

Witness Study Guide

Witness by Whittaker Chambers

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Witness Study Guide..... | 1 |
| Contents..... | 2 |
| Plot Summary..... | 3 |
| Chapter 1 Flight..... | 4 |
| Chapter 2 The Story of a Middle-Class Family..... | 6 |
| Chapter 3 The Outrage and the Hope of the World..... | 7 |
| Chapter 4 The Communist Party..... | 8 |
| Chapter 5 Underground The First Apparatus..... | 10 |
| Chapter 6 The Child..... | 12 |
| Chapter 7 Underground The Second Apparatus..... | 13 |
| Chapter 8 Colonel Boris Bykov..... | 15 |
| Chapter 9 The Division Point..... | 17 |
| Chapter 10 The Tranquil Years..... | 18 |
| Chapter 11 The Hiss Case..... | 20 |
| Chapter 12 The Bridge..... | 22 |
| Chapter 13 The Hiss Case II..... | 23 |
| Chapter 14 1949..... | 25 |
| Chapter 15 Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow..... | 26 |
| Characters..... | 27 |
| Objects/Places..... | 29 |
| Themes..... | 31 |
| Style..... | 33 |
| Quotes..... | 35 |
| Topics for Discussion..... | 39 |



Plot Summary

Witness, by Whittaker Chambers, is the story of Communist penetration of the United States government by an underground cell, run by Whittaker Chambers. His underground espionage apparatus includes Alger Hiss, an assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State; Harry Dexter White, an assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury; Julian Wadleigh in the Trade Agreements section at State; and Vincent Reno at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, then a secret military installation. These people pass government documents to Chambers, who has them photographed and passed on to Colonel Bykov. He, in turn, passes them on to Moscow.

Chambers becomes a Communist when he is in college at Columbia College in New York. He has been to Germany, which is still suffering the devastation of World War I, and feels certain that there will be a World War II. The world is in a crisis and, like many students and intellectuals, the question is what can be done about it. He finds the answers in Communism. During the Purge, he begins to question his own actions and beliefs, and decides to break with Communism in 1938. He hopes to get Hiss and others to break with Communism as well. Chambers remains in hiding for a year and then takes a job at *Time*. The Communist smear campaign against him begins, as this is a usual Communist tactic against ex-Communists. A friend convinces Chambers to become an informer and sets up an appointment with the Assistant Secretary of State for Security. Nothing comes of the meeting.

Eventually Chambers is called to testify at the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings, where he identifies Alger Hiss as a Communist. Hiss denies ever having met Whittaker Chambers. Eventually Nixon and the other HUAC members bring Chambers into the hearings room, and Hiss acknowledges that he knew him by another name. Hiss eventually sues Chambers for libel. At the pre-trial hearing, Hiss's lawyers ask for any documents Chambers has. Chambers produces documents that connect Alger Hiss to Soviet espionage. There are federal grand juries, HUAC sub-committees and the lawsuit all happening at the same time. The HUAC sub-committee subpoenas any other evidence that Chambers might have, and finds he takes three rolls of microfilm out of a pumpkin in his pumpkin patch where he had hidden them. These are the famous 'pumpkin papers'. They are the documents that linked Hiss, and others, to Soviet espionage.

The later chapters of the book contain excerpts from the hearing transcripts, so the reader can read exactly what happened and how. Chambers brings the reader into the mind of the Communists and what drove them as they worked for the government that they swore allegiance to and betrayed. The reader also learns how the Soviet apparatus operated and what its deserters were afraid of, given the mentality of the participants. Even though the book is long, it is worth the time spent reading it. It provides insight into the events in the Communist scare era.



Chapter 1 Flight

Chapter 1 Flight Summary and Analysis

The book opens with Chambers saying he began his break with communism in 1937. This is not the same thing as breaking with the Communist Party, which he describes as an organization. His break with the Party takes place in April, 1938 and causes him, his wife, and two children to go into hiding. Chambers is involved in espionage at the time of the break. His superior is Colonel Boris Bykov of the Red Army military intelligence; but Chambers only knows him as Peter. Chambers, himself, is known as "Bob" and in Washington as "Carl". Chambers isn't the only one in Washington involved in espionage on the part of the Soviets. There were contacts and active sources in the State Department, the Treasury Department, the Bureau of Standards and the Aberdeen Proving Ground. The highest-level active source is Alger Hiss, who is an assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State, Francis Sayre. Henry Julian Wadleigh is also at the Trade Agreements Division. Harry Dexter White worked at Treasury as an assistant to Henry Morgenthau, the Secretary of the Treasury. Vincent Reno is at the Aberdeen Proving Ground and Abel Gross is at the Bureau of Standards. Elizabeth Bentley is head of the Communist cell or apparatus under Bykov, who also heads a New York apparatus. This is only a small part of the D.C. apparatus structures that Chambers knew about. Chambers never knew if he worked for the Fourth Section of the Red Army intelligence or the Foreign Section of the G.P.U.

Chambers stumbled into two other Washington D.C. apparatuses as he was breaking with the Party there. There are also various sleeper apparatuses in the country, as Chambers learns. Bykov talks to Chambers about organizing one, just before Chambers breaks with the Party. "The important point about the Washington apparatuses is that, in the 1930's, the revolutionary mood had become so acute throughout the whole world that the Communist Party could recruit its agents, not here and there, but by scores within the Government of the United States. And they were precisely among the most literate, intellectually eager and energetic young men in a nation which by all its traditions of freedom, initiative and opportunity, its institutions and the circumstances of its geography and history, was farthest removed from the revolutionary struggles of Europe" (Chapter 1, pg. 33). None of them were paid for their activities on behalf of the Communists.

A deserter from this kind of organization is a threat to its security, and, from the Soviet point of view, the only way to guarantee silence is to have the deserter killed before he reaches the police. Chambers expects the Party to try to have him killed when he breaks with them, since many highly placed deserters suffer this fate. Chambers makes the plans for his escape. He carries a knife for protection, sends his wife to buy a car outside of Baltimore and finds a house to hide at in Pikesville, Maryland. He obtains a job with the U.S. government to establish the fact that the Party placed him. He begins to copy documents that were being copied for the Party for use at a later time. This is part of his plan to fight Communism. Chambers makes the break in April, 1938 when he



and his family move into the rooms they rented for hiding. He is supposed to meet Bykov in New York that night but doesn't show up. Telling no one of his break, he works at home as a translator.

Both the Soviet apparatus and the Communist Party try to find out what happened to Chambers when he disappeared. They send Maxim Lieber, known as Paul, to Baltimore to look for Chambers, whom they feel has deserted. Paul reports to them that the Mount Royal Terrace house is empty. Now Bykov and Peters know that Chambers has deserted. Chambers, who is a friend of Paul, eventually contacts and meets with Paul several times, to find out what is happening. Paul does not turn him in, but tells him that his loyalties are with the Party. The apparatus sends Grace Hutchins to Chambers' brother-in-law's office to try to find Chambers. She tells his brother-in-law that Chambers will be killed if he doesn't appear.

