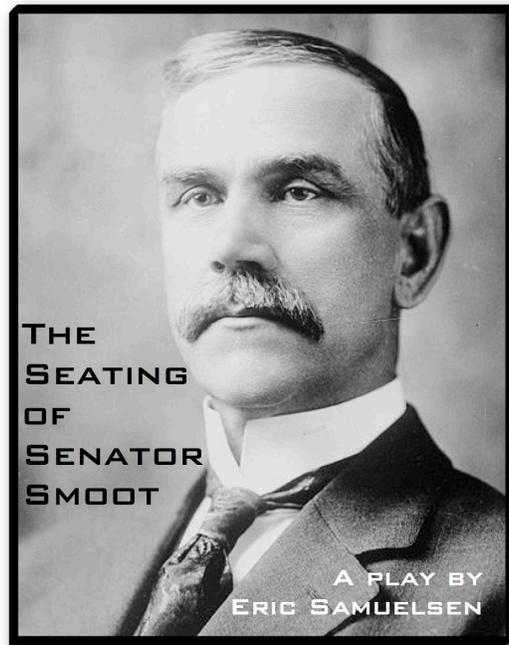


# PERUSAL SCRIPT



Newport, Maine

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## **THE SEATING OF SENATOR SMOOT**

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Characters:

- THE CHORUS** -- Three men and three women, who serve three main functions: First, they play a number of smaller roles in the play. Second, they function as the crowd in public and group scenes. Third, they function at times as a group narrator. CHORUS ONE, TWO, and THREE are men, FOUR, FIVE and SIX are women.
- SMOOT** -- LDS apostle. Age 42 when the play begins, 45 when it ends. Dour, thought to be humorless--although in fact, possessed of a subtle and dry wit--intelligent, hard working. SMOOT is a man who knows exactly who he is and what God wants him to do.
- ALPHA MAE SMOOT** -- His wife. Charming, cultured, a gracious hostess, impeccable homemaker and devoted mother. Used to being the center of Utah cultured society, she is unprepared for the ugly publicity brought on by the trial. She meets it head on, the mask never cracking; the strain nearly kills her.
- DUBOIS** -- Idaho senator. In his mid-fifties. Once a rising star in national politics, now a has-been. In his own way, he is also a man of principle and integrity. He retains formidable political skills, and as his fanatical anti-Mormonism becomes politically passé, he clings to it as tenaciously as he once clung to the holy cause of free silver. In the early stages of the alcoholism that would later kill him. As poor as SMOOT is rich, they share a love of family, and a hatred of graft.
- EDNA DUBOIS** -- Fred's wife. Twenty years his junior, but in many ways, more mature in judgment. She's a brilliant public speaker and organizer, and unshakably devoted to her husband. Likewise cultured and charming, a woman from a prominent family, she is Fred's liaison to the women's clubs and societies that are the backbone of his support.
- JOSEPH F. SMITH** -- Prophet, seer and revelator, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Far more wily and politically astute than anyone suspects. Unwavering in his support for SMOOT, even when most of the Twelve oppose his candidacy.
- HYRUM M. SMITH** -- The youngest member of the Twelve. President Smith's confidante and son.
- THEODORE ROOSEVELT** -- The President of the United States. Also a far more sophisticated politician than his public persona suggests. SMOOT's other main supporter.
- ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE** -- Indiana Senator, and a rare man, the single member of a corrupt Congress with the most unshakable reputation of integrity and honor. Impressed with SMOOT, and a loyal advisor to President Roosevelt, he is certain that supporting SMOOT is political suicide, and that the country is not ready for an Apostle-Senator.
- JULIUS C. BURROWS** -- Senator and chair of the Senate Committee on Elections and Privileges. A complete political creature, a man of no principles whatsoever, craven and corrupt, smooth and polished.

The Original Cast of the BYU Productions was as follows:

**Director:** Bob Nelson

**Reed Smoot:** Troy Lakey

**Alpha Mae Smoot:** Samantha Lakey

**Fred Dubois:** Paul DeWitt

**Edna Dubois:** Alisha Watts

**Joseph F. Smith:** Jay G. Macfarlane

**Teddy Roosevelt:** Peter Myer

**Albert Beveridge:** Lincoln Hoppe

**Julius Burrows:** David C. Simmons

**Other Cast Members:** Joel R. Wallin, Douglas Mark Flandro, Robert Gardner, Traci W. Hainsworth, Jjana Valentiner and Ann Sparks.

A note on ellipses. In this play, whenever an ellipsis (. . .) appears in the middle of a speech in the dialogue of a named character (BEVERIDGE, SMOOT), it is meant to indicate a pause. When a double dash (--) appears, it indicates an interrupted line; the next speaker needs to top it.

## A Note

The Seating of Senator Smoot was commissioned by Brigham Young University in 1996, for a production in 1997. Robert Nelson directed the production in the Margetts Theater at BYU's Harris Fine Arts Center.

