things have so far turned out alright. Lafe says hello and makes friendly light of Mabel's worriedness, causing her to laugh. Anderson and Lafe then go to lunch at Normandy Farms, fifteen miles out into the Maryland countryside. Anderson thinks Lafe should get married. Lafe admits the girl he has been seeing over at the Armed Services Committee has hooked him. At Normandy Farms, they discover Dolly and Lady Maudulayne are present. They say hello, and are worried about Anderson. Anderson is touched, but says he is alright. Anderson and Lafe discuss Anderson's meeting the President. Anderson doesn't want to. When it is found out the papers are carrying a story that Munson says Anderson is to meet with the President, Anderson knows he has no choice but to go.

The President calls Anderson, asking Anderson if there is anything he needs. Anderson insists his stand is not to put himself in a bargaining position. The President wishes a meeting with Anderson alone; Anderson wishes Munson and Harley Hudson to be present as well. The President consents to Anderson's request. The meeting is set for after the Correspondents Dinner. The President then calls and yells at Munson for handling Anderson so softly. Munson then calls Anderson who will not compromise on the meeting.

Justice Davis meets with Munson. Davis says he has never wanted to hurt anyone, but claims to have found something that fell out of Anderson's car when Anderson gave him a ride. Davis says that what he is doing is for the country's best. Davis hands Munson an envelope with an inscribed photograph inside. Davis insists he didn't steal it, but does say that if someone could find the man in the photo with Anderson, Anderson might be made to see the light. The photo seems to suggest a homosexual liaison during the war in Hawaii, Davis insists. Munson thinks he should destroy the photograph because it isn't clear if the photo or inscription imply anything; Davis insists it should be given to the President and a detective agency.

Munson challenges Davis's time as a Justice and his fairness for resorting to blackmail. Munson knows that such a charge could not only wreck Anderson's career, but his family and his entire life. Munson says it will ultimately be his decision what to do with the photo and Davis had better not say anything to anyone about it. Davis insists that Anderson cannot be defended. Munson contends Anderson is a decent and honorable man. Davis tells Munson that Munson cannot defend Anderson if such information got out. Davis refuses to promise he won't speak with anyone about the photo. After Davis leaves, Munson considers tearing up the photo, but refuses to do so.

Chapter 4 – The evening radio news criticizes Anderson for wanting to reopen the hearings. Mabel and Pidge help Anderson dress for the Correspondent's Dinner.

Chapter 5 – The White House Correspondents' Dinner gets underway. The room is full of distinguished guests. Leffingwell's entrance is met with applause. The President and Anderson greet each other warmly, a show for the room. When the President speaks,



he pokes thinly-veiled insults at Anderson and Munson and the confirmation process, but seriously insists he will stand by Leffingwell no matter what. On the way back to the White House, the President converses with Hudson, asking if he likes Anderson. Hudson says he does, as does the press on most things. Hudson relates that Khaleel and Tashikov want to see him, but he doesn't know why. They return to the White House, and are joined by Munson and Anderson. They get down to business.

Anderson says he recalled the subcommittee at the request of James Morton. The President, Vice President, and Munson are stunned. Anderson says that Leffingwell lied about Morton and the Communist cell. Gelman was telling the truth. The President ignores it, saying Anderson should be honored with a job somewhere far away until the confirmation process is over. Munson is stunned again. Anderson suggests the President withdraw the nomination. Munson says he worries the President isn't taking the situation seriously. The President contends that Leffingwell's ability to deceive and remain strong will do well against the Russians. Munson, Hudson, and Anderson are shocked. The President goes on to say that Leffingwell's refusal to quit is a sign of a good fight and he will be a welcome addition after the old-fashioned Howard Sheppard.

The President argues that none of them are so perfect as to be able to judge Leffingwell's past or his time in the subcommittee. Anderson says freely he is not perfect; however, that fact doesn't stop men from exercising judgment. The President questions whether Anderson's right to judge, or judgment, are superior to his own. However, the President says that nothing can be done for Leffingwell. He asks for some time to withdraw the nomination. Anderson promises to help to make it look like it isn't a retreat. The President asks Anderson to tell the press that a solution has been reached, but not to name the solution. It will give the President time to think of someone else. Anderson says he is proud to be in the same party with the President.

After Anderson and Hudson leave, the President tells Munson that Davis has given him a note about a photograph. The President demands to see the photograph. Munson is both angered and heartbroken. Munson demands the President only threaten Anderson, because a threat will be enough in this case. The President refuses, citing the country's fate may depend upon it. The President demands the photo. Munson surrenders it. He realizes the President never intended to drop the nomination. Bob then goes to Dolly's house. The President then types up a message and has his chauffeur deliver it. As the President settles in for the night, he feels his heart pounding hard and painfully.

Chapter 6 – Anderson and Orrin Knox meet up the next morning. Anderson is in a good mood. Knox guesses the events of the meeting the previous night, and tells Anderson not to believe the President about withdrawing his nomination. Knox tells Anderson that if the President backs out, Knox will have Anderson's back. Knox doesn't believe the President has any honor, and being president goes far deeper than honor. As they head into the Capitol, Anderson and Knox notice black crows on the Dome. Knox believes it is a bad omen of Shakespearean note; Anderson says there are no bad omens on this day.

Anderson relates to Cooley that he is pleased with how things are unfolding. In Foreign Relations, Sheppard says all future actions will be the responsibility of Leffingwell –



which causes rumors among the press and Senators that the President, despite assumptions based on a deal being reached between Anderson and the President, is going to let Leffingwell's nomination stand. Anderson says the President will make his position known in due course. The news media can only speculate about what is going on.

Anderson meets with Munson. Munson has no patience and can barely stand to talk to Anderson. Anderson worries he has done something wrong. Anderson meets with Hudson, who urges caution about the President. Hudson tells Anderson that if by the following day he feels something has gone wrong, he will go to the press with Anderson to give them the full story. Anderson begins to worry as the day goes on. At home, Mabel explains an anonymous caller told her to ask Anderson about Honolulu. It frightens Mabel who puts distance between her and Anderson. Anderson's attempts to call the President are met with notices that the President has gone to bed early.

Chapter 7 – The press speculates on what is unfolding with the Leffingwell nomination. They believe there is secret information to be made public. Anderson determines that, no matter what happens, he will not abandon his position. He knows that the country must keep running, and more often than not, “front-door idealism” gave way to “back-door acceptance” of human imperfections and realities. He hopes this will be the case for him. Cooley meets with Anderson. Cooley has surmised that something is up, and wonders if Anderson will back down. Anderson is sure he won't back down. Cooley promises to defend Anderson. Anderson thinks that with help he will make it through what he knows must be coming. He also warns Cooley that charges against him may be exaggerated and not worth defending. Cooley still vows to stand by Anderson.

Rumors are now flying about Anderson in Honolulu. Senator Bill Kanaho of Hawaii, and Senator Clement Johnson think it is all a smear campaign. Anderson explains to them that his wife got an anonymous phone call. Kanaho explains he heard about Anderson being in Honolulu from Ackerman, who wanted to know if Miller & Haslett, a big photo house, was still in operation. Kanaho relates that Ackerman claims to have had his photo taken there during the war, and says that Ackerman thought Anderson did, too.

Leffingwell meets with Anderson in Anderson's office. He says that he and Anderson are rational men who seem to have been caught up in an unpleasant situation. Leffingwell relates his wife was upset by an anonymous caller. Leffingwell also knows that Anderson knows something very bad about him. Anderson reveals someone called his wife as well. Leffingwell asks Anderson why Anderson opposes him. Anderson explains it is because he got a call from James Morton. Leffingwell surmises that the President is going to stand by him, and then becomes enraged with Anderson. Anderson fires back, calling Leffingwell a cheat not fit to be Secretary of State. Leffingwell says the President can't be overcome, then goes to see Ackerman.

Ackerman calls Anderson, demanding Anderson back down. Ackerman uses the threat of blackmail through a planned speech at the COMFORT rally. Anderson tells Ackerman that he is not scared and he is not quitting. The President then calls. He denies knowledge of what Ackerman is doing, though he says he had hoped such a situation



could have been prevented. Anderson says he will not change his position. Anderson then calls the Vice President to set a time for a press conference, only then to learn the Vice President has flown to Kansas City for a speech –but that the promise still stands. Anderson cannot reach Knox either. Beth, Knox's wife, tells Anderson that her husband is out and that Anderson should go home to see his wife Mabel.