Chambers and his family eventually leave Pikesville for Florida, where they rent a house in Daytona Beach. Footsteps heard outside their bungalow at night have Chambers and his neighbor worried. The neighbor gives him a gun because of the prowlers. Chambers uses the nearby Stetson College library for research for his translation projects. After a month, the Chambers returns to Pikesville, having made the decision to come out of hiding. They buy a house in Baltimore and Chambers continues to work as a translator.

When Chambers deserted the apparatus and Party, he made the decision to fight Communism. He describes the Communist Party as a terrorist organization. Chambers begins by confronting the active sources, Julian Wadleigh, Harry Dexter White and George Silverman who did not apparently know of his desertion. He also visits Alger Hiss at his Georgetown home. Hiss tries to talk Chambers into returning to the apparatus, while Chambers tries to talk Hiss into breaking with the Party. Chambers ends his attempts at direct confrontation of the party apparatus.

In April 1939, Chambers begins to work for *Time*, where he works as an editor until December 1948 when the Alger Hiss case breaks.



Chapter 2 The Story of a Middle-Class Family

Chapter 2 The Story of a Middle-Class Family Summary and Analysis

This chapter is a brief biography of Chambers. He is born in Philadelphia on April 1, 1901, named Vivian Chambers. His father is an art journalist. The family moves to Long Island when Whittaker is two or three. He has a younger brother named Richard. He recounts memories of his early childhood in this chapter. His father never wanted the house in Long Island and would never make any repairs to it. Any repairs that were made were done by Richard or Laha, who pawned her jewelry to have the wallpaper replaced. Jay never gave her the money to retrieve her jewelry.

The parents believed that the children should be exposed to the arts, so they took them to the museums and the theater. Theirs is not a religious household. Jay eventually moves out of the house and into a studio in Brooklyn. Laha supplements their income by baking and raising chickens. She is very close to her sons. After a period of separation, Jay moves back into the Lynbrook home. He stays separate from the family, even eating in his room. During this time, Whittaker excels in foreign languages, studying many in high school. Chambers does not want to go to college, as his mother wants him to. Chambers leaves Lynbrook.

He travels to Baltimore, where he secures a job laying rail track for the D.C. area metro system. He meets people of all nationalities, which he considers to be his first encounter with the proletariat. When the job ends he buys a train ticket to New Orleans, rents a room at a rooming house and looks for work; but he doesn't find any. When he runs out of money, he writes his parents, who send him train fare back to New York. Upon his return to New York, his father gets him a summer job at the advertising agency where he works. Chambers prepares to enter college in the fall. He enters Columbia College in 1920, where he remains until his junior year, then joins the Communist Party in 1925 after traveling to Germany. His brother, Richard, educated at Colgate and married afterwards, begins drinking heavily and commits suicide.



Chapter 3 The Outrage and the Hope of the World

Chapter 3 The Outrage and the Hope of the World Summary and Analysis

Why do people become Communists? "Each time I wince, not at the personal question, but at the failure to grasp the fact that a man does not, as a rule, become a Communist because he is attracted to Communism, but because he is driven to despair by the crisis of history through which the world is passing" (Chapter 3, pg. 191). Chambers' answer to this question is that intellectuals are drawn to Communism because of two issues: war and economic crisis. They see no other way of stopping the crises of history. Communism gives them a faith and vision when confronted with the crisis of history. Crises of history are things like the rise of Nazism, the Spanish Civil War and the Great Depression.

Chambers says he was drawn to Communism by the issue of war. Chambers visited Germany after World War I and saw what devastation it left. World War II is inevitable, from his point of view, and he is concerned with the survival of civilization. He views the world in a state of crisis. When he returns to Columbia, he reads and studies history, including Lenin. It is in Communism that he finds the solutions to the crisis of history that he sees the world in. After thinking long and hard, he makes his decision to leave Columbia and join the Party.



Chapter 4 The Communist Party

Chapter 4 The Communist Party Summary and Analysis

Chambers makes his contact with the Party and meets a man at the public library. The man agrees to take him to a meeting. The man's name is Sam Kreiger; but he is known as Clarence Miller in the Party. Kreiger takes Chambers to his first meeting and introduces him to the people there. He is not too impressed at the first meeting, although he is being considered by the cell for membership. Kreiger and his wife, who have a Party marriage, teach Chambers about the Party. There are two different factions, he discovers, that are constantly competing and fighting with one another. Kreiger proposes Chambers for membership after several meetings. Chambers joins, using his own name, and volunteers to work for the New York office of the *Daily Worker*. He is assigned to doing newsstand collections.

During this time Kreiger wants Chambers to join a study group about the laws of social revolution. He attends the group, but isn't that impressed with it. He does most of his own studying and reading at the public library instead of attending meetings. While there reading one day, he meets a Hungarian, who is also a Communist. The Hungarian takes him home to his room to discuss Party matters. This is the first of many visits for Chambers, who never does discover who the Hungarian is. He is a representative of the West European Secretariat of the Communist International and never reveals his name to Chambers. One day the Hungarian simply announces that he is leaving.

Chambers meets Harry Freeman soon after Freeman's graduation from Cornell. Freeman eventually becomes the assistant chief of Tass in the United States, which is the official Soviet news agency. Freeman wants Chambers to write for the *Daily Worker*, which Chambers does until his brother's death. He is valued there for his work in answering letters to the newspaper and editing them for publication. The publication of the correspondence is immensely popular because it establishes contact with the working class, which is something they never had before.

While covering the strikes at the textile mills, Chambers makes his first contact with an underground cell in New Jersey. All of the members were Hungarian immigrants and spoke Hungarian at the meetings. On the train ride back from the strike with Freeman one day, Chambers meets Esther Shemitz. She is a writer covering the strike for a pacifist magazine called *The World Tomorrow*. She eventually becomes his wife in 1931. It is during his *Daily Worker* days that Chambers first works as a translator to supplement his income. Eventually, Freeman becomes editor of the *Daily Worker* and Chambers moves up to foreign-news writer.

Stalin is consolidating his power in Russia by destroying his right wing opposition. This meant Trotsky and Bukharin. The Purge also hits the Party in America, as there are a number of expulsions. Chambers is untouched by the Purge because he is not a part of



any unit. His job at the *Daily Worker* requires him to work nights, so he does not attend meetings; although they do have a Comrade Cohen, who comes in and has to approve all of the copy going into the paper.

Chambers begins to write for *The New Masses*. In June 1932 Chambers receives a call from a Comrade Bedacht to report to his office. Bedacht is a high-ranking official in the Communist apparatus and wants to meet with Chambers immediately. Chambers has been a Party member for seven years at this time.