In writing *The Seating of Senator Smoot*, I inevitably took some liberties with the events and characters of the historical record. For the most part, these liberties involved conflating a number of characters to a few, and slightly altering the timetable of events. For example, for the most part, the examinations of witnesses by the Committee on Privileges and Elections was conducted by Robert W. Tayler, counsel for the protestants. To intensify the personal conflict between Smoot and Dubois, I gave a number of Tayler's lines to Dubois. In the same spirit, I occasionally gave lines of Mr. A. S. Worthington, Smoot's counsel, to Senator Beveridge, and indeed cut the character of Worthington altogether. In addition, a number of other attorneys and senators took part in those debates, both for and against Smoot; for the sake of simplicity, I chose to center the conflict on Dubois, Beveridge, and Smoot himself. In addition, I took some liberties with the time table regarding Alpha Mae Smoot's campaign for acceptance, which really took place for the most part after this controversy was over.

Obviously my main research source has been the four volumes, and 3,227 pages, of *U.S. Senate, Proceedings before Committee on Privileges and Elections: Protests Against Hon. Reed Smoot to Hold His Seat*. Although I reassigned lines, and greatly condensed questions and answers, all quotations from the trial itself in the play are taken from this source. For the sake of authenticity, I have chosen to retain eccentricities of grammar, syntax and content which may appear in these sections of the play. I also looked briefly at the Congressional Record of 1904-1907, especially the speeches of Feb. 20, 1907, which I quote extensively in Act Three.

In addition, I have found two books to have been absolutely indispensable: Milton R. Merrill's *Reed Smoot: Apostle in Politics*, and Leo W. Graff's *The Senatorial Career of Fred T. Dubois of Idaho*. I also found the following quite helpful: Claude G. Bowers' *Beveridge and the Progressive Era*; John Braeman's *Albert J. Beveridge*; Senator Joseph B. Foraker's *Notes of a Busy Life*; Robert V. Friedenberg's *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rhetoric of Militant Decency*; Francis M. Gibbons' *Joseph F. Smith: Patriarch and Preacher, Prophet of God*; Alan Elmo Haynes' *Brigham Henry Roberts and Reed Smoot: Significant Events in the Development of American Pluralism*; Nathan Miller's *Theodore Roosevelt: A Life*; David Graham Phillips' *The Treason of the Senate*, Thomas J. Schlereth's *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1875-1915*; and Joseph Fielding Smith's *Life of Joseph F. Smith*.

While these sources are the main primary and secondary sources I used in constructing this play, I take full responsibility for any historical errors that may appear in the play, and for any misuse of these sources.

**THE SEATING OF SENATOR SMOOT** by Eric Samuelsen 10m 5w. Simple fluid setting. The plot centers around congressional hearings conducted early in this century regarding the election of Reed Smoot, an apostle in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to the U.S. Senate. The major sticking point was, of course, polygamy -- which Smoot did not practice. But it wasn't really Smoot who was under fire, it was the Church as this 'practice' was perceived to threaten family values. Most of the Anti-Mormon, Anti-Smoot issues were raised by Idaho Senator Fred Dubois and his wife. It is a dynamic play about personal integrity, religious hypocrisy and religious and political freedom and how those who seek to protect their own religious freedoms so often are the attackers of those freedoms for others. **ORDER #2028.**

## ACT ONE

(As the play begins, we see SMOOT, a somewhat younger man, with ALPHA MAE, his wife.)

**CHORUS SIX:** The Seating of Senator SMOOT.

**CHORUS FIVE:** Act One, Prologue.

**CHORUS THREE:** September, 1890.

**CHORUS ONE:** Provo, Utah.

**CHORUS FOUR:** A missionary farewell.

*(CHORUS SIX steps into place, portraying SMOOT's mother, ANNA KIRSTENE MORRISON SMOOT, standing in a receiving line. The other CHORUS members go through the receiving line, mingle, tasting MRS. SMOOT's baked goods. They ad lib, as follows--to SMOOT.)*

I'm sure your father is proud tonight--

Congratulations, Reed--

You scamp, looks like we finally got you--

When are you leaving, Reed--

*(To ALPHA MAE.)*

You poor thing, you simply must come visit us--

You must be very proud of your husband--

So will you be staying here in town, or are you going up to Salt Lake with your mother--

*(To MRS. SMOOT.)*

Anna Kirstene, this is a great day--

For en spennende dag! De må virkelig være stolt--

What are these, they're absolutely delicious--

*(And so on, for coming back through the line, while SMOOT and ALPHA MAE and MRS. SMOOT nod and smile, and reply briefly. Then CHORUS THREE steps out.)*

**CHORUS THREE:** Could I have your attention, please?

*(They all stop and look at him, ad libbing "Sure, Bishop!" and "Hush, it's the bishop.")*

This is a very exciting day for all of us. And a challenge. For Brother Smoot, and also for us, as we'll all have to pitch in and make things as easy as we can for Sister Smoot, and the family.

**ALPHA MAE:** We'll be fine, Bishop.

**CHORUS THREE:** Well, I hope so. I want you to feel free to call on the ward for help, any time.

**ALPHA MAE:** Thank you, Bishop.

**CHORUS THREE:** I think we should hear from our new missionary.

*(CHORUS ad lib encouraging noises.)*

Reed, come up here, tell us a little about what you're going to be doing over in England.