Anderson heads home. Mabel explains she has received a note giving all the details of Honolulu. Anderson says he went off the track because of pressure from the war. He says it happened longer before Mabel, had never happened before, and has never happened since. He says he has spent his life trying to make up for it. Mabel worries that it might not have been only the war. Anderson might have done it anyway. Anderson denies it and apologizes for the past. He begs her to stay. She says she doesn't know she can ever be sure of things again. She begins crying, and he holds her.

Five thousand people turn out for the COMFORT rally. Leffingwell and Ackerman are present. Ackerman contends he has the means to see Leffingwell through, and holds up a white paper. Ackerman contends Anderson is not even morally fit to lick Leffingwell's boots. Ackerman intends to reveal all in the Senate on Monday. Anderson, watching the broadcast, knows Ackerman is not bluffing. Around midnight, Anderson receives a call from the man with whom he had a homosexual encounter. The man apologizes, saying he had only recently gotten out of the service, had been hard up for cash, and had agreed to reveal the information requested of him for money.

Chapter 8 – The next morning, the director of the Washington Post reveals a column to Anderson from Henry Wilson which alleges things about Anderson but doesn't actually make claims. The Post will not publish the letter. The director contends that while most papers oppose Anderson's position on Leffingwell, 99% of them will not go so far as the 1%. When the story breaks, however, the other papers will be forced to carry news of the story. Cooley drops in on Anderson at the office Sunday evening to restate his support of Anderson no matter what. Cooley is willing to back down entirely on everything to help Anderson save his name. Cooley vows that Ackerman will be destroyed. Cooley steps out to eat, promising to come back later. Lafe Smith calls, concerned about Anderson. Anderson says he is fine.

Anderson muses on the present situation. Both he and Leffingwell have secrets. Whereas his secrets harm no one, Leffingwell's could damage the world –and yet Anderson is the one being destroyed. Anderson locks his office door, shuts the blinds, turns off the lights, prays to God, writes the words "I'm sorry" on a sheet of paper, and commits suicide by shooting himself. Cooley and Lafe Smith hear the gunshot, and discover Anderson's body. Late that night, the man who had a homosexual liaison with Anderson gets drunk and commits suicide by jumping off a bridge. No one in Washington learns of the second death that they caused.



Analysis

In the most tragic part of the novel, politics, honor, and the lingering past all emerge as a powerful thematic force when it comes to Anderson. Anderson has conducted himself honorably throughout the novel, especially when it comes to consideration of Leffingwell's suitability for the office of Secretary of State. Anderson, Knox, and others have serious reservations about Leffingwell's ability to deal with the Soviets as the international scene seems to rapidly be turning unfavorably toward the United States. Anderson and Knox are frustrated by Leffingwell's lack of specifics and his strategy of peace at any price. To Anderson, it is only right that Leffingwell be judged on his character and his beliefs given the power of the position that he may potentially assume.

The past factors heavily into one's character. As Anderson later muses, his own past affects no one beyond himself and his family. Leffingwell's past will affect the country and the world. Whereas Anderson regrets the past, Leffingwell does not. He almost appears to take great joy in his sympathetic attitude toward Communism. Whereas Anderson has acknowledged and tried to move beyond the past, Leffingwell is allowing his past to influence the present with his decidedly soft stance toward the Communist world. Despite this, it is Anderson's life that seems poised for destruction; whereas, Leffingwell is poised to become one of the most powerful men in the world. Leffingwell's own shadowy dealings and maneuverings within circles of power cast doubt on his honor.

Interestingly enough, the reader should note that it is the very conservative Southerner Cooley who more so than any other comes to support and defend Anderson, even when things are at their worst. In a time when homosexuality was frowned upon, it is Cooley who rushes to defend Anderson. This is done not merely out of common cause against Leffingwell. Cooley has a sense of honor about himself and his life. Out of friendship with Anderson. Cooley's concern isn't what Anderson's past has been so much as it is how Anderson is now being exploited for something he wanted to leave in the past.

The reader should also note that it is not the Minority party which seeks to use Anderson's homosexual liaison as a matter of gain in their political opposition, but Anderson's own Majority party fellows who are determined to get Leffingwell through. The conspiracy of Ackerman, the President, Munson, and Davis is not only dishonorable, but downright disgusting. It is the worst side of politics in operation and demonstrates the desperation of the President to get Leffingwell through –and calls into question just why the President should behave this way and why he should be so desperate.

Exploitation of Anderson is sickening and highly dishonorable as time passes. The newspapers are prepared to go public with the story. Ackerman is prepared to announce the truth about Anderson's past on the Senate Floor. Anonymous calls are made to Mabel. A letter detailing the truth arrives for Mabel, throwing Anderson's home life into question. Everything that Anderson has worked towards now stands to come undone.



Yet, Anderson himself displays great courage and honor. He knows he is morally right when it comes to Leffingwell, and he will not back down no matter what the cost. He worries, however, for his wife and daughter. Better he should die, he figures, than they have to deal with him once his reputation is gone. He already feels he has caused them enough pain. Writing out the truth of everything to Knox and thanking Cooley for his friendship, Anderson ultimately commits suicide. He believes it is the only honorable way out of his situation.

Discussion Question 1

When life becomes dark for Anderson, who emerges as his chief friend and defender? Why does this seem so surprising?

Discussion Question 2

Despite the understanding that his life is going to be destroyed and his reputation ruined, Anderson does not back down from opposing Leffingwell. Why? If you had been in Anderson's shoes, what would you have done? Why?

Discussion Question 3

While Anderson and Leffingwell both have pasts that have come back to haunt them, what distinguishes them in relation to their pasts? Why?

Vocabulary

recapitulation, obdurate, aloofness, tangent, feasible, exasperated, recalcitrant, beleaguered, incommunicado, fortuitously, paramount, patronizingly, duplicity, iniquity, irrevocably, fatalistic, flabbergasted, ponderous, vituperative, paragon, implacable



Part IV: Orrin Knox's Book

Summary

Part 1 – The President has a restless night, knowing he is morally culpable for what has happened. He realizes he did not anticipate Ackerman being so cruel and forceful with the photograph, or Anderson taking his own life. The President knows that Ackerman must be destroyed, but it will be difficult because Ackerman is loved by COMFORT. Any hope for party unity has died with Anderson. At the same time, the global situation is increasingly desperate. The Communists are on the rise; the Russians are talking about a moon landing; the United States is falling behind. The President knows much must be done, but he also knows his health is in serious condition. Only his wife, his physician, and his press secretary know about the blackout he suffered in the Oval Office two months before.

Yet the President knows he cannot slow down. He cannot stomach the thought of Harley Hudson becoming president. He worries that the back-dealing leading to Anderson's suicide will be exposed. He worries about Munson's friendship with Anderson and whether that will lead to Munson dropping support for Leffingwell. The President also knows that Orrin Knox will be key to how things unfold now. Knox, stunned over the loss of his friend Anderson, is preparing to dig in against the President. He is full of such hatred for the President he almost wishes him dead. Knox, who had a strange feeling the night before, called Anderson –only to be told by Cooley what had happened. Knox is enraged by newspaper coverage which has exploited Anderson's wife and child. The press questions Knox as he arrives in Washington. He vows to defeat Leffingwell's nomination.

It is decided that Hal and Crystal's wedding for Wednesday afternoon will go on as planned, because Anderson would have wanted it that way. Senator Knox continues to consider other things as well. He knows his friendship with Munson is finished, imagining Munson somehow had a hand in things. He also knows that the President and Ackerman must be destroyed. Knox also suspects the cause of Anderson's suicide is blackmail. Knox also wonders what defeat would do the President's health. Knox knows that he himself may have a hand in making the President's health worse with a stand against Leffingwell. It may lead to Hudson getting into office, and few people want Hudson in the Oval Office. Nevertheless, Knox prepares for the coming fight against the enemy, knowing his whole life has led up to this moment.

Chapter 2 – Knox, of a middle-class background, has twice attempted unsuccessfully to become President. His beginning in politics came in college through the Student Union, ultimately leading to the governor's mansion and then the Senate. Knox believes much of his success is due to the grace and support of his wife, Beth. Knox worries about the state of America, which is self-conscious and too easily lulled by pleasures and intentional ignorance of planning for tomorrow. Yet, he also knows the Americans are good, decent, and industrious people. At his office, Knox finds an envelope addressed



to him. He calls Cooley, Danta, Tom August, Lafe Smith, and Strickland for a private conference.