Chapter 5 Underground The First Apparatus

Chapter 5 Underground The First Apparatus Summary and Analysis

Chambers appears at Max Bedacht's office. Bedacht informs Chambers that the Party wants him to work in an underground apparatus. This means he has to leave his job at *The New Masses*. He travels back to the farm in New Jersey to discuss the situation with Esther. Chambers usually spends the weekdays in the city and the weekends on the farm, since it is too far and too expensive for a daily commute. Esther does not want him to take the underground work; but when Chambers returns to Bedacht, he finds he has no choice. Bedacht takes him to meet John Sherman, who used to be at the *Daily Worker*. When Sherman disappeared, he became a member of the underground apparatus. Sherman is the one who requested Chambers. The next day Sherman takes Chambers to meet Dr. Philip Rosenbliett, who tells Chambers that he is to separate himself from all contacts with the Communists. He is to be paid \$100 per month for living expenses and is given the name of Bob.

At subsequent meetings, Sherman gives Chambers \$50 for respectable clothes for his new position as bourgeoisie in society. "But on one or more of them, Sherman began to instruct me in underground organizational techniques, the only real instruction of the kind that I ever had. There was no particular order in the instructions. Sherman simply took up points as they occurred to him. I had begun to call Sherman by his underground name, Don, and shall call him that henceforth" (Chapter 5, pg. 283).

From Don he learns about things like being separated from the apparatus. If that happens, he is to wait for contact to be made; he is not to try to make contact. He learns to code his meeting dates and times, and he learns about the rules of punctuality. There are instructions for what to do if he is followed. There are rules for not remembering places where meetings took place and not acknowledging other members of the apparatus. There are instructions on the chain of command and who could reach whom. His instructions also include what to do in case of arrest: profess innocence and deny everything. There are rules covering expenditures and money and on not drinking when on business. The Party is referred to as the Bank. Chambers' job is to function as a liaison between the underground and the Bank. It isn't until years later that Chambers finds out that he is working for the Fourth Section of Soviet Military Intelligence.

Chambers follows orders and rents an apartment in Greenwich Village. Chambers has meetings at the Gallery, an apartment in New York City where he meets Ulrich, his superior in the underground. There is also an apartment on Gay Street in Greenwich Village, which is a link in a trans-Atlantic chain. The last link to Gay Street is a worker known as Charlie, an agent who had been born in Russia but grew up in America. He is the brother-in-law of Molotov. It is at the Gay Street site that Chambers learns how to



prepare secret letters that are sent via sailors on the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd steamships. They carry the microfilm in a mirror. Mirrors from Germany went through Gay Street also.

"Underground work is one test of a Communist. Few other party activities make such insistent demands upon his devotion, discipline, resourcefulness, and courage, because few others require him to demonstrate daily, in action, his revolutionary faith beyond all appeals of country, family friendship, and personal interest. But few others give him the same sense of participating directly in the revolutionary transformation of our time, for which a Communist exists. It is this sense of revolutionary purpose that gives underground activity whatever appeal it has. Once its startling novelty has worn off, and in my case that happened within the first few months, that revolutionary purpose alone makes it bearable" (Chapter 5, pg. 320)

Chapter 6 The Child

Chapter 6 The Child Summary and Analysis

This two and one half page chapter discusses the fact that there is a group within the Party that believes it is morally wrong for a revolutionist to have children. Children interfere with the work of the revolutionary. Chambers agrees with this view. In spite of this, Esther becomes pregnant in 1933. They both want the child. Ulrich allows them to move back to the barn house in Hunterdon County.



Chapter 7 Underground The Second Apparatus

Chapter 7 Underground The Second Apparatus Summary and Analysis

Chambers is part of an underground apparatus organized by Hal Ware and J. Peters. Chambers uses the name Carl with this apparatus. He returns to Washington in 1934. "I had returned to Washington to assist in unmaking that fate, still with the proletariat, but with a proletariat that throughout the world was rising in the consciousness or its mass strength and the faith, that only through its unflinching intelligence and will, could all of mankind emerge from the disaster of this age to a better (or even a bearable) life. I had no doubt at all, as I stepped out of the Union Station, thinking of those things, that whatever I might do on my return to Washington was inseparable from that purpose" (Chapter 7, pg. 337). Chambers is met by Hal Ware, who drives him around meeting different people while they talk. Ware's sister has a violin studio, which Ware uses for meetings. Chambers spends his first night sleeping at the studio.

The Ware Group holds its meetings at Henry H. Collins, Jr.'s apartment. He is the treasurer of the group. In 1936 or 1937 they began to hold their meetings at the Home of John Abt, who is the head of the group and a special assistant to the U.S. Attorney General. There are seven members at the top of the Ware Group that attend meetings at Collins' apartment. All of the members are Communists who meet to discuss policies, projects, etc. Some had their own cells. Chambers estimates that there are at least seventy-five members to the Ware Group, most of who work for the federal government. Ware Group members had to contribute ten percent of their income to the Party. The group was not an espionage group, although some of its members are engaged in espionage activities. "It was a power to influence, from the most strategic positions, the policies of the United States Government, especially in the labor and welfare fields" (Chapter 7, pg. 343). Chambers provides the names and positions of the leading committee of the Ware Group. Chambers works with this group until he deserts in 1938.

Chambers is introduced to Alger Hiss who is assigned to him. Hiss and Chambers spend several evenings getting to know one another. Chambers has Hiss thinking that Carl is a Russian or German. (Carl is the pseudonym that Chambers uses with Hiss). Chambers begins to make his contacts and set up his network. He uses Lieber's apartment in New York as his base of operations when he is in New York.

Peters arranges for fraudulent birth certificates for the Chambers family. This is in preparation for his work in England. Before this occurs, he is assigned to develop an underground apparatus in Japan. Since Chambers is known in New York, he and his family move to Baltimore, where he rents an apartment in the name of Lloyd Cantwell.



The Hiss' visit the Chambers at their Baltimore home, since they have become friends. Soon Bill tells Chambers that he is not going to England. Don must set up an underground apparatus in Japan and needs assistance. Chambers has to find him an assistant and credentials, which he is able to do. He also travels to San Francisco on Party business. When the Hiss family moves to Georgetown, the Chambers family moves into the vacant Hiss apartment where they stay for two months. They then move to New York, to a friend's apartment in Greenwich Village, and later move to the country and share a house with Max Lieber. Chambers is using the name David Breen since the England project is on again.

Hiss is now working at the Department of Justice and moves to another Georgetown location. He accepts the offer of Francis Sayre to become assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State. Hiss is trying to recruit a colleague from the State Department. Chambers doesn't ask Hiss how openly he is talking with the colleague, Noel Field. Field is eventually sent to Geneva to work for the League of Nations and is already in the underground.