*(CHORUS cheers.)*

**SMOOT:** *(Terribly uncomfortable.)* Well. I'm not much for public speaking.

*(CHORUS encourages him.)*

Well. My main duties will be emigration and mission finances.

*(He starts to step down, notices the others waiting expectantly.)*

It's an opportunity I look forward to.

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*(Awkwardly.)*

And I trust my bookkeeping skills will be of value.

**CHORUS SIX:** And you'll also be preaching the Gospel!

**SMOOT:** Yes, as my mother reminds me, in my spare moments, I'll be expected to proselyte.

**CHORUS SIX:** That's right!

**SMOOT:** But my main responsibilities will be fiduciary. Uh, in accordance with both my gifts and temperament.

*(A certain awkwardness descends on the gathering.)*

**CHORUS THREE:** Well, we all have our own talents, and make the best use of them we can. Thank you Reed.

And best of luck starting tomorrow!

*(Tepid applause. SMOOT steps down.)*

**ALPHA MAE:** Reed?

**SMOOT:** Yes. Mama, I have an early train tomorrow. . .

**CHORUS SIX:** Yes, it's all right, take your wife home.

**ALPHA MAE:** Thanks so much, Mama Smoot. It's been a lovely gathering.

**CHORUS SIX:** The ward needed to say properly farewell. I'll see you at the station tomorrow.

**SMOOT:** Thank you, mora min.

**CHORUS SIX:** *(Suddenly embraces him, hard.)* Preach the gospel, Reed.

**SMOOT:** I will.

**CHORUS SIX:** Three times you are called as missionary. Only the third time do you accept the call. Then you talk of bookkeeping and accounts.

*(Emphatically.)*

You are called to preach the gospel.

**SMOOT:** *(Uncomfortable.)* We all find our own ways to serve.

**CHORUS SIX:** Yes.

*(Steps back from embrace.)*

Yes. I'll see you in the morning, Reed.

**ALPHA MAE:** Good night.

**CHORUS SIX:** God natt.

**SMOOT:** *(Looks after her as she leaves.)* Good night, mora min.

*(ALPHA MAE and SMOOT freeze.)*

**CHORUS ONE:** Twelve years later.

**CHORUS FOUR:** Salt Lake City and Washington D.C.

**CHORUS FIVE:** 1902.

*(The CHORUS members suddenly become newspaper reporters.)*

**CHORUS THREE:** Smoot for Utah!

**CHORUS SIX:** Smoot wins -- senate campaign!

**CHORUS FOUR:** Mormon leader -- named to Senate!

**CHORUS FIVE:** Legislature chooses -- businessman apostle!

**CHORUS THREE:** 1903.

**CHORUS ONE:** The election of Reed Smoot, an apostle in the Mormon Church to the United States Senate, has led to the strongest possible protest--

**The Seating of Senator Smoot** by *Eric Samuelsen*

**CHORUS TWO:** The protestants are comprised -- largely of ministers--

**CHORUS SIX:** The Christian leadership -- of Utah--

**CHORUS FIVE:** Women's societies, and led by--

*(Slightly overlapping the next three lines.)*

Idaho senator--

**CHORUS THREE:** Senate opposition -- is expected to be led by--

**CHORUS FOUR:** *(An M.C.)* And now, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our featured speaker--

**CHORUS FOUR, THREE and ONE:** Senator Fred T. Dubois<sup>1</sup> of Idaho!

*(Cheers from other CHORUS members, getting audience involved as well.)*

**DUBOIS:** Let me read from this statement.

**CHORUS THREE:** Reed Smoot is one of the ruling authorities of the Mormon Church.

**CHORUS TWO:** These authorities claim--

**CHORUS ONE:** And by their followers are accorded the right to claim--

**CHORUS FOUR:** Supreme authority--

**CHORUS FIVE:** Divinely sanctioned--

**CHORUS SIX:** To shape the belief and control the conduct of those under them in all matters whatsoever--

**CHORUS THREE:** Civil and religious--

**CHORUS FOUR:** Temporal and spiritual--

**CHORUS TWO:** And thus do inculcate and encourage a belief in -- polygamy--

**CHORUS FIVE:** Polygamous cohabitation--

**ALL CHORUS:** And are guilty of practices destructive of the family and the home.

**CHORUS ONE:** Fred T. Dubois, senator from Idaho.

**DUBOIS:** I am making this fight because I think it is the right thing to do. I am satisfied that the Mormon Church as a Church is industriously encouraging the practice of polygamy, and that their leaders are also dictating as absolutely as possible how their people should vote!

*(The CHORUS ad libs shouts of "Outrageous", "You tell 'em, Fred" "Monstrous." DUBOIS silences them by raising his hand.)*

They ought not to have the vote.

*(CHORUS shouts "No!")*

They ought not to experience the privileges of American citizens!

*(CHORUS shouts "No!")*

**CHORUS ONE:** Ladies and Gentlemen! Senator Fred Dubois of Idaho!

**DUBOIS:** *(Cheers from CHORUS.)* I have burned all my bridges behind me, and will fight this contest out to the end, regardless of who suffers! I know that it ends my political career! I know that I could have made my terms with the Church without difficulty! But I say to the Church leadership, you cannot defeat me, because I am eternally right in this fight! Let us end this threat to our families, to Christian virtue and to wholesome living! To all honest men and modest women, I call for an end to polygamous barbarism! An end to visionary fanaticism!