Chapter 3 – Lord and Lady Maudulayne discuss the tragedy of Anderson. Lady Maudulayne hopes Leffingwell is defeated given Anderson's suicide; Lord Maudulayne thinks Leffingwell might as well be confirmed given his international popularity. Meanwhile, Justice Davis's conscience is eating away at him. Khaleel calls Senator Hal Fry. Khaleel wants to know why Anderson committed suicide. Fry says he wants to know, too. Khaleel asks about Leffingwell. Fry vows to fight Leffingwell. He doesn't care that the Indian government likes Leffingwell. Khaleel hopes Leffingwell can be confirmed with pressure; Fry says that the situation is now a Washington family situation and will be handled accordingly. Meanwhile, the press begins avoiding Ackerman.

The President calls Senator Powell Hanson about the vote situation with Leffingwell, touching only briefly on Anderson. The President has been unable to get a hold of Munson, and Hanson confirms battle lines are being drawn. The President encourages Hanson to steady the others and reminds Hanson that Munson won't be Majority Leader forever. This shocks Hanson, who nevertheless agrees to assist the President. The press is coming to discover that even former Leffingwell supporters are now questioning their support given the nature of events.

Munson feels horrible after Anderson's death. Munson knows he is directly attributable to Anderson's suicide. Munson dutifully continues to try to rally support for Leffingwell, but finds more and more senators turning against Leffingwell. The press realizes something is going on in Knox's office. Meanwhile, Beth Knox looks after Mabel and Pidge. The President refuses a meeting with Ackerman, wanting to distance himself from Ackerman. Ackerman says he knows things. The President asks him if he knows how to murder a man, tells him not to do anything hasty, and hangs up. Tashikov, meanwhile, tries to figure out the situation unfolding with respect to Leffingwell. He knows there is some connection between Leffingwell, Ackerman, and Anderson. He wonders if Leffingwell might fail to be confirmed.

Hudson knows that the President knows more than he is letting on about Anderson's suicide. Hudson tells the President he will have no more of Leffingwell. Hudson is then invited to the meeting in Knox's office by phone. Hal discusses the possibility of going into politics with Crystal. Crystal opposes the idea the moment, but says she'll probably feel differently once the current tragedy is behind them. Hal tells her that awful things will not happen to them. Munson learns that Senator Walter Calloway is especially determined to destroy Ackerman. Munson suggests doing things through the Legislative Drafting Service in order to keep things off the Floor. Munson secretly hopes this will cover up his own role in things.

Knox comes to visit Munson. He tells Munson he looks like the devil. Knox reveals he received a letter from Anderson written before his suicide revealing the details of everything. Knox reveals he read the letter to a group of people, including the Vice President, before burning it. Knox reveals a course of action for the Majority Leader not yet revealed to the reader, which Munson agrees to doing because he was already



planning on doing so. Munson tells Knox about Calloway's desire for a censure reading. Knox confirms he doesn't hate Munson, but that it will be a while before forgiveness might be possible. Munson says he never expected things to come out the way they have. Knox leaves. Munson ignores another call from the President.

On the Floor, Knox sees that Ackerman isn't present. He knows he must work quickly to get a censure resolution, after which time he and Bob can politically and personally freeze out Ackerman. As the Senate convenes, Calloway officially announces the death of Anderson. He says that he thinks Ackerman should like to see what has been accomplished through his efforts. The floor is then yielded to Calloway for a privileged resolution to censure Ackerman for the death of Anderson. Hanson gets to the floor and asks for proof. Knox ultimately takes the floor, denying challenges from Hanson and Richardson, casting doubts on Ackerman's character. Lafe Smith refers to Ackerman as a little murderer. Hanson requests time to alert Ackerman about the censure so that Ackerman can be present. A moment later, Ackerman enters looking shaken. With him, 94 Senators are present. 93 vote for censure; Ackerman votes "present". The censure is had.

Munson then takes the Floor. He announces he is stepping down as Majority Leader in protest over Anderson's death, says the President hounded Anderson, will no longer back Leffingwell and will refuse reelection. His decisions are taken very well. Dolly proposes marriage to him. Munson hopes his reputation may recover. Ackerman convenes a press conference vowing that Leffingwell will still be confirmed. Ackerman then leaves for a vacation in Arizona.

Chapter 4 – The next morning, the papers attack Knox and the others for their stand for Anderson being used as a weapon against Leffingwell. The news channels do the same. Knox calls the director of the Post to let him know that the letters and calls now being received about Leffingwell oppose him two-to-one, saying the press should be fair to the way things are playing out. The director reluctantly agrees.

At the National Cathedral, a memorial is held for Anderson. Knox and the other Senators are amazed at the gall of the President and Leffingwell to attend. The Senators agree among themselves that Munson's stand has made reelection to Majority Leader possible. A meeting must be arranged for this. Munson reveals that even the President has sent him a telegram urging he accept. Munson tells the other Senators to set it up with Stanley, the acting Majority Leader.

Knox heads to the Office Building. The committee vote for Leffingwell has come up. The press lines the room. Knox calls to make the committee informal, formalizing only the final vote and recommendation. It is agreed upon. Knox then says that the President is responsible for Anderson's death. Proof of this is known to at least six members of the committee. Such facts, Knox argues, should be put in full view of the Senate.

These facts are damaging to Leffingwell as well, Knox says. Richardson demands to know why something stupid done years ago makes Leffingwell unfit to be Secretary of State. Strickland says lying under oath is proof. Richardson says anyone will lie to



protect himself. Strickland argues that the validity of what is being protected must be judged. Richardson contends a stupid youthful error should not affect the present. DeWilt says that if no one else brings up James Morton when things come to a head on the Senate Floor, he will. The committee votes to pass the nomination to the Senate without a favorable recommendation.

Chapter 5 – As they get ready for the wedding, Knox explains to his son, Hal, that the unfavorable recommendation is merely a parliamentary procedure. The real fight will be in the Senate. Stanley Danta spends time with his daughter, Crystal, as she gets ready for the wedding. She encourages him to get married again. The wedding comes off beautifully.

Chapter 6 – Knox learns from Munson that the President wishes a meeting. Knox isn't sure about meeting with the President, but Munson insists. The President calls Knox, asking for a meeting. Knox finally agrees. Munson is later reelected Majority Leader. Munson releases all senators from their obligation to cast votes as they previously indicated. On the Floor, Leffingwell's biography is read. Cooley then stands to speak. He wants to know why the whole truth about Leffingwell isn't made known. Cooley then brings up James Morton. Knox heads to the White House to meet with the President in the meantime.

The President does not look well at all. The President says nothing has turned out how he wanted. He is glad Ackerman was censured. Knox says he does things not to be cold and calculating, but out of honesty. Knox is glad he and the President are not the same kind of person, he says, which causes anger in the President. Knox demands to know why Sheppard is being forced out. The President skirts the question, appealing to patriotism and international relations to convince Knox to support Leffingwell. Knox can't understand why, with the Soviets ahead in the Space Race and with the Russians exerting more pressure than ever, the President wants a man like Leffingwell who will submit. The President says he cannot go back on his support of Leffingwell.

The President then offers to make Knox the president by throwing his support behind him in the coming elections. The President asserts Knox is the only plausible choice. Knox says he was planning to run anyways. The President doubts Knox can win without his support and wants to know why Knox wants to make it hard on himself. Knox says Leffingwell is why. At Knox's request, the President puts his offer in writing. Knox then says he'll need time to think it over. The President then encourages Knox to give a speech the following day after the Russian broadcast on the Space Race to reassure Congress and the country. The President will be doing the same at 8 PM.

Knox meets with the National Chairman of the Party. The Chairman explains the President has decided to skip his speech to the Party, suggesting Knox give the speech instead. Meanwhile, the Senate prepares for a long night. Knox explains he will indeed make his opinion known in the Senate by then. Knox meets with Munson, Cooley, Danta, Lafe Smith, and Strickland. He shows them the President's handwritten offer. Cooley and the others agree that Knox is in a tough spot. Stanley Danta contends the situation has more to do than with just Leffingwell, but involves Knox's soul. Knox goes



for a drive with his wife to explain the situation. Beth says the decision must ultimately be his and the Lord will ultimately be the judge. Beth expresses her love for her husband. Knox returns to the Senate realizing he had already made his mind long ago on what to do.