Peters is behind the promotion of a big expansion in Washington. Chambers meets various people via introduction from Peters. Peters has David Carpenter turn over several of his contacts to Chambers: they are Abel Gross, Julian Wadleigh. Chambers photographs some documents that they produce; but the Party shows little interest in them. Then Bill tells Chambers that Don has been arrested in Tokyo. Chambers is told to dissolve everything that connects to the apparatus and to have the people leave town, which he does. After all traces are obliterated, Chambers finds that the message was a mistake. When Don returns a month later he reports that Tokyo mission was a failure. Don is told to report to Moscow and soon leaves.

"The underground worker at my level never knows where the impulses come from that shift him from one task to another. He can only guess that someone in Moscow or Paris or London has had an idea, or made a contact, or heard something that sets in motion a score of people in more than one country working at tasks whose real meaning and purpose they will probably never know" (Chapter 7, pg. 389). Since there is still talk of the English assignment, the Hiss family has uncertain living arrangements. They move back to Baltimore; and Chambers is told to keep in touch with the Washington group and to wait for orders to go to England.



Chapter 8 Colonel Boris Bykov

Chapter 8 Colonel Boris Bykov Summary and Analysis

"A 'sleeper apparatus' is an underground group whose most important duty is to do nothing at all. Its first function is to exist without detection. Any kind of action exposes a secret apparatus to the risks of detection" (Chapter 8, pg. 405). Chambers' sleeper apparatus with an Assistant Secretary of State and an assistant Secretary of the Treasury was an important apparatus. It was probably not the only apparatus in Washington D.C., but it was important.

Chambers meets Colonel Boris Bykov in 1956 in New York, and is told to call him Peter. He appears nervous about being in the United States. Chambers goes to Lieber's apartment and finds John Sherman (Don) there. They go out for a walk and talk about how Don got out of Russia after he called there following the Japanese network failure. The Soviets took his passport and held it. Eventually they return his passport and order him to return to the United States and set up a network in England. Don tells Chambers to tell Moscow he won't set up the English network. "Don had no intention to setting up an underground organization in England or anywhere else. He was through. He was determined at all costs to get out of the underground. But, curiously enough, his Communist faith was not impaired. Communism still seemed to him the only solution to the crisis of history" (Chapter 8, pg. 410). Bykov is furious when he hears of this; but Moscow allows Don to leave the underground. However, he must meet with the Russian secret police before he leaves for the West Coast. Chambers waits until Don and his family are on their way to the West Coast before telling Bykov.

Chambers has his problems with Bykov. He has a list of every contact Chambers has and doesn't like all of them. This was the beginning of the Purge; and one of Chambers' contacts, Ludwig Lore, is considered to be a Trotskyist by Bykov. He then wants to know about the sources that Chambers has. Hiss and White are the people that Bykov is most interested in. Bykov instructs Chambers to buy four expensive Oriental rugs as Christmas gifts for Hiss, White, Gross and Wadleigh. Years later the rugs became a material link between Chambers and the four men, especially since the man who Chambers had buy the rugs produced the receipt. Bykov meets with three of the sources, Wadleigh, White and Hiss, one by one.

The sleeper cell is now active and there is a flow of documents that are photographed. They used an apartment in Baltimore for this purpose. Chambers would pick up the documents that Hiss brought home, drive them to Baltimore, photograph them and return them to Hiss later that night. Silverman would pick up the documents from White and Carpenter would pick-up documents from Gross and Wadleigh, following the same routine. The shop was eventually moved to the apartment of Felix in Baltimore.

Bykov was in charge of other apparatuses, not just the one that Chambers was involved in. Chambers gains some knowledge of a second apparatus through Bykov, which is



how he meets Keith. Keith soon leaves the underground and returns to the Communist Party in Los Angeles. During this time, Chambers continues to process the documents that the four sources produce, but he considers them to be of little value. The only request from Bykov is for the official State Department seal, which Hiss provides. Bykov was looking for secret clauses from the anti-Comintern Treaty, which they never did find; but the Russians obtained enough information to break the State Department's code. This meant that they could tap the diplomatic trunk lines.

After Chambers' desertion, Hiss would rise higher in the State Department. This means that they could now influence policy instead of just passing information. "That power to influence policy had always been the ultimate purpose of the Communist Party's infiltration. It was much more dangerous, and, as events have proved, much more difficult to detect, than espionage, which beside it is trivial, though the two go hand in hand" (Chapter 8, pg. 427).

Chambers decides that the best place for meetings in Washington was in drug stores at the soda fountain. The people would meet in the drug stores and then go out into the street for their discussions. The other way they had meetings was for two men to start out twenty blocks apart on the same street and walk towards each other until they met. Chambers felt this was impossible to be detected by surveillance. At this time Bykov decides he wants more documents from Hiss, instead of those that appeared on his desk once a week. He wants daily coverage. Hiss had to make handwritten or typed copies of the documents that would later be photographed and passed to Moscow. At this time Vincent Reno obtained a job at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, which was a secret military installation. Bykov had a photographic site set up near there to copy the documents Reno provided.

At this point Chambers is beginning to plan his break with Communism and the apparatus. He has helped others escape and is worried about his life, because the underground kills its defectors. He keeps some of the copies of the documents that Hiss has provided, to use against Hiss and Communism for his own protection.



Chapter 9 The Division Point

Chapter 9 The Division Point Summary and Analysis

This two-page chapter represents a transition point. Chambers has rejected Communism and has broken from the underground.



Chapter 10 The Tranquil Years

Chapter 10 The Tranquil Years Summary and Analysis

Chambers is working for *Time* magazine after he comes out of hiding. After the signing of the Communist-Nazi Pact, Chambers decides to become an informer. Chambers flies to Washington to talk to Adolph A. Berle, the Assistant Secretary of State in charge of security. The year is 1939. Chambers expounds on the role of the ex-Communist. He knows people and details, having been a part of the communist conspiracy. Chambers is not happy about his role as an informer. Chambers never asked for, nor was offered, immunity.

One evening Chambers meets Walter Krivitsky at the apartment of a friend, Isaac Don Levine, in New York. It is not a planned meeting, since he has already broken from the Party and come out of hiding. Krivitsky has also broken with Communism. They discuss the situation in Russia with the slaughter of the Russian sailors at Kronstadt and the Soviet alliance with Nazism, as well as the Soviet foreign policy leading to the Pact. They talk through the night. When the discussion ends, Chambers knows that he will become an informer. Levine is trying to talk Chambers into becoming an informer and makes the appointment with Adolph Berle, the Assistant Secretary of State for security. Chambers agrees to attend the meeting.

Chambers meets Levine in Washington and they go to the residence of Berle, who is living at the Secretary of War's home. They talk for several hours, during which Chambers tells him of Vincent Reno. Berle writes notes of the discussion, which Chambers provides in the chapter. After the meeting, Chambers returns to New York. Berle presents the situation to the President, who does not believe any of it. Chambers waits to see what will happen and finds that nothing happens. "I perceived that the Communists were much more firmly embedded in Government than I had supposed, and that any attempt to disclose or dislodge them was enormously complicated by the political situation in which they were parasitic" (Chapter 10, pg. 473).