An end to the Mormon menace! Expel Reed Smoot from the Senate!

*(Wild cheers from the CHORUS, which steps aside. DUBOIS steps down, EDNA enters.)*

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<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Du-BOYS. Not Du-Bwah.

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**EDNA:** Good, Fred, first rate. We've just time to catch the train.

**DUBOIS:** (*Mopping his brow.*) Who's next, Edna?

**EDNA:** Waxahatchie County Women's Alliance. And meanwhile, I'm to speak at the Women's Literary Society in Fremont.

**DUBOIS:** We meet at the hotel. . .

**EDNA:** Dinner compliments the League of Decency. Your tie.

*(She straightens his tie.)*

It's going well, Fred.

**DUBOIS:** I think so too, Edna.

*(SMOOT and ALPHA MAE come out of their freeze. CHORUS notices him.)*

**CHORUS TWO:** Mr. Smoot.

**CHORUS THREE:** Your response, sir.

**SMOOT:** I have been legally and lawfully elected by the legislature. That's all that matters.

*(The CHORUS waits expectantly.)*

That's all I have to say.

*(The CHORUS turns away.)*

**CHORUS ONE:** (*Tepidly.*) Smoot responds to charges.

**SMOOT:** Come, Alpha Mae, my dear. We have much to do.

**ALPHA MAE:** We have indeed.

*(They exit together.)*

**CHORUS SIX:** (*Contemptuously after them.*) Mormons.

**CHORUS ONE:** The election of 1902. Challenged in 1903. The attack building.

**CHORUS FIVE:** (*Horrified.*) Mormons!

**CHORUS FOUR:** Alliances formed, coalitions built.

**CHORUS SIX:** (*Chuckling.*) Mormons?

**CHORUS FOUR:** The old clichés revived.

**CHORUS ONE:** Mormons!

**CHORUS SIX:** Priapic old paramours, attacking pristine female purity!

**CHORUS TWO:** Mormons!

**CHORUS FOUR:** Danite murderers with satanically sensuous temple rites!

**CHORUS THREE:** Mormons!

**CHORUS FIVE:** Enemies to the family, and to all the values "family" implies!

**CHORUS ONE:** Old questions resurrected.

**CHORUS FIVE:** Can they be trusted--?

**CHORUS FOUR:** Are they even Christian--?

**CHORUS SIX:** Old controversies revisited.

**CHORUS ONE:** Frankly, I'd love to help you. But, well, you know, politics.

**CHORUS THREE:** I'd lose the vote of Missouri--

*(In rapid succession.)*

**CHORUS FOUR:** Idaho--

**CHORUS FIVE:** Colorado--

**CHORUS SIX:** Arkansas--

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**CHORUS TWO:** And so, quietly, without fanfare--

**CHORUS FIVE:** The businessman-apostle launches his own campaign.

**ALL CHORUS:** Smoot!

**CHORUS SIX:** Smoot for the senate.

**CHORUS ONE:** Reed Smoot elected--

**CHORUS FIVE:** Act One. Plots and plans.

*(Enter HYRUM M. SMITH and PRESIDENT SMITH.)*

**HYRUM:** *(Disgusted.)* Senator Smoot.

**CHORUS ONE:** Hyrum M. Smith, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** For now, at least.

**CHORUS THREE:** Joseph F. Smith, President of the Church.

**HYRUM:** Why?

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** Why? He asked for permission to run. I granted it. He was the choice of the legislature.

**HYRUM:** He's ambitious.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** In God's service, Hyrum, not always a bad thing.

**HYRUM:** Senator Smoot. He likes the way that looks in the paper. Senator Smoot sounds better to him than merely Elder Smoot.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** That seems unfair, Hyrum. Reed's motives are clear enough. He feels that it's as a Senator that he can best serve as an apostle.

**HYRUM:** But father, he's a businessman, with a bookkeeper's head for figures. With all our financial problems, he would be invaluable--

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** Unfortunately, the Lord chose to call him as an apostle, not as Presiding Bishop.

**HYRUM:** *(Uncomfortably.)* I know. My point is . . . that word. Apostle. I keep thinking of President Woodruff. Heber Kimball. Jed Grant. Parley Pratt.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** Great men, all.

**HYRUM:** The apostolic calling is a missionary calling. Apostles should be men of stature and excitement, who can preach the word through the sheer force of their personality. And the spirit, of course. But not this colorless bookkeeper.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** Perhaps it's time for the apostolic calling to change. Moses Thatcher has charisma. Look how he misused it.

**HYRUM:** I know.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** The Saints listened to him. Not because he talked sense; he didn't. Because he has charisma.

**HYRUM:** The damage will be small enough. He may even repent; I've seen signs of it.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** I hope he does. In the meantime, if just one soul apostatizes because of his charisma, well, Hyrum, that's damage enough. Reed may be colorless, as you say. But I say, we can do with a little colorless competence for a change.