Chapter 8 – The following day dawns with the promise of a vote on Leffingwell that night. Knox turns down the chance to speak to the Party's National Committee. He then folds the President's handwritten offer into an envelope and sends it back to the President. The Russians broadcast from the moon, where a base has now been established. Knox takes to the Senate Floor to encourage Congress and the American nation to continue. New circumstances do not change the American character or America's mission. However, a public letter from the Soviets to the American President requesting a meeting regarding the future of the United States is sent out, dampening the mood.

Knox, Sheppard and Hudson meet with Khaleel, Maudulayne, Barre, and Tashikov. Tashikov is gloating. Hudson and Knox assure him nothing has changed, moon base or no moon base. Hudson strongly reminds Tashikov the future is not as simple as the Russians think. Hudson floats the idea that the Americans may recognize Red China, loan them a billion dollars, and gain influence in the East. Knox says the Senate would support such plans. Knox confirms that Leffingwell will be defeated. Tashikov calls all Westerners fools.

The President takes to the air at 8 PM. The President announces their own moon expedition is underway. No nation owns the moon. The American landing will be about freedom and knowledge, not owning the moon. The President then seconds the comments made by Knox on the Senate Floor. He announces he will meet with the Russians in Geneva on his own time the following Monday. He says the Americans, despite the cruelty of the Soviets, are committed to peace. The President contends the meetings will be open to the eyes of the world. Unknown to the world, following the broadcast, the President seeks out his doctor.

The final vote on Leffingwell comes up. Knox argues that Leffingwell is too weak to be Secretary of State. He is not strong enough to stand up to the Russians. He argues that Leffingwell's positions would not avoid defeat against the Russians, but merely postpone it. The new Senator from Utah, a doctor from Logan appointed by the Governor, votes against Leffingwell when the vote comes. Leffingwell is defeated overwhelmingly by a vote of 23 for, 73 against. A short time later, the President suffers a massive fatal heart attack.

Analysis

As the fourth part of "Advise and Consent" begins, Washington is reeling from the death of Anderson. The country is shocked –none more so than Orrin Knox. Knox is fully aware of what has gone on and enlists loyal friends as allies, including members of the Minority like Cooley, in order to bring down Leffingwell and Ackerman. Indeed, Knox,



Cooley, and even Knox's own fellow Majority allies are willing to do whatever it takes to destroy Ackerman.

Their opposition of Leffingwell has not only strengthened in resolve, but turned near to hatred given the circumstances. Even with the truth of Anderson's reasoning for the suicide revealed, the most conservative Senators like Cooley refuse to back down from defending or aligning themselves with Anderson. It is very honorable.

Honor is a trait lacking among the President, Davis, and Ackerman. Davis himself feels great remorse over the death of Anderson, but he takes no active steps to do anything to make it right. By all counts, Davis ought to resign with a confession of what he has done –but he does not. He slinks away into the shadows dishonorably.

Ackerman was the final straw to Anderson's suicide. Ackerman himself has no remorse about Anderson's death beyond its political cost to Ackerman and the Leffingwell nomination. Ackerman has the audacity to speak about Leffingwell even after being censured. Then, he suddenly takes a vacation rather than manning up to deal with the consequences of his actions.

The President, though stunned by Anderson's suicide, is ready to brush over it in order to confirm Leffingwell. At best, this is dishonor. At worst, it is heartlessness. The President takes dishonor to an entirely new level when he attempts more backroom dealing. In exchange for his support of Leffingwell, the President is determined to throw his support behind Knox as the next President.

It becomes apparent that the President's dishonorable actions and his sense of utilitarian pragmatism are the result of his ill-health. The President will need someone to continue on his policies when he is gone. Sheppard does not fit the bill, and Hudson is considered too conservative and too unpopular to carry out the President's vision. Only Leffingwell can do this –and the President will do whatever he must to see Leffingwell through.

The only member of the Leffingwell conspiracy against Anderson to do the honorable thing is Bob Munson. Munson is horrified at what has happened and resigns as Majority Leader over it. Although Munson is later reelected as Majority Leader, his willingness to accept responsibility for his own part in things salvages his position and his reputation – justly or unjustly, as the reader may decide on his or her own.

Knox, Hudson, Cooley, and others then make their move honorably on the Senate Floor. They have Ackerman censured and speak glowingly of Anderson. They next settle the question of Leffingwell. Given the evidence and Anderson's suicide, Leffingwell's nomination is overwhelmingly rejected. This is especially important given the radical change in world affairs announced the same day. Cold War relations hit a new low point as the Russians begin building a base on the moon and broadcast video from the lunar surface. It is all the more apparent now that a man of strength is needed in the position of Secretary of State –not someone who will be submissive to every Soviet demand.



That night, due to stress over the events of the past two weeks, the President suffers a massive heart attack and dies. Along with the President, his hopes of a legacy consisting of his policies being continued through Leffingwell die. This means, however, that Hudson will now become the President –something which few ever imagined, or felt Hudson capable of doing.

Yet the reader will reflect on the meeting held between Hudson and Tashikov, in which Hudson took a bold stand against the Soviets and their threats. It signals a shift in U.S. foreign policy to a more politically conservative approach with the understanding that the politically liberal approach has allowed the Soviets to get ahead in the Space Race.

Discussion Question 1

How do the President, Davis, Ackerman, and Munson respond to Anderson's suicide? Which of these characters show honor and dishonor in their response? Explain.

Discussion Question 2

Knox, Cooley, and others vow to destroy Ackerman. How do they seek to do this? Are they successful? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

What is the truth behind the President's desire to confirm Leffingwell no matter the means? Do you believe the President was right or wrong to try to push Leffingwell through? Why?

Vocabulary

imperatives, cajoling, astute, palpable, compunction, jargon, immolated, meteoric rise, conglomeration, amalgam, sibilant, flagrant, depreciate, pedantic, ostracism, insufferable, sundry, vigorously, cavalier, ghoulish, intonations, desultory, demagogic, scintillates, baffled, insouciance, precipitous, inexorable



Part V: Advise and Consent

Summary

Chapter 1 – The President's body lies in State as his family and thousands pay their last respects and mourn his death. His death is a sad and stunning event. Hudson is sworn in as President.

Chapter 2 – Hudson asks that both Houses of Congress meet that afternoon to pass a joint resolution supporting his pending trip to Geneva to discuss with the Russians. Munson agrees to help. Hudson then arranges to meet with Knox.

Chapter 3 – Knox goes to see President Hudson for lunch. Hudson hopes to count on Knox's advice and support in all areas, especially foreign policy. Knox agrees to do so. He also apologizes for a disagreement that he and Hudson had on the convention floor years before, where Knox challenged Hudson's moral courage. Hudson says he has long ago forgiven Knox.

Chapter 4 – The joint resolution of support passes quickly. President Hudson speaks before Congress to let them know of his plans for the future. Hudson announces he will not seek reelection to the Presidency the following year. Hudson notes he wishes Leffingwell to be a part of his administration –as part of a committee to overhaul the administrative side of the government. He then nominates Orrin Knox to Secretary of State.

Chapter 5 – More than 300,000 people turn out to wish President Hudson, Secretary of State Knox, Munson, and Strickland well as they head to Geneva. Although the future is uncertain, Hudson, Knox, and the others are confident in themselves and in America.

Analysis

As the novel concludes, it is clear that the stage has been set for a sequel, though many plots in the novel come to a close. Honor and justice are prominent concepts on the mind of President Hudson. Hudson not only honors Anderson and the deceased President, but he appoints Knox as Secretary of State. Knox, who has remained honorable throughout the novel in his own pursuit of justice for Anderson, also denotes a shift in U.S. foreign policy. The Cold War is entering a new era with more conservative principles and positions when it comes to dealing with the Soviets.

As the President, Knox, Munson, and the others move forward in friendship, more than politics will bind them together in their future actions. These men are approaching their new roles as old Senate friends. Knox himself reflects on how good men from the Senate will now be leading the country. Among these men can be found true friendship –for example, in Knox's defense of Anderson despite political challenge –and honor –for



example, in Munson's honorable decision to resign as Majority Leader in the wake of Anderson's death.

Among those questions that have yet to be answered are how the new team will do against the Soviets at the convention in Geneva and how international politics will adjust to the new American administration at large. Other questions are why Hudson will refuse to seek his own rightful term as President and what Knox will do following the end of Hudson's year in office. Many of these questions will receive answers in "A Shade of Difference," the sequel to "Advise and Consent."