A common tactic of the Communists against ex-Communists is to try to make it impossible for the deserter to work. They try a smear campaign against Chambers when he begins working at *Time*, and another one when he begins to testify in 1948. Chambers never hid the fact from *Time* that he had been a member of the Communist underground. Chambers works in spite of them.

He learns of Krivitsky's death from a colleague at *Time*. Esther and the kids are wintering in Florida at the time. She learns from the newspapers, packs up and begins the drive back to New York. She is in South Carolina before she reaches her husband, who tells her to stay in Florida. He sends Krivitsky's widow and children to hide with Esther in Florida until spring, when they return to Maryland. Krivitsky's widow and son soon leave to make their own life. During this time, Chambers, like many ex-Communists, feels a need for religion and attends Quaker meetings and services.



The F.B.I. contacts Chambers two years after his meeting with Berle. Before talking to them, Chambers calls Berle for permission to discuss their conversation. The F.B.I. knows nothing about the Berle meeting or notes. Ludwig Lore had denounced Chambers, which is how the F.B.I. learned of him; but Chambers does not know this. Chambers tells the F.B.I. he will only meet with them in his office since he is worried about his own safety. After several promotions, Chambers develops heart trouble and is confined to bed at the farm in Westminster. The F.B.I. comes to ask him to identify a picture. He identifies the person in the picture as J. Peters.

Chambers returns to *Time*, after an absence of seven or eight months. He gradually regains his strength and resumes his full duties as editor. Soon he becomes the editor of the foreign news section. There is opposition by the foreign correspondents to Chambers' views regarding communist aggression. After a brief illness, Chambers becomes the editor of Special Projects.

There is a federal Grand Jury in session in New York in 1948, at which Hiss testifies that he is not a Communist. This is the Grand Jury that eventually indicts Alger Hiss; but Chambers is not yet active in testifying. Chambers commutes to his home in Westminster. They expand the farm by buying the two adjoining farms. Chambers hopes his children will farm the land after they marry. It is stocked with livestock and they grow crops. Esther and a hired man work the farm, with Chambers helping when he is at home.



Chapter 11 The Hiss Case

Chapter 11 The Hiss Case Summary and Analysis

On August 1, 1948 Chambers is working at *Time*, when he begins to receive calls from the press asking if he has been summoned to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). He doesn't yet know anything about the subpoena. He does not want to testify, but knows he must if he is subpoenaed. Testifying gives him a chance to tell what he knows of the dangers of Communism. Chambers begins to testify on August 3, 1948. Chambers begins by reading a prepared statement, and then answers the questions of the Committee members. The Communists begin their smear campaign by trying to portray Chambers as a drunkard to Richard Nixon. Chambers vows not to read any news reports during the testimony.

When Hiss testifies, he claims that he doesn't know Chambers. Hiss relates his career to the Committee and denies that he is a Communist. Confronted with conflicting testimony, Richard Nixon is appointed to chair a sub-committee to question Chambers and Hiss separately about details of Hiss's home and other things. The sub-committee consists of Congressmen Nixon, Hebert, and Mandel. Chambers testifies to the details of the Hiss apartments, homes and cars, as well as to other details. Chambers tells them of the car that Hiss donated to the Communist Party through a car dealer. This becomes the subject of an August 25 hearing, which begins to turn the tide against Hiss. Chambers provides pages from the testimony in the chapter. Chambers is told confidentially that the Department of Justice is preparing to indict him for perjury. One of the details that Hiss was tricked on was the sighting of a prothonotary warbler. Chambers reported where they had seen one, and Hiss freely admitted to Nixon that he had seen the bird at Arlington, as Chambers had told them.

The Committee members continue to question Hiss about whether or not he knows Chambers. He continues to deny that he knows Chambers. Little by little they trap Hiss. Hiss finally admits that he has met Crosley who rented one of his apartments and stayed in his home several times. He says he can't make an identification from a photograph, but he remembers giving the man a car.

Harry Dexter White dies of a heart attack a few days after testifying at the Committee hearings. Chambers goes to Washington to talk to the Committee members and is taken to New York with Nixon, Stripling and McDowell. They don't tell him why. The sub-committee had a session in progress in a suite at the Hotel Commodore. When Chambers enters the room where the session is in progress, he finds that Hiss is there. Hiss finally admits that he knows Chambers as George Crosley. He gave him a car when Crosley rented his apartment and Crosley gave him an expensive rug as payment for the rent. Hiss tries to deny any other kind of relationship with Chambers. At one point Chambers says to Hiss, "Very easy, Alger. I was a Communist and you were a Communist" (Chapter 11, pg. 611). The smear campaign against Chambers begins.



Nixon tells Chambers that there is to be another public hearing. Chambers is not happy about it. At the open hearing on August 25, Collins, Abt, Pressman and others are called to testify. Most plead the Fifth Amendment in response to questioning by Committee members. Records are produced, and Hiss and others are questioned about them. Records are produced regarding the sale of the car that Hiss claims he gave to Crosley. Both Hiss and Chambers are questioned about the car. Hiss reads a prepared letter into the record, summarizing his career and the people he has worked with. Questioning resumes, and Hiss is asked if he knows of certain people being Communists. He claims that he doesn't know that any of them are Communists.

Chapter 12 The Bridge

Chapter 12 The Bridge Summary and Analysis

This four-page chapter covers Chambers' thinking after the close of the August 25 open session. He commits himself to exposing the Communist conspiracy within the government, since he doesn't like what Hiss is doing in his testimony.



Chapter 13 The Hiss Case II

Chapter 13 The Hiss Case II Summary and Analysis

Chambers is at the beginning of a one hundred day ordeal with the Hiss case. He decides to appear on *Meet the Press*. Hiss had threatened to sue Chambers if he repeated his charge that Hiss is a Communist outside of the hearings. Chambers takes his son to the studio for the *Meet the Press* show, where he states that Alger Hiss was a Communist and may still be one. In the weeks after the show, their peaceful farm is flooded with the press. Also during this period, J. Peters is facing deportation. Immigration does not want Chambers to testify against Peters, which intensifies Chambers' belief in a cover-up.

Alger Hiss sues Chambers for libel. At the same time, Chambers receives a subpoena from the Grand Jury of the Southern District of New York. The Grand Jury has been investigating Communist espionage. When he is asked if he knows of Soviet espionage, he tells them no, knowing that if he answered yes, he would have to tell the whole story and name names. *Time* arranges to finance his legal defense in the libel suit. Chambers admits to his lawyers that he is shielding Hiss because of espionage.