**HYRUM:** But Reed Smoot--

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** He was a member of a stake presidency, and an effective one. Do you know anyone who questions his integrity? Or his testimony?

**HYRUM:** No. Oh, I don't dislike Reed. Humorless stick. Oh, he's a good enough fellow, I suppose. Still,

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Senator Smoot. It sticks in my craw--.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** He has my permission, and my blessing. You must be content with that, son.

**HYRUM:** Of course. It's just . . . Senator Smoot. Worst of all, he's a Republican.

**PRESIDENT SMITH:** (*Laughs.*) I suppose the Church will survive even that.

(*PRESIDENT SMITH exits with HYRUM.*)

**CHORUS FIVE:** Meanwhile, in Washington. . .

(*Enter SMOOT and ALPHA MAE and CHORUS. SMOOT and ALPHA MAE start at opposite ends of the stage, work their way up to the middle, talking simultaneously.*)

**CHORUS ONE:** Yes?

**SMOOT:** I'm Reed Smoot, Senator-elect from Utah. I've come to pay my respects to Senator Foraker, if it's convenient--.

**ALPHA MAE:** I'm Mrs. Reed Smoot. Is Mrs. Burrows at home today--?

**CHORUS ONE:** (*To SMOOT.*) I'm sorry, the Senator is not in today--.

**CHORUS FOUR:** (*To ALPHA MAE.*) Mrs. Burrows is not receiving this afternoon--.

**ALPHA MAE:** Could you present her my card--?

**SMOOT:** I'm here to call on Senator Hoar--.

**CHORUS FOUR:** (Reluctantly.) Yes, ma'am--.

**ALPHA MAE:** My at home day is Wednesday. But I'll also be receiving Thursday mornings, if that is more convenient--.

**CHORUS TWO:** Senator Hoar is not available, sir--.

**CHORUS FOUR:** Quite so, Madame--.

**ALPHA MAE:** Mrs. Reed Smoot to see Mrs. Dillingham--.

**CHORUS TWO:** I could not say when he'll be in, sir--.

**SMOOT:** Senator Smoot to see Mr. McComas--.

**CHORUS FIVE:** Mrs. Dillingham's apologies. She is not receiving today--.

**CHORUS THREE:** I'm sorry sir--.

**CHORUS SIX:** Her apologies, madame--.

**CHORUS THREE AND SIX:** He (She) is not receiving today--.

(*The SMOOTS meet. Exchange a glance.*)

**ALPHA MAE:** Does this town seem strangely deserted to you, Reed?

**SMOOT:** If we were at war, one might think the entire government had been taken prisoner.

**ALPHA MAE:** Harlow and Chloe say they're equally shunned at school.

**SMOOT:** Let's talk to all the children tonight. It's bound to get worse before it gets better.

**ALPHA MAE:** Right. Well, three more rejections, and off to the market.

(*They kiss.*)

**SMOOT:** Senator Smoot to see Senator Aldrich.

**ALPHA MAE:** Mrs. Reed Smoot to visit Mrs. Depew.

(*They exit.*)

**BEVERIDGE:** (*Who has entered with ROOSEVELT.*) Senator Smoot from Utah.

**CHORUS ONE:** Senator Albert J. Beveridge, Republican from Indiana.

**ROOSEVELT:** What of him?

**CHORUS FOUR:** Theodore Roosevelt. President of the United States.

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**BEVERIDGE:** We'll be hearing his case in Privileges and Elections.

**ROOSEVELT:** Privileges and Elections. That greasy little fellow is chair, isn't he? From Michigan? Burrows?

**BEVERIDGE:** Julius Burrows, that's right.

**ROOSEVELT:** I don't like that man, Albert. He hums.

**BEVERIDGE:** He's a very effective floor leader.

**ROOSEVELT:** I suppose. So, this Smoot feller, what's the problem?

**BEVERIDGE:** He's a Republican in trouble. Fred Dubois has protested his seating.

**ROOSEVELT:** Dubois, he's the feller who switched parties, isn't he?

**BEVERIDGE:** That's right. He's from Idaho, switched to the Democrats over free silver.

**ROOSEVELT:** I know him. Good horseman. Used to have that big bay, a gelding, I think it was. . . .

**BEVERIDGE:** Mr. President. The question is Smoot. All right, we need to support him. How strongly? That's the question.

**ROOSEVELT:** Go on.

**BEVERIDGE:** He's from Utah. Hardly a key state, and a Democratic stronghold.

**ROOSEVELT:** McKinley carried it.

**BEVERIDGE:** It's still Bryan country. I doubt we'll carry it next election, not that it matters much if we don't.

**ROOSEVELT:** How did Smoot win it?

**BEVERIDGE:** I assume the Mormon hierarchy ordered it done. Smoot's a Mormon apostle, you know.

**ROOSEVELT:** Kearns is their other senator, isn't he?

**BEVERIDGE:** That's right, Tom Kearns. A "gentile." This isn't the first time they've tried this, you know. First it was Roberts, an admitted polygamist. He was expelled pretty easily. Now it's an apostle. A Mormon apostle. And that's the crucial question.