Discussion Question 1

Why does President Hudson decide to keep Leffingwell on in his administration? Do you agree or disagree with his decision to do so? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Knox look ahead with optimism as he, Hudson, and the others are on the way to Geneva –especially when it concerns Hudson's new administration?

Discussion Question 3

Why does President Hudson name Knox as Secretary of State? Do you believe Knox's appointment is a sound judgment on the part of Hudson? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

hitherto, obstructionist, unequivocal, symbolic, emphatically, pandemonium



Characters

Bob Munson

Robert “Bob” Munson is a fifty-seven year-old U.S. Senator from the State of Michigan and the Majority Leader in the Senate. He is something of a political moderate, appearing to be more conservative on issues of foreign policy, but more liberal in other areas. A widower with no children, Munson becomes engaged to widowed socialite Dolly Harrison by the end of the novel. Munson is well-respected and well-liked, even by political opponents. He is blindsided by the President’s nomination of Leffingwell to Secretary of State and commits to confirmation. When things get tough, Munson is made aware of Anderson’s wartime homosexual liaison by way of a photograph given to him by Davis. Munson is disgusted, but he does not destroy the photo. He is later compelled to give the photo up to the President, which ultimately results in Anderson’s suicide. Munson is sickened, but he does the honorable thing by resigning as Majority Leader following Anderson’s suicide. Munson is later reelected as Majority Leader out of respect for his sense of honor.

Seab Cooley

Seabright “Seab” Cooley is a seventy-five year-old U.S. Senator from the State of South Carolina. He is in the Minority party. Given to outbursts, Cooley is conservative, old-fashioned, and very honorable. Cooley becomes the first avowed opponent of Leffingwell, determining to defeat the nomination. It is Cooley who helps to uncover the truth about Leffingwell’s past as a Communist. Despite Cooley’s intense conservatism, he considers honor and friendship to be above politics. When he learns about Anderson’s being blackmailed, Cooley does not hesitate at all to defend Anderson and stick by him even when things get darkest. After Anderson’s suicide, Cooley is instrumental in helping to bring about a resolution of censure against Ackerman and in defeating Leffingwell’s nomination.

Bob Leffingwell

Robert “Bob” A. Leffingwell is the President’s nominee for Secretary of State. Leffingwell is a very liberal academic from the University of Chicago who has served in various government positions, including as head of the Federal Power Commission. In his thirties, Leffingwell was a member of a Communist cell in Chicago that was determined to apply Communism to the United States. Leffingwell’s sympathy for Communism helps to underscore his liberal politics and his soft approach to international policy, especially when it comes to the Soviet Union. Leffingwell is an extremist in this regard, refusing to even consider military action unless the United States suffers a direct, physical attack by the Soviet Union. Leffingwell is nevertheless overwhelmingly popular with the media and much of the public. During the hearings on his confirmation, Leffingwell plays both



victim and aggressor as it suits him. His confirmation is ultimately overwhelmingly defeated. Allen Drury based Leffingwell on Alger Hiss, the real-life American government official found guilty of espionage against the United States.

Brig Anderson

Brigham “Brig” Anderson is a U.S. Senator from Utah. Anderson is a World War II veteran, the husband of a beautiful woman named Mabel, and the father of an adorable four year-old named Pidge. Anderson is a morally upright member of the Majority party. He is completely opposed to Leffingwell’s nomination due to Leffingwell’s soft stance toward the Soviet Union. Anderson’s friend, Davis, steals an old photograph of Anderson during World War II while Anderson was on leave in Hawaii. The photograph features Anderson and a never-identified man with whom Anderson has a one-time homosexual liaison –something Anderson has spent his life trying to put behind him. The photo is used as blackmail against Anderson to drop his opposition to Leffingwell. Anderson refuses, knowing in his heart what is morally right. He pens a note to his friend Knox about what is happening and takes comfort in Cooley’s support. Anderson then commits suicide.

Orrin Knox

Orrin Knox is a U.S. Senator from Illinois. Knox is a member of the Majority party. Knox is very conservative when it comes to foreign policy, and he is a good friend of Anderson. Anderson pens a written confession prior to his suicide for Knox, revealing the truth of everything. An enraged Knox positions himself as the primary opponent to the Leffingwell camp. He vows to destroy Ackerman through a resolution of censure –a task which Knox completes. Knox, a morally upright man, rejects an offer of backing from the President should Knox decide to run for president in the next election cycle in exchange for supporting Leffingwell. Knox refuses. When Hudson becomes President, Knox is made Secretary of State.

Fred Van Ackerman

Fred Van Ackerman is a U.S. Senator from Wyoming and a member of the Majority party. He is very liberal, utilitarian, and pragmatic. He is known for dramatic outbursts, hotheadedness, and unwillingness to compromise. He becomes the most avowed supporter of Leffingwell’s nomination. He will stop at nothing to see it through. When information about Anderson’s past homosexual liaison is made apparent to Ackerman, Ackerman has thugs harass Anderson and his family to force Anderson to relent. When Anderson refuses to drop his opposition to Leffingwell, Ackerman vows to expose Anderson’s past on the Senate floor. This directly leads to Anderson’s suicide. When this is discovered by Knox and the others, they unanimously move to censure Ackerman, who will still not back down from Leffingwell. As Leffingwell is defeated, the cowardly Ackerman leaves the city for a supposed one-month vacation.



Herbert Gelman

Herbert Gelman is a longtime associate of Leffingwell. He makes it known to the subcommittee –and the country and the world at large –that he and Leffingwell were once part of a Communist cell. Gelman is currently employed by the Commerce Department of the Bureau of International Economic Affairs. Gelman briefly flirted with a Communist group while in college, ultimately rejecting the philosophy. This is why he goes public against Leffingwell. Leffingwell attempts to cast doubt on Gelman’s reliability given that Gelman has suffered nervous breakdowns, but Gelman’s reliability holds up. Gelman is based on Whittaker Chambers, a real-life reformed Communist who exposed Alger Hiss.

The President

The President of the United States, never named, is the driving force behind the nomination of Leffingwell. The President is in his seventh year in office. He is a member of the Majority party and popular with the people of the country. He brings every ounce of weight he can to bear on getting Leffingwell confirmed. To this end he becomes a political animal, doing whatever is necessary to secure the votes –from alerting Ackerman to Anderson’s past to attempting to bribe Knox with endorsement for the Presidency in the next election. The President’s rush and desperation are continually questioned, and rumors circulate about his ill-health. The President has limited time left, but he wants to make sure that if he dies in office, he will have a Secretary of State determined and strong enough to carry on the President’s policies toward the Soviet Union. The President ultimately dies of a heart attack the night Leffingwell is rejected.

Harley Hudson

Harley Hudson is the gentle, conservative, and well-respected Vice President of the United States. Though he is a member of the Majority party, Harley is considered ineffectual politically, and no one ever thinks he could possibly be President. As the truth about Leffingwell’s confirmation and Anderson’s death becomes apparent, Hudson comes into his own by challenging the Russian ambassador and working to help censure Ackerman. When the President dies, Hudson is sworn in. He agrees to keep Leffingwell on in an administrative role. He names Knox to be Secretary of State.

Tommy Davis

Thomas “Tommy” Davis is an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America. Davis is very liberal and desperately wishes to see Leffingwell in office. He begins pulling whatever weight he can to help Leffingwell get elected. It is Davis who first discovers the photograph and the possibility that Anderson had a homosexual liaison during World War II. Despite being friends with Anderson, politics matters more to Davis –and Davis hands over the photograph to Munson. Davis then

alerts the President about Munson's possession of the photograph. When Anderson commits suicide, Davis is shaken –but dishonorably refuses to take responsibility for his part in things.



Symbols and Symbolism

The Gelman Telegram

The Gelman telegram is received by Senator Arly Richardson as the hearings on Leffingwell's confirmation begin. The Gelman telegram reveals that Leffingwell spent time in a Communist cell dedicated to forcing Communism on America. The telegram is seized upon by Cooley and others as more evidence that Leffingwell is unfit to be Secretary of State. The telegram ultimately leads to the tracking down of Gelman and to Gelman's personal appearance in the hearings as a witness.

The Photograph

A photograph depicting Anderson and an unidentified male in Hawaii during World War II is discovered and stolen by Davis. The photograph is never described, but appears to be ambiguous enough to either be construed or dismissed as evidence of a homosexual liaison. The photograph is passed along to Munson, then the President, then Ackerman. The latter two use the photograph as blackmail against Anderson.