At the pre-trial hearing, Hiss's attorney asks Chambers to give them any written communication from Hiss. Chambers has sixty-five pages of copied correspondence that Hiss had passed during the days they were photographing them. The papers are not with him but are hidden with a relative in New York. Chambers has to travel to New York to redeem the envelop with the papers from Nathan Levine, his wife's nephew. There are also three cylinders of microfilm with the papers. When Chambers arrives back in Maryland at his farm, he looks over the documents and debates what to do. He has his proof against Communism; but he must expose those who he has been shielding, hoping they would see the error of their ways.

Chambers shows the documents to his lawyers, Cleveland and Macmillan. They put them in the law firm's safe and have them copied. Chambers does not give them the microfilm. He wants to develop the film and see what is on them first, and then make the decision as to what to do with them.

Chambers hesitates to give the information to the Justice Department because the government is trying to stifle the case. His wife has to testify at the pre-trial hearings. He drives her to Baltimore, but does not stay with her. He needs time alone to think. "The agony resulted from the conflict between two forms of witness that I had to bear - the witness against Communism and the human witness" (Chapter 12, pg. 744). He considers suicide and decides against it. He also decides not to destroy the microfilm. When he returns to Baltimore to pick-up Esther, he tells Cleveland that he will introduce the copied documents in the pre-trial hearings.



Before introducing the documents, Hiss reads a prepared statement that, until that time, he had only discussed Hiss's Communism and had tried to shield him from the rest. He was hoping that Hiss would break with Communism. Now he is producing proof of espionage. The lawyers number and list each of the documents introduced into evidence. The documents are presented to a judge and turned over to the Justice Department. Chambers is unaware of these events until Stripling, from the HUAC committee, comes to see him. Stripling wants to know if there is any other evidence that he hasn't presented. He tells him no.

Hiss has to appear at a State Department Loyalty Board hearing the next day. Stripling wants him to come to his office after the hearing. Not wanting to take the microfilm with him, Chambers hides it in a pumpkin in his pumpkin patch. When he meets Stripling, he is given a subpoena for any evidence he might have. Two committee investigators drive back to the farm after Chambers to pick up the evidence. Chambers gives them the microfilm.

The next day Chambers receives several tips that he is going to be picked-up by the F.B.I. While they are questioning him, a U.S. Marshall appears with a subpoena for Chambers to appear before the Grand Jury in New York. Before his appearance, Chambers resigns his position at *Time*. He receives a generous severance amount from the publication, so he doesn't have to worry about money. When he appears at the Grand Jury, he is aware of the fact that he has given the government the proof they need to indict him.

During the Grand Jury hearings, Chambers is kept in a separate room. Once in a while the F.B.I. asks if he can identify certain people as they walk by. On occasion he is brought into the Grand Jury room for witnesses to identify him. Nixon calls to tell him that experts at Eastman Kodak claim the microfilm was manufactured in 1945. So how did Chambers have them in 1938? He tells him the sub-committee will be arriving in New York that evening. Before arriving in New York, Nixon calls again to tell him that Kodak made a mistake and that the film checks out. The committee wants to question Chambers, but Justice doesn't want them to. Justice wants the microfilm and the Committee doesn't want to turn it over. They finally compromise.

Chambers attempts suicide with poisonous chemical fumes but fails. He is at the Long Island house of his mother who knows immediately what he has tried. She chastises him about being a quitter.

Chambers wonders if the government will take legal action against him. He doesn't learn until after the end of the Hiss trial that Justice had no plans to prosecute him, even though he always believed that they would. After the last day of the Grand Jury hearing, he returns to his mother's house and learns from her that Alger Hiss has been indicted.



Chapter 14 1949

Chapter 14 1949 Summary and Analysis

In 1949 there is a second Grand Jury and a second Alger Hiss trial. Chambers works with two F.B.I. agents, Tom Spencer and Frank Plant, answering questions in detail and helping them amass as much information as they could. Witnesses, like Wadleigh and Reno, begin to confirm Chambers' story. The F.B.I. finds Keith and Felix. Numerous agents worked hard on the case, which has Tom Murphy chosen to be the prosecutor. Murphy and his team visit the Chambers' farm to explain the trial process to them.

The government wins its case against Alger Hiss, which Chambers finds out from a call by a wire service on January 21, 1950. He is convicted of two counts of perjury.

Chapter 15 Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

Chapter 15 Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow Summary and Analysis

Chambers spends his time on his farm after the trial. This is where he writes this book.



Characters

Whittaker Chambers

Colonel Boris Bykov

Alger Hiss

Henry Julian Wadleigh

Harry Dexter White

Vincent Reno

Abel Gross

Elizabeth Bentley

Abraham George Silverman

Alexander Goldberger

Maxim Lieber

Jay Chambers

Laha Chambers

Richard Chambers

Sam Krieger

Louis Katterfeld

Harry Freeman



John Sherman

Alexander Ulanov

Hal Ware

John Abt

Henry Collins

Bill

Walter Krivitsky

Isaac Don Levine

Richard Nixon

Tom Donegan



Objects/Places

Baltimore, Maryland

Baltimore, Maryland is where the book opens, with the Chambers' living in a house near Mount Royal Terrace.

Washington, D.C.

Washington D.C. is where the government buildings are located and the site of the espionage apparatus.

Pikesville, Maryland

Pikesville is located near Baltimore. It is where the Chambers rent a house to hide in after Chambers breaks with the Soviet apparatus.

Dayton Beach, Florida

Chambers rents a house in Daytona Beach for himself and his family. Being cooped up in the small quarters in Pikeville caused them to impulsively go to Florida.

Long Island, New York

Chambers' childhood home is in Lynbrook, on Long Island, where his family moved when he was two or three. He stays at the family home in Lynbrook until he graduates from high school.

New Orleans, Louisiana

Chambers moves to New Orleans after finishing the job on the D.C. Metro. He rents a room in a rooming house and looks for work, which he doesn't find. He returns to New York.

New York, New York

New York City is the location for Chamber's college days at Columbia College and his early days working in the Party. It is where the *Daily Worker* office is located and where *The New Masses* office is located.



Hunterdon County, New Jersey

Hunterdon County is where the farm is located that Chambers and his new wife Esther live on. It is six miles from Glen Gardner.

Westminster, Maryland

Westminster is the site of the farm that Chamber buys. Esther and the kids live there while he works at *Time*, and Chambers makes a long weekly commute. They name the farm Pipe Creek Farm.

San Francisco, California

Chambers travels to San Francisco for business. He meets Keith while he is there, and they go to see a life-long Communist called the Old Man.



Themes

Belief in a Cause

The underlying theme of the book is belief in a cause. For Chambers, the first cause he believed in is Communism. He looks at a world that is in trouble, a world that is heading for a second world war. He views the world's condition as a crisis of history and finds the solution to the crisis in Communism. Belonging to the Party requires submission to discipline and following the orders of the Party. Working in the underground apparatus requires the living of a secret life and adherence to even more rigid disciplines. For many, it means betrayal of the government they have sworn allegiance to and work for. All of this is done on the strength of their conviction in their belief that Communism is the answer to the crisis in history.