**ROOSEVELT:** The Mormon question?

**BEVERIDGE:** Precisely. In the public eye, Mormon equals polygamist, and polygamy equals heavens knows what sort of debauchery.

**ROOSEVELT:** Didn't they repudiate polygamy? Some fifteen years ago?

**BEVERIDGE:** It doesn't matter. There's still that air of exotic oddness about them. That golden Bible of theirs, all that strange talk of angels and secret temple rites; it's offensive. People find it offensive.

**ROOSEVELT:** So you think I should just abandon this Smoot feller?

**BEVERIDGE:** He's politically dangerous. Supporting him would do more harm than good. Let him dangle.

**ROOSEVELT:** I've hunted in Utah, you know. Killed my first mountain lion up in the high Uintahs. Bulliest sight on earth, that great creature gathered to pounce.

**BEVERIDGE:** I can imagine.

**ROOSEVELT:** My guide was a Mormon, too. He took an elk, perfect shot, right through the shoulder.

**BEVERIDGE:** I've heard it's beautiful country.

**ROOSEVELT:** We need to preserve it, Albert. It's as I've said for years, national parks--

**BEVERIDGE:** Conservation's a tricky issue. The mining interests and timber trusts--

**ROOSEVELT:** Hang the mining interests.

**BEVERIDGE:** Cheerfully. But push conservation too hard in my state, and you'll see me swinging from the next tree.

**ROOSEVELT:** (*Sighs.*) I know, Albert.

**BEVERIDGE:** Mr. President, on this Smoot matter--

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**ROOSEVELT:** I already advised him to withdraw. Two years ago, when he first announced his intentions, I sent a message to him and to that prophet of theirs, Smith, advising against the election of an apostle. I sent Colonel Loose to Smoot with the same message. Even had it published in the Salt Lake papers. He ignored me completely. Ran anyway.

**BEVERIDGE:** All the more reason to abandon him, Mr. President.

**ROOSEVELT:** Well, why shouldn't he ignore me? I told him, as a citizen, I didn't think he should run, and he responded, as a citizen, that I could go jump in the lake. I like his sand.

**BEVERIDGE:** Mr. President, I--

**ROOSEVELT:** I just want to ask you one question, Albert. Are Mormons good Americans?

**BEVERIDGE:** (Taken aback.) Well, I don't know. I've only met a few of them.

**ROOSEVELT:** Don't shilly-shally, Albert. I hate that. Answer my question. Yes or no?

**BEVERIDGE:** Honestly, Mr. President, I can't answer. I've known too few of them.

**ROOSEVELT:** Then find out. Find out if they're good Americans. Then vote accordingly.

**BEVERIDGE:** (*A bit amused.*) That's . . . good advice.

**ROOSEVELT:** You bet it is, Senator. There are more important things than politics.

*(Enter SMOOT, ALPHA MAE, and CHORUS.)*

**BEVERIDGE:** Yes, Mr. President.

*(He and ROOSEVELT exit.)*

**SMOOT:** I'm here to see Senator Burton.

**ALPHA MAE:** Is Mrs. Bailey at home today?

**CHORUS FOUR:** I'm sorry, sir.

**CHORUS THREE:** Mrs. Bailey is indisposed at the moment, Madame.

**SMOOT:** This is Senator Reed Smoot from Utah, to see Senator Dolliver.

**ALPHA MAE:** Here is my card. If you would be so good as to tell her that I am at home on Wednesdays.

*(Enter DUBOIS and EDNA.)*

**CHORUS SIX:** I'm sorry, Senator. Mr. Dolliver is in conference.

**CHORUS ONE:** I'll pass it on, Mrs. Smoot.

*(SMOOT and ALPHA MAE exchange an exasperated glance, leave. Lights up on DUBOIS and EDNA.)*

**DUBOIS:** And then on Thursday it's the Inter . . . the Inter--

**EDNA:** The Interdenominational Council of Women for Christian and Patriotic Service.

**DUBOIS:** ICW--

**EDNA:** ICWCPS.

**DUBOIS:** That's Helen Gould's group, isn't it?

**EDNA:** She's vice-president. It's headed by Mrs. Darwin James.

**DUBOIS:** And you've contacted the National Mothers' Congress?

**EDNA:** Mrs. Shoff assures me of their full support. As does Lillian Stevens of her organization.

**DUBOIS:** And that's the National--

**EDNA:** The National Christian League for the Promotion of Social Purity.

**DUBOIS:** The NCLPSP. All these clubs and societies, millions of women supporting us, and still denied the vote. It's infuriating.

**EDNA:** We'll have it soon enough.

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**DUBOIS:** I certainly hope so. We nearly got the suffrage amendment out of committee last term. Next time--

**EDNA:** Anyway, the Senate can hardly overlook us, even if we haven't the vote. We have, after all, husbands who vote.

**DUBOIS:** I've been thinking about the petitions, Edna. Six million signatures--

**EDNA:** I think we'll manage it.

**DUBOIS:** No doubt we will. My point is, many of these women belong to several national organizations. Let's ask them to be sure to sign only one petition.

**EDNA:** Fred, the Senate is hardly likely to sort through all these petitions looking for duplicate signatures.

**DUBOIS:** I don't care. This needs to be completely above-board. If we say we have six million signatures, then I want six million genuine signatures.