Letter to Knox

Anderson pens a letter to Knox the night of his suicide. The letter to Knox sets down the truth of Anderson's past, the Leffingwell confirmation, and the blackmail being orchestrated by Ackerman. The letter is read by several other Senators and ultimately burned to help keep Anderson's past a secret.

Transcripts

Transcripts of the business of the Senate Foreign Relations confirmation subcommittee are compiled after each meeting. The transcripts are a written record of all things said during the subcommittee meetings. Cooley extensively studies these transcripts each evening. He discovers enough clues to lead him to James Morton.

Promise for Presidency

A promise in writing to support Knox as candidate for the presidency is made by the current President. This is done as a bribe in the attempt to get Knox to drop his opposition to Leffingwell. Knox shows the written offer to several other Senators as proof the President's backhanded dealings and to prove that he has been offered such a bribe. The President's bribe is unsuccessful as Knox ultimately returns the written offer to the President in an envelope.



Resolution of Censure

A resolution of censure against Ackerman is introduced by Knox in the U.S. Senate. The censure condemns Ackerman for his part in goading Anderson to suicide, though specifics are not mentioned. The resolution condemning Ackerman passes unanimously, with Ackerman himself voting “present.”

White paper

A white paper is held up by Ackerman at the COMFORT rally. He explains the paper has a secret that will be exposed Monday on the Senate Floor. The secret the paper contains, he reveals to the audience on live television, will expose Anderson as morally corrupt. In addition to the photograph, this seals Anderson’s fate, as Anderson commits to suicide not long afterward.

Telephones

Telephones are incredibly important in the novel. In the late 1950s, telephones had become commonplace in the United States, much the way computers and smartphones are commonplace in the 2010s. Telephones are routinely used in the novel for personal and professional reasons. In the Senate and in the Senate Office Building, telephones are daily used by Senators to keep in touch with one another and with the White House. Telephones are also used to keep in touch with constituents back home. Telephones can also be used for nefarious purposes, such as when Ackerman’s thugs make harassing calls to Anderson’s wife.

Newspapers

Newspapers are written and read twice daily during the era of the novel in morning and evening editions. Newspapers come from a host of local, state, and national organizations ranging from outfits like the Baltimore Sun and Christian Science Monitor to news stories written by the Associated Press. The news media is overwhelmingly liberal, with most papers fully endorsing Leffingwell. Likewise, only a handful of papers – including the Washington Post –refuse to print letters accusing Anderson of homosexuality.

Soviet Moon Base

A moon base is established by the Soviets by the end of the novel. The Soviet cosmonauts conduct a live broadcast from the moon to prove their presence and demonstrate their claim on the moon. The moon base is evidence of the United States having fallen behind not only in the Space Race, but in the Cold War as well –due to the policies of the President. This provides evidence that policies even more extreme than

the President's by way of Leffingwell will cause the country to fall further behind the Soviets.



Settings

Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States of America and the seat of the nation's government. Located along the banks of the Potomac River between Maryland and Virginia, Washington, D.C., is described like a lover, totally seducing the people who go to stay there for one reason or another. Even those not directly involved in politics are unable to resist the attraction of the city. They find ways to stay, settle down, and raise families. Washington, D.C., is the location of the White House, the Capitol, and the Senate Office Building. When Congress is in session, it is the home of Congressmen and Senators. Washington is also host to foreign embassies and ambassadors. It is the permanent residence of Dolly Harrison.

The Senate Floor

The Senate Floor is located in the Senate Chamber in the U.S. Capitol building. The Floor is where the Senators convene in the Chamber to discuss and debate issues and legislation. In the novel, the Senate Floor is host to tremendous drama, from the fiery speeches of Ackerman to the calls for censure against Ackerman by Knox. The Senate Floor is where the Senate votes on matters that come before it, including the nomination of Leffingwell. The Senate is a hallowed chamber. The press, tourists, and visitors of note are seated in the galleries above the Floor.

The Caucus Room

The Caucus Room is one of numerous committee rooms found in the Senate Office Building. The Caucus Room becomes home to the subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee dedicated to the recommendation of approval or disapproval of Leffingwell. Much of the drama of the novel occurs in the Caucus Room where the Senators begin their questioning of Leffingwell, where Leffingwell is outed as a Communist, and where the subcommittee recommends Leffingwell to the Senate in full without a favorable approval.

The Senate Office Building

The Senate Office Building is located in Washington, D.C., It is where the Senators of the novel have their personal offices, discuss and debate important legislation and issues among themselves, and keep in touch with their constituents and visitors. The Senate Office Building houses the Caucus Room and the offices of Brigham Anderson, which is where Anderson commits suicide.

Hawaii

Hawaii is the 50th state to be added to the United States of America. Hawaii is represented in the novel by Senator Bill Kanaho, who is worried about Leffingwell's nomination. Hawaii has long been an American ally and site of military installations, including at Pearl Harbor which was attacked by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941, propelling the United States into World War II. It is in Hawaii that Anderson takes leave while serving in World War II and where he has a brief homosexual liaison. A photo of the two men taken in Hawaii surfaces in the novel.



Themes and Motifs

Politics

Politics is an important theme in the novel “Advise and Consent” by Allen Drury. Politics –essentially the art of running or governing a country –takes on many forms in the novel. Politics is seen in both a positive and negative light. It is an honorable and straightforward system. However, it can be an underhanded and dishonorable practice. Political philosophy is also briefly treated at various points throughout the novel.

Politics in general is seen as a positive thing by Drury. His novel is dedicated to the U.S. Senate. Most of the Senators in the novel are committed to doing a good job, considering themselves to be the voice of calm reason and methodical work. Munson, Knox, Anderson, and others frequently assert the importance of the offices with which they have been elected to hold. They take their work very seriously. They wish to do a fair and honest job in the work that they do, which is why they take such great pains to fully vet and examine Leffingwell in subcommittee. They also make sure to cull the opinion of their constituents as they consider Leffingwell and other issues.

However, the typical aspects of politics are also largely apparent as the novel progresses. The President and Ackerman are determined to get Leffingwell's nomination confirmed. After obstacles begin to be encountered, both men begin to use their influence to exact pressure on the Senate to confirm Leffingwell. Ackerman, in particular, brings the pressure of the group COMFORT to bear on the Senators, while the President and Ackerman both apply their positions to further influence the already liberal media to come down hard for Leffingwell. The President begins to call in favors and to make offers of Senators to secure their support.

When typical political methods fail to shift enough opinion to Leffingwell, the President and Ackerman resort to negative political tactics. These are made possible through Davis. Davis, a Supreme Court justice meant to be morally upright and in keeping with the law, subverts legality and morality to bring his own influence to bear. He steals the photo of Anderson, gives it to Munson, and notifies the President of the photo's existence. Munson does not destroy the photo, but hands it over to the President. The President then informs Ackerman, who begins a campaign of political blackmail against Anderson. Even under such pressure, Anderson does not fold. He ultimately commits suicide instead of backing down.

Even with the death of Anderson, things are not finished politically for Leffingwell. Ackerman is censured for his corruption, though he continues to insist on Leffingwell's nomination. The President, desperate to confirm Leffingwell, makes a final plea and bribe to Knox, offering Knox official support for a potential future presidential run. Knox, owing to honor, the hallowedness of his office, and especially to his friendship with Anderson, refuses the offer. Leffingwell is soundly defeated in the Senate based on



honest politics –his own merits, and the consequences of the negative politics of the President and Ackerman.

When it comes to political philosophy and parties, Drury never identifies the parties by name. They are only known as the Majority and the Minority parties. Munson resolves that the Majority party must stand with their President. Based on characterization and positions taken, the identity of the Majority and Minority parties can be easily established. The President, Munson, and the Majority are Democrats, with many of them being liberal. Cooley and the Minority are Republicans, with many of them being conservative. Some, like Cooley, are very conservative. Others, like Ackerman, are very liberal. A far larger number (like Munson, Anderson, and Knox) appear to be conservative on some issues, but liberal on others. Ackerman immediately lines up behind the liberal Leffingwell; Cooley quickly moves to oppose Leffingwell.