Communism was the darling of many students, intellectuals and well-to-do's. Even though it was illegal, it was fashionably appealing to many. Many honestly thought they could change the world for the better through Communism. Chambers joined the Communist Party because he viewed the world in this way. He thought that Communism was the answer. He did what he was ordered to do. He begins to question Communism during the Purge. When Chambers no longer believes in the cause, he makes his plans to break with Communism. Knowing that others believe in the cause and follow orders, Chambers and his family hideout until he takes a job at *Time*. Even though Chambers no longer believes in the cause, he tries to shield others, hoping they will break with Communism. Eventually his belief in the cause of fighting Communism has him reveal the documents and microfilm that eventually lead to the indictment of Hiss.

Doing the Right Thing

A second underlying theme can be called doing the right thing. This is what Chambers and others think they are doing at each step. Chambers becomes a Communist in the hopes of helping solve the world's problems. Just back from Germany in the days after World War I, Chambers saw a world heading toward a second world war and looked for a way to deal with a world in crisis. He sees the answer in Communism. He, and others, see Communism as a way to solve the world crisis. They believe that they are doing the right thing when they follow orders coming from the Soviet Military Intelligence, and betray their own government. They are doing the right thing because they are serving the revolution. They are doing the right thing by serving the cause that they believe in.

Chambers also believes that he does the right thing when he breaks with Communism and doesn't turn in the traitors he knows about. He shields them, trying to give them the chance to reach their own decision and break with Communism. He feels that fighting Communism is the path that is correct. He visits the active sources and tries to get them to break with Communism. He is finally talked into informing on them and allows Levine



to set up a meeting with the Assistant Secretary of State for security. Nothing comes of the meeting; and it isn't until years later that he receives a subpoena from the House Un-American Activities Committee and a federal Grand Jury in New York. When he is asked about any knowledge of Soviet espionage, he says he has none. He is still trying to shield Alger Hiss and the others.

When Hiss sues him for libel, he produces documents with proof of espionage by Hiss and others. Eventually all of the documents and microfilm are turned over to the Department of Justice and HUAC. The government develops a good enough case to have Alger Hiss indicted. Chambers acted the way he did at each step of the process because he believed he was doing the right thing. He acted according to his strength of conviction.

The Communist Threat

A third underlying theme is the Communist threat. The threat was not just to the United States, but to the entire world. People embraced Communism because it seemed to provide a way to solve the world's problems. People who accepted Communism accepted its rigid discipline and adherence to orders, even as they betrayed their country. The Communists follow the orders of their superiors in the Soviet apparatus. They don't acknowledge one another in public. But they move into various government positions and passed documents on government activities. As Chambers points out, the danger is when they are in high enough positions to affect policy.

The Communist threat was throughout the U.S. government at the time. It was also evident in other governments throughout the free world. The book portrays the Communist tactics, and why they were so hard to catch and prosecute. They stuck together, protected each other and used the government to protect themselves. Ex-Communists like Chambers faced smear campaigns if they weren't killed. Chambers conveys the situation and how it was able to exist and continue in his book.



Style

Perspective

Chambers point of view is quite obvious. He explains why he becomes a Communist and why he breaks with Communism. He explains the reasons because he wants the reader to understand why people embraced Communism and why they broke with Communism. Communism seems to be a way to avoid war and economic crises. Economics crises are a part of capitalism and wars are often related to economic crises. Communism was seen as the solution to this problem for many who embraced it, most of who were students, intellectuals and many well-to-do's. Many were in the ranks of government.

Chambers wants to expose the Communists tactics and strategies. He shows how the underground functions and why it is so effective. He writes from his own experience in the Soviet apparatus. His writing has to influence the reader with the tactics and ease with which it was done.

Tone

The book is written in the first person, as Chambers is telling his own story. Chambers explains why he becomes a Communist and why he becomes an ex-Communist. He presents the facts as he sees them, and events as they occurred. Chambers own personal views are presented throughout the book. The fact that his purpose is to fight Communism is also made clear throughout the book. The tone of the book can best be summed up as honest. Chambers comes across as honest about his beliefs, thought processes and how he makes his decisions. Even though the reader can't always understand the choices that Chambers made, such as not immediately turning over the documents and microfilm to HUAC or the Grand Jury, he still seems honest in his soul-searching. There are times in the book when the reader has to question Chambers' decisions and actions, as in telling the Grand Jury that there was no link to Soviet espionage.

Structure

The structure of the book is simple and straightforward. There is a Foreward, fifteen chapters and an index. Each of the chapters covers a different topic, even though there is a lot of overlap between the chapters. It is not in strictly chronological order. But Chambers covers the material more than adequately in this form. There are a lot of characters; and once in a while readers may have to do some backtracking to refresh their memory about a character, event or place.

Most of the book is written from the author's own recollection. There are some notes and references, as well as many pages of transcripts from the HUAC hearings. This

allows the readers to ascertain how difficult it is to get Hiss to acknowledge that he knows Chambers. Many of the pages of transcripts cover the same material; but they show the fight that Hiss put up. The structure chosen for the book works well. Chambers conveys the concepts that he wants.



Quotes

"The first impact of this blueprint of Communist penetration is likely to be shock at the espionage revealed. That is not the important point. Espionage is always intolerable, just as it is indispensable. No government in sound political health, no government which was not subtly infected with the revolutionary virus of the age, could tolerate in its service any employee against whom there was a suspicion of Communist espionage or even of indiscretion that might serve an espionage purpose." (Chapter 1, pg. 33)

"Coming out of hiding meant much more than walking freely on the streets of Baltimore, receiving letters through the United States mails or openly looking for a job. It meant ceasing merely to survive and beginning to live as other people live. It meant sinking roots and fostering growth." (Chapter 1, pg. 59)

"I left the Communist Party to fight it." (Chapter 1, pg. 63)

"My chief interest, from the beginning, was foreign affairs in which he seemed much less at home, though he had a realistic grasp of the main lines of political force." (Chapter 2, pg. 132)

"That left me absolutely alone. My family could give me no support against the alien world, from which the whole influence of our life divided me. And I felt about our family, a foreboding, an indefinable sense of doom, which I would also share unless I found the strength to free myself from it. I doubted that I had that strength. I decided to find out." (Chapter 2, pg. 149)

"It is the crisis that makes men Communists and it is the crisis that keeps men Communists. For the Communist who breaks with Communism must break not only with the power of its vision and its faith. He must break in the full knowledge that he will find himself facing the crisis of history, but this time without even that solution which Communism presents, and crushed by the knowledge that the solution which he sought through Communism is evil against God and man." (Chapter 3, pg. 193)