**EDNA:** Good. I agree. Now, I'm worried about your speech. Maybe we should consider changing that one line: "I know it ends my political career. . ."

**DUBOIS:** Why?

**EDNA:** Self-fulfilling prophecy?

**DUBOIS:** 30% of Idaho is Mormon.

**EDNA:** And 70% is not.

**DUBOIS:** But many who aren't Mormon have business relationships that make it difficult for them to oppose the Church.

**EDNA:** But you did win last election. Your majority in the legislature is still substantial.

**DUBOIS:** That could change, and quickly.

**EDNA:** I wish you'd stop being so pessimistic. We will win in '06.

**DUBOIS:** (*Suddenly depressed.*) We'd better.

**EDNA:** I know.

**DUBOIS:** You saw Jesse's letter.

*(Brandishing the letter.)*

The mortgage on the Blackfoot ranch! And this time, I have no idea how I'm to pay it.

**EDNA:** Talk to Richard. Talk to Charlie Wagner. Maybe--

**DUBOIS:** Oh, they'll lend me money. Let me build up that much more debt.

**EDNA:** They lend you money because they believe in you, Fred.

**DUBOIS:** They'll charge little or no interest, and look positively shocked when I insist on a legal contract, all the formalities.

**EDNA:** I know how it weighs on you.

**DUBOIS:** I go days without opening my mail. Every letter carries more bad news. I dread going to bed at night, thinking about it.

**EDNA:** It's an honorable debt, honorably incurred. How many other members of the 58th Congress will leave office poorer than they entered it?

**DUBOIS:** Few enough.

**EDNA:** Few enough indeed! Mitchell and Burton, Lorimer, Platt and Depew, Clark and Aldrich and Bailey and Overman. All of them, in prison for corruption, or heading there soon. And they're the ones who've been caught.

**DUBOIS:** It's been a terrible time.

**EDNA:** It's a club of millionaires and rascals. And Smoot as rich as any of them.

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**DUBOIS:** At least he's rich going in.

**EDNA:** And when you do leave office, what will you have to show for your twenty years of public service? 160 acres near Blackfoot, mortgaged to the hilt.

*(Embraces him.)*

Is it any wonder I love you?

**DUBOIS:** You're my anchor, Edna. My rock.

**EDNA:** You stand for everything that's good and decent in this country. The people know it. They believe in you.

**DUBOIS:** When I look at you, so confident, so bright, I think, there's absolutely nothing we can't accomplish.

**EDNA:** There isn't.

*(Breaks away.)*

So. No more stewing and fretting. We have a campaign to plan. Now, sit there and take it easy. I need to mail these letters.

*(She exits. ALPHA MAE enters, paces. DUBOIS looks wearily at the letter. After a moment, looking stealthily to see if she can see him, he pulls out a hip flask and drinks. SMOOT enters.)*

**CHORUS ONE:** Wednesday evening.

**CHORUS SIX:** One of a series of Wednesday evenings.

**CHORUS FIVE:** Alpha Mae Smoot, wife of the Utah Senator. "At home" on Wednesdays.

**CHORUS FOUR:** Mrs. Smoot?

**ALPHA MAE:** Yes, Beulah?

**CHORUS FOUR:** It's the sandwiches, madam. The company we've been 'specting. . .

**ALPHA MAE:** No, put them away.

**SMOOT:** It's not eight o'clock yet.

**ALPHA MAE:** If they haven't come by four. . .

*(Angrily.)*

It's the calculated rudeness of it, Reed! I have called and called, I have left my card, I have made my "at home" day known to every hostess of consequence in this city. Not one of them could be bothered even to respond.

**SMOOT:** It's only to be expected.

**ALPHA MAE:** In Salt Lake, this treatment would be unheard of. Even if you intend to cut someone, there are ways to do so courteously.

**SMOOT:** I am persona non grata, Alpha Mae, and will remain so until I am confirmed in my seat. What did you expect?

**ALPHA MAE:** I expected. . . .

*(Controlling herself.)*

I expected a certain coolness, I suppose. I did not expect . . . deliberate discourtesy, complete social isolation.

**SMOOT:** It's only going to get uglier. The hearings haven't yet started. Perhaps it would be best if you returned to Utah. Take at least the youngest children-- .

**ALPHA MAE:** No, Reed.

**SMOOT:** I don't know what more you could accomplish here. And honestly, I'm concerned about little Anna.

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She's such a sensitive soul.

**ALPHA MAE:** She was in tears when she came home from that outing with Molly. And Harlow was fighting at school, I'm sure of it. He'd skinned a knuckle and has a bruise below his eye.

**SMOOT:** I didn't see a bruise.

**ALPHA MAE:** He made a point of hiding it from you. We could send the older children back. Harold and Chloe have talked of missing their friends. They could stay with my sister.

**SMOOT:** It might be best, at least in the interim. Once the hearings begin--.

**ALPHA MAE:** I'll telegram Alice tomorrow.

**SMOOT:** And I wonder if you shouldn't join them.

**ALPHA MAE:** No. I've made the rounds once with no response. Well, then, I'll just make them a second time. And a third.