Munson initially has all the necessary advantages when it comes to Leffingwell's nomination. Leffingwell is liberal, the media is largely liberal, and the Majority party is left-of-center. The public generally approves of Leffingwell, who also has unflinching support from the President and liberal organizations like COMFORT. It appears at first as if Leffingwell will be a foregone conclusion. Yet party loyalty means nothing as some members of the Majority, such as Ackerman, are ready to eviscerate and destroy Anderson. Others, like the very conservative Cooley of the Minority party, go to bat for Anderson not merely out of common political cause, but friendship and honor as well.

Honor

Honor is an important theme in the novel "Advise and Consent" by Allen Drury. Honor, thematically, involves moral courage, integrity, and loyalty to sound principles. Honor is a word used by all the Senators and primary players in events, but honor is not observed by all. Indeed, many of the characters behave dishonorably in all that they do.

When the novel begins, it would appear as if all characters in the novel are honorable men and women. The story begins straightforwardly enough: The President has named Leffingwell to be Secretary of State and wants him confirmed by the Senate. Supporters and opponents of Leffingwell, such as Munson, Anderson, and Cooley, go to work.

A sense of honor in the subcommittee hearings on Leffingwell is also observed by Anderson and other Senators. They believe that the honor of Leffingwell is as important as their own honor. Therefore, questions of Leffingwell's political past and political intentions toward the Soviet Union become the order of the day. Leffingwell behaves dishonorably, politically playing to the media and viewers by alternately playing a victim and an aggressor. Leffingwell cruelly tries to discredit Gelman by insisting Gelman is insane when there is no evidence to support this assertion.

Dishonor reaches a crescendo as more evidence against Leffingwell comes to light and as Ackerman and the President become desperate. Davis dishonorably steals Anderson's photo to use as blackmail against Anderson. The photo is given to Munson,



who dishonorably refuses to destroy it, handing it over to the President. The President then dishonorably gives the photo to Ackerman to use against Anderson. Ackerman then dishonorably blackmails Anderson and has thugs threaten Anderson's family.

Even in Anderson's darkest hour when word of his homosexual liaison will become public, honor can be found in Anderson and elsewhere. Anderson, who has spent his life trying to redeem himself for the episode in Hawaii, resolves that he will not back down from opposing Leffingwell no matter what. It is an honorable position to take. One of Anderson's strongest and closest allies turns out to be very conservative South Carolinian Seab Cooley, who is ready to go to bat and defend Anderson no matter what. Cooley does this out of a sense of friendship and honor, demonstrating himself to be a very honorable man indeed.

With the death of Anderson, dishonor and honor again compete for dominance. Davis dishonorably refuses to take responsibility for what he has caused. The Senate honorably censures Ackerman, who dishonorably refuses to take responsibility and flees the Capitol for Arizona. The President dishonorably brushes Anderson's death aside and commits to attempting to bribe Knox to drop his opposition to Leffingwell. Ultimately, the president suffers a massive heart attack and dies. Nevertheless, even his opponents turn out in honor of him. Only Munson does the honorable thing following Anderson's death –and that is to resign as Majority Leader.

Friendship

Friendship is an important theme in the novel "Advise and Consent" by Allen Drury. Friendship in the novel is very instrumental in the plot. It appears as a positive or a negative by some. Others see it as meaningless.

When the novel opens, friendship appears common among the Senators and the President. Friendship occurs not merely within the Majority and Minority parties, but across party lines. One of the early sequences of the novel involves Munson and Ennis disagreeing with Cooley over Leffingwell's nomination –but happily sharing a cab with Cooley on the way into work. Despite their political differences, the friendship between these men is dominant and is strong enough to not even be challenged by politics.

Indeed, as the novel unfolds, it seems as though there is friendship between the President and Munson, as well as between the President and numerous other Senators. However, the President's friendship with others is largely politically-based. The President is quick to turn on people who suppose there is friendship between them. For example, when Anderson becomes a chief opponent to Leffingwell, the President holds nothing back in the attempt to either force Anderson into submission or destroy him. The President unleashes Ackerman.

However as the President and Ackerman clearly demonstrate that their friendship –or the appearance of friendship –is outweighed by politics, others demonstrate that politics is subordinate to friendship. The very conservative Seab Cooley, a Southern member of



the Minority party, is quick to come to Anderson's defense when Anderson is blackmailed. Cooley, while he agrees with Anderson on Leffingwell but disagrees with Anderson's past homosexual liaison, is not about to let Anderson stand alone. Cooley has a sense of honor about such things, and his friendship with Anderson is more important than mere politics.

Other members of the Senate also rally around Anderson, before and after his death. These include Knox, Lafe Smith, and the Vice President of the United States. They all realize that a serious wrong has been done against Anderson. Out of friendship and honor, they refuse to let Anderson's death be in vain. Working together with Cooley, not only do they defeat Leffingwell's nomination, but they have Ackerman censured.

Cold War Relations

Cold War Relations is an important theme in the novel "Advise and Consent" by Allen Drury. The Cold War was a period of sustained antagonism. During that time, a threat of nuclear war and auxiliary military fighting occurred between the free world led by the United States and her friends and allies and the Communist world led by Soviet Russia and her satellite nations. The relations between the United States and Soviet Russia help to inform the core of the plot.

When the novel begins, tension in the United States is high. The policies of the President have put the United States in second place to Russia in the Space Race and in its standing in the world. Americans, worried about the future, prefer to focus on the present. Their confidence is shaken. The Communists are growing in power militarily and nationally, while the United States appears to be docile and immobile. While liberals tend to accept the status quo as proof of the promise of peace, conservatives believe the United States should be running in first place, leading rather than falling behind.

The liberal mindset is most notably demonstrated through Leffingwell and how Leffingwell wishes to approach Cold War relations. Leffingwell is very nearly a pacifist, vowing to refuse recommending war in any circumstance unless the United States is directly attacked by the Soviets. Further, he is willing to make compromises and concessions wherever needed in order to placate the Soviet Union and to keep peace. The Soviets love Leffingwell, while America's friends and allies are wary but accepting. Leffingwell refuses to say how many concessions he will make in order to make peace. This worries not only conservatives, but even other members of the Majority party, who see Leffingwell as a man who will try for peace at any price—even if it means slavery to the Soviet Union.

It isn't just Leffingwell's foreign policy beliefs that throw doubt on his qualifications to be Secretary of State. His past with Communism—for which he is unapologetic and refuses to actually deny—causes many Senators to question whether Leffingwell will have the interests of the Communist Russians at heart rather than America's interests at heart. Likewise, Leffingwell presents a more liberal, more extreme version of the President's



current foreign policy in Cold War relations. These policies have led the United States to fall behind. Many in the novel wonder whether this is not the right price to pay for peace.

The Soviets' moon landing, their declaration of claiming the moon for the Soviet Union, their decision to build a military base on the moon, and their threats of violence against anyone else who sets foot on the moon, underscore the point that the Soviet Union must be stood up to, not submitted to. The Communists are geared toward world domination, not peace. The United States is the only power capable of standing up to the Soviets –and Leffingwell would rather submit to the Soviets. As such, the moon landings add extra evidence to the need to reject Leffingwell. If the United States is already behind with the President's policies, the Senators can only wonder where they will be under Leffingwell's policies.

The Past

The Past is an important theme in the novel "Advise and Consent" by Allen Drury. The past is very relevant and important to the characters of Anderson and Leffingwell. The pasts of both men become essential and key to the unfolding plot of the novel through Leffingwell's confirmation process. There is also a degree of hypocrisy and great political cruelty exhibited in how the pasts of both men are handled.

Leffingwell's past consists of participating in a Communist cell and seeking to bring Communism to the United States. When confronted with the truth of his past, Leffingwell deflects, denies, and never apologizes for it. In fact, Leffingwell goes on in spite of challenges to his nomination in spite of his past. Senators like Ackerman, groups like COMFORT, the President, and the news media at large come to Leffingwell's defense. They argue that the past should have no bearing on the present. Yet, men like Anderson insist the past does have a bearing on the present when it directly affects the present and the individual is either unchanged, unapologetic, or refuses to admit wrongdoing in the past.

Anderson's own past consists of a homosexual liaison had during leave in World War II. Anderson regrets this part of his past. He knows it was brought on by wartime pressure. He has spent his life trying to put it behind him. Nevertheless, Anderson's past comes back to haunt him, as the liaison is used to blackmail him. The same people who have defended Leffingwell's past now seek to break or destroy Anderson. Anderson refuses to back down in his opposition to Leffingwell, Facing ruin, he commits suicide.