"I quickly passed on to *Lenin's State and Revolution* and the *ABC of Communism*.... Here was no dodging of the problem of getting and keeping power. Here was the simple statement that terror and dictatorship are justified to defend the socialist revolution if socialism is justified. Terror is an instrument of socialist policy if the crisis was to be overcome. It was months before I could accept even in principle the idea of terror." (Chapter 3, pg. 195)

"The Communist lives in permanent revolt and anger against the injustice of the world around him. But he will suffer almost any degree of injustice, stupidity and personal outrage from the part that he serves. He may fuss, whimper, harangue and even intrigue. But he will not act openly against the authority of the party. For to do so would be to breach discipline. And discipline is not only, to this great secular faith, what discipline is to an army. It is also what piety is to a church. To a Communist, a deliberate



breach of discipline is an act of blasphemy. Only an intolerable situation can make it possible or even imaginable." (Chapter 4, pg. 232)

"The terms 'special institution' and 'underground' could only mean secret, possibly dangerous party work. They could only mean that, somewhere beside the open Communist Party, there existed a concealed party which functioned so smoothly that in seven years as a Communist I had not suspected it. At that time, I thought of the underground as an underground of the American Communist Party." (Chapter 5, pg. 276).

"I was in the Fourth Section of the Soviet Military Intelligence, though no one in the apparatus ever told me that fact and it would be years before I was sure of it." (Chapter 5, pg. 288)

"It is certain that, between the years 1930 and 1948, a group of almost unknown men and women, Communists or close fellow travelers, or their dupes, working in the United States Government, or in some singular unofficial relationship to it, or working in the press, affected the future of every American now alive, and indirectly the fate of every man now going into uniform." (Chapter 7, pg. 331)

"In his failure publicly to deny those lies, Alger Hiss is shielding no one but himself. In lending them the force of this silence, he is adding to his offenses, an offense against the human spirit." (Chapter 7, pg. 374)

"That little effort to warn me, passed along thousands of miles of devious route by unknown hands, was the last of Bill that I would ever know. It was like a final signature hurriedly scrawled in darkness with what generous desperation we can scarcely guess at. My instinct tells me that Bill was a man, by nature too kind, too human, to have survived the purge, and that the note he sent me was his last effort to help someone else when he knew that he could no longer help himself." (Chapter 7, pg. 402)

"Therefore, a 'sleeper apparatus' exists not to act. It waits for the future. It is a reserve unit which will be brought into play only when those who control it see fit, when events dictate, or when it has matured. It takes time to mature a good apparatus. Any apparatus that includes an assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State and an assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury is a 'good apparatus.'" (Chapter 8, pg. 405)

"...What went on in the minds of those Americans, all highly educated men, that made it possible for them to betray their country? Did none of them suffer a crisis of conscience? The question presupposes that whoever asks it has still failed to grasp that Communists mean exactly what they have been saying for a hundred years: they regard any government that is not Communist, including their own, merely as the political machine of a class whose power they have organized expressly to overthrow by all means, including violence." (Chapter 8, 420)

"In the persons of Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White, the Soviet Military Intelligence sat close to the heart of the United States Government. It was not yet in the Cabinet room, but it was not far outside the door." (Chapter 8, pg. 427)



"It was the night when I faced the fact that, if Communism were evil, I could no longer it, and that that was true regardless of the fact that there might be nothing else to serve, that the alternative was a void. It was that void that I faced throughout the night until the alley below me again took form out of the opacity of a sultry dawn." (Chapter 8, pg. 444)

"For in the end, the choice for the ex-Communist is between shielding a small number of people who still actively further what he now sees to be evil, or of helping to shield millions from that evil, or of helping to shield millions from that evil which threatens even their souls. Those who do not inform are still conniving at that evil. That is the crux of the moral choice which an ex-Communist must make in recognizing that the logic of his position makes him an informer." (Chapter 10, pg. 455)

"In those years, too, unknown to me, most of the underground Communists were rapidly rising in the Government. For it should also be borne in mind that for nine years I had to communications of any kind with my former comrades, and, with one or two exceptions, almost never heard their names mentioned. Even about those one or two I knew practically nothing," (Chapter 493)

"The fight in Foreign News was not a fight for control of a seven page section of a newsmagazine. It was a struggle to decide whether a million Americans more or less were going to be given the facts about Soviet aggression, or whether those facts were going to be suppressed, distorted, sugared or perverted into the exact opposite of their true meaning." (Chapter 10, pg. 498)

"I began to testify against Hiss, as it were, bare-handed. I had charged him over the air with having once been a Communist more than a month before his own attorneys demanded any specimens of Hiss' handwriting that I might have, and thus compelled me to look and to find the terrible evidence of the documents where I had had it secreted but forgotten it." (Chapter 10, pg. 513)

"Then I only felt, like many others, that the Communist danger was being concealed from the nation. The Communist danger was being concealed from the nation. The Committee in effect challenged me to spell out that danger where all men could hear it." (Chapter 11, pg. 534)

"I saw at once that it was the counterattack, though I did not then foresee its massive development. But I sensed that in a national conditioned by press, radio and movies to crime and scandal, while knowing almost nothing about Communists, their motives and methods, and much less about ex-Communists, the tactic was shrewd and dangerous. It struck me a psychological blow before the hearing began." (Chapter 11, pg. 627)

"In my future action in the Hiss Case, the problem was never, though I am convinced that many people suppose so, a problem of saving myself from a judgment in the libel suit. No doubt, the Hiss defense intended to force me to ruin myself financially by the costs of defending such a suit. But that was soon taken care of in another way. The developments that results from the libel suit were as unforeseen by Hiss as by me. But



the motives that made them possible had nothing to do with dollars and cents. On my part, they were the same motives that began in the Case." (Chapter 13, pg. 723)

"For I knew that the documents and the film meant much more than any part they might play in the libel suit. They challenged my life itself. They meant that there had been given into my hands the power to prove the existence of the Communist conspiracy. They meant that I must decide once for all whether to destroy that documentary proof and continue to spare those whom I had so far shielded, or to destroy the conspiracy with the means which seemed to have been put into my hands for that reason by the actions of a purpose that reached far back into the past to the moment and the impulse that had first led me to secrete the film and papers. There was this one chance, and only this one, which, if I destroyed the evidence, would never come again. I knew, too, that whatever else I destroyed, I could do what I had to do only if I was first of all willing to destroy myself." (Chapter 13, pg. 738)



Topics for Discussion

Why is it dangerous for a Party member to break with the Party? Was Chambers realistic in taking precautions for his safety when he defected from the Communist Party?

Why does Chambers become a Communist?

The apparatus that Chambers ran under Bykov is one of the most important in Washington D.C. Discuss why?

What are the factors that contributed to Chambers' break with Communism?

How does Chambers become an informer?

Hiss keeps denying that he knows Chambers. How does the HUAC sub-committee get him to admit he knew Chambers?

What are the pumpkin papers? What is their significance?