Before he dies, Anderson wonders why his past –personal, private, and harmless to anyone but himself–should be cause for such hatred. Leffingwell's past –one which holds public relevance then and now –is seen as inconsequential to Leffingwell in the present. Anderson is apologetic for his past; but Leffingwell is flippant about his previous wrongdoings. It is clearly political backstabbing and hypocrisy at its worst.

Styles

Point of View

Allen Drury tells his novel “Advise and Consent” in the third-person limited-omniscient narrative mode. Drury’s epic novel spans two weeks in time, but it covers diverse people and diverse events, as well as numerous subplots. The third-person narrator acts as a unifying voice, tying together disparate strands of the plot and providing the reader with a bridge and sense of uniformity to traverse the scope of the plot. The limited-omniscient aspect provides for a sense of drama and suspense in various places, such as when Anderson learns he is being blackmailed, though he does not know by whom. Drama is also created by the narrative point of view when Munson and others wonder consistently throughout the novel why the President is rushing Leffingwell into confirmation.

Language and Meaning

Allen Drury tells his novel “Advise and Consent” in language that is educated and straightforward. The educated aspect of the language reflects both Drury’s own intelligence as a journalist who covered the Senate; and gives a sense of realism to the novel in terms of the educated nature of the Senators themselves. The straightforward aspect of the language not only allows even casual readers to understand and follow the plot, but helps to tie dozens of characters and numerous subplots together for the reader. The straightforward language also means that readers in both 1959 and the present day can understand and follow the plot of the novel –including understanding the messages Drury makes about the evils of Communism and the untenable, liberal position in foreign relations.

Structure

Allen Drury divides his novel “Advise and Consent” into five separate parts. Each part, except for the last, is not only numbered but given the title of the name of the character who will chiefly figure into that section of the novel. For example, Part I belongs to Bob Munson, while Part II belongs to Seab Cooley. Each part is further subdivided into chapters, with some a few pages long and others quite lengthy. The final part of the novel is the shortest. It is not given to any specific character. Instead, its title is “Advise and Consent”. This part of the novel concludes much of the plot and sets the stage for sequels.



Quotes

Why couldn't he have picked any one of ten thousand other outstanding Americans?
Why the one most likely to cause trouble?

-- Narrator (Part 1, Chapter 1 paragraph 5)

Importance: When the novel begins, Munson is stunned to learn of Leffingwell's nomination to the post of Secretary of State. Leffingwell is not popular even among the party of the Majority and the President. Munson knows he has his work cut out for him, and he can't understand why the President would choose Leffingwell of all people.

Washington takes them like a lover and they are lost.

-- Narrator (Part 1, Chapter 2 paragraph 1)

Importance: Here, the narrator describes the seductive appeal of Washington. It doesn't matter why one comes to Washington, but the place manages to get a hold on people. They spend their lives trying to stay with Washington as a result, even to the point of staying on after their official reason for being in the nation's capital has ended. Quite often, morals and decency are compromised in exchange for that power, for that chance to stay. This will prove to be the case with the President, Justice Davis, and Ackerman.

The Senators of the United States, each with a vote that will be recorded, when the day arrives, to decide the fate of Robert A Leffingwell and through him, to whatever degree his activities may affect it, the destiny of their land and of the world.

-- Narrator (Part 1, Chapter 2 paragraph 64)

Importance: Here, the narrator lays out what is at stake for the United States and the world. Leffingwell's decisions will ultimately affect not only the United States, but the world at large. Secretary of State is a very powerful position, and the Senate has a sacred and solemn obligation to do its job thoroughly and carefully in approving or rejecting someone for such a position.

This, in essence was the American government: an ever-the-same bargaining between men's ideals and their ambitions; a very down-to-earth bargaining, in most cases, and yet a bargaining in which the ambitions, in ways that often seemed surprising and frequently were quite inadvertent, more often than not wound up serving the purposes of the deals.

-- Narrator (Part 1, Chapter 4 paragraph 4)

Importance: The narrator explains that Senators and politicians, in general, are often motivated by a combination of idealism and ambition. Often, idealism and ambition coincide. In the 1950s, ambition usually was in keeping with idealism: ambition ended up helping to serve ideals. As Majority Leader, Munson must navigate the idealism and ambition of 99 other human beings to gain support.



“This was in truth to be a busy day, for it was, and everyone knew it, the climactic episode in the committee-hearing stage of the Leffingwell nomination.

-- Narrator (Part 2, Chapter 5 paragraph 2)

Importance: Here, the narrator sets the stage for ongoing subcommittee examination of Leffingwell. The day before, Cooley had produced Herbert Gelman as a witness –a former student of Leffingwell’s who insisted that Leffingwell was, and still is a Communist. On this day, Leffingwell will be cross-examining Gelman. The public believes the day will be the climax of the subcommittee as events unfold.

He is an honest and a conscientious man and it is not possible for him to keep the world out for more than a minute or two at a time. Then it comes rushing back upon him as it must upon any responsible citizen.

-- Narrator (Part 3, Chapter 1 paragraph 9)

Importance: Here, the narrator speaks to the responsible nature and duty-oriented mindset of Brigham Anderson. Anderson deeply loves his country, but knows that his position as a Senator can also be a burden. His brief attempts to get away never last because of how seriously he takes his position and duties as a Senator. This sense of obligation and responsibility will come to haunt Anderson very deeply in coming chapters as he makes a life-and-death decision.

There’s always something.

-- Part 3, Chapter 3 (The President paragraph 58)

Importance: When Anderson unexpectedly reconvenes the subcommittee, the President and Munson wonder what Anderson is up to. The President insists Anderson must be brought in line, even if he has to be threatened to do so. This reveals the President’s desperation to get Leffingwell through. Munson insists there is nothing bad on Anderson; the President insists everyone has something on them.

“It doesn’t have anything to do with honor... though I don’t think he has any. It involves being President, and that goes deeper.

-- Senator Orrin Knox (Part 3, Chapter 6 paragraph 17)

Importance: The morning after the President has told Anderson the nomination for Leffingwell will be withdrawn, Knox cautions Anderson not to trust the President. The President has no honor and will stop at nothing to get what he wants. Anderson believes the President is honorable and will stick to his word. Little does Anderson know, the President is preparing to destroy him with the past.

Here he was, carrying a secret in his past; and what, essentially, except that his secret was purely personal and harmed no one else, while the nominee’s went to his public philosophies and could conceivably be of great harm to his country, was the difference between them?

-- Narrator (Part 3, Chapter 8 paragraph 102)



Importance: Here, the narrator explains Anderson's thought process just before suicide. Anderson knows both he and Leffingwell are similar: both have a secret from the past they would rather forget or have avoided given a second chance. Yet, while Anderson's secret is personal, it will destroy him publicly. Leffingwell's secret, which will affect the public, will be of no consequence against him personally. It is a bitter irony of politics.

His was the basic motivating decision, his the act which placed the weapon in Senator Van Ackerman's hand, his the finger that touched the button that triggered the tragedy.
-- Narrator (Part 4, Chapter 1 paragraph 7)

Importance: Here, the President spends a restless night after the suicide of Anderson. He cannot arrive at any other conclusion that his actions led directly to the death of Anderson. The President realizes that he has miscalculated both men. He did not expect Anderson to commit suicide and he did not expect Anderson to be so vitriolic. Now Anderson is dead, and the President's mind and heart are taxed with the stress of guilt—a severe danger given his ill-health.

Yes,' the President said quietly. 'I am.'
-- The President (Part 4, Chapter 6 paragraph 140)

Importance: In a final move of desperation to confirm Leffingwell, the President makes Knox an offer. The President, in his second term, will back Knox for President next election cycle provided Knox pulls for Leffingwell. This demonstrates the President's desperation and his underhanded politicking. He knows that Knox has failed twice as a candidate for President and that Knox can't win if the President opposes his nomination during the convention. Knox realizes it is a deal with the Devil. He asks for the President's offer in writing. The President agrees, unknowingly sealing his own fate.

I nominate for the high office of Secretary of State my old colleague and dear friend, the senior Senator from the State of Illinois.
-- President Harley Hudson (Part 5, Chapter 4 paragraph 21)

Importance: With the President dead of a massive heart attack, Vice President Harley Hudson becomes President. Among his first official acts is to nominate Orrin Knox for Secretary of State. He knows he will be able to work with Orrin Knox. Knox, likewise, knows the nomination has been honestly achieved and the result of his own moral stand against Leffingwell. This is in complete contrast with the way the previous President sought to handle his affairs.