**SMOOT:** Do you think that's wise, my dear?

**ALPHA MAE:** We are here to open doors never before open to us, Reed. You have your campaign, and it's an important one. But my campaign is just as weighty, in its own small way.

**SMOOT:** Even so--

**ALPHA MAE:** Your weapons are debate and hearings and arguments. My weapons are . . . finger sandwiches and petit fours. And between us, Reed, we'll bring this city to its knees!

**SMOOT:** That's the girl I married.

*(He kisses her. They hold each other briefly, then break.)*

**ALPHA MAE:** *(A little breathlessly.)* In the meantime, Senator Smoot, we have some leftover delicacies, courtesy of my guests this afternoon. Shall we dine?

**SMOOT:** Wonderful. And I'll tell you about my visitor today.

**ALPHA MAE:** *(Astonished, delighted.)* You had company?

**SMOOT:** Stopped by my office. My first senatorial caller.

**ALPHA MAE:** And there you've been sitting, reading the paper.

*(Avidly.)*

Tell me all about it.

*(Enter BURROWS, freeze.)*

**CHORUS ONE:** Senator Julius C. Burrows, Republican from Michigan.

**BURROWS:** *(Enters, all friendliness and smiles.)* Reed!

**SMOOT:** Senator Burrows.

**BURROWS:** Oh, please, let's not stand on ceremony. It's Julius.

**SMOOT:** Julius.

**BURROWS:** *(Looks around admiringly.)* Furnished and moved in already. Very nice. I like the roll-top desk. Mmmm . . . Rented?

**SMOOT:** Purchased.

**BURROWS:** How very . . . mmmmm . . . optimistic of you.

**ALPHA MAE:** A chilly start. Who is this Burrows?

**SMOOT:** Chair of the committee.

**ALPHA MAE:** Privileges and elections? The committee that's investigating your case?

**SMOOT:** That's right.

**ALPHA MAE:** Privileges and Elections. And they can remove you from office?

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**SMOOT:** They can recommend that the Senate do so.

**ALPHA MAE:** What a nasty assignment.

**BURROWS:** Really, it was the bad part of a deal I cut some years ago. I wanted Ways and Means . . .  
mmmm . . . who doesn't . . . but plums like that come with a price, and the price, in this case--  
*(Pauses meaningfully)*

**SMOOT:** I understand.

**BURROWS:** I'm a great believer in . . . mmmm . . . collegiality, Reed. We're under constant scrutiny, and in our zeal to serve our constituents, from time to time, we get ourselves into . . . mmmm . . . these minor scrapes.

**SMOOT:** Minor scrapes.

**BURROWS:** As with Mitchell and Burton, mmmm? And Lorimer? And Depew, poor Chauncey, what a handicap that name is for an elected official mmmm? Chauncey Depew?  
*(Chuckles.)*

Chauncey Depew. The effete villain of an Augustin Daly melodrama.

**SMOOT:** You're speaking to a man named Smoot.

**BURROWS:** Heavens yes, Smoot, yes, that's an amusing one too. Smoot, sounds like some sort of . . . minor injury. "Oh, drat, I've got a smoot on my leg." Eh? Or some creature in a fairy story. "Samantha and the Smoot."  
*(Chuckles.)*

**SMOOT:** *(Drily.)* Yes.

**BURROWS:** Yes.  
*(Gets himself under control.)*

No offense, I hope. I've never much cared for the name Julius Caesar Burrows, myself. Pretentious.

**SMOOT:** None taken.

**BURROWS:** Good. Anyway. As I was saying, when a potential . . . mmmm . . . embarrassment arises, it's important that it be investigated thoroughly. But also . . . mmmm . . . sympathetically? You understand me? By those who understand human foibles.

**ALPHA MAE:** What an interesting definition of corruption. A foible. An embarrassment.

**SMOOT:** I thought so too.  
*(To Burrows.)*

My membership in the Mormon Church is neither a . . . a minor scrape or a human foible. Nor is it an embarrassment to me.

**BURROWS:** Precisely what makes your case so unique, Reed. You're being attacked, not for anything particularly that you've done, but . . . mmmmm . . . because of who you are. A Mormon. A Mormon apostle, no less.

**SMOOT:** As you say. It's who I am.

**BURROWS:** Yes. And you're new. There's no past history, no favors to call in, no votes to bargain with. Instead we're being asked to . . . mmmmm . . . assess . . . a faith, a doctrine, a practice. Just not the sort of thing we do. No, Reed, you're certainly unique.

**SMOOT:** My vote would not be a bargaining chip in any case.

**BURROWS:** *(Hastily.)* Nor mine, certainly not. You misunderstand me entirely.

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**SMOOT:** My apologies, then.

**BURROWS:** Accepted.

*(Mournfully.)*

What ugly notions you have, Reed.

**SMOOT:** You'll have to excuse me. I'm not accustomed. . .

**BURROWS:** Quite so. You're not accustomed to us and we're not accustomed to you. We just all need to . . .

mmmm . . . get accustomed to one another.

**SMOOT:** I suppose so.

**BURROWS:** Yes. My point is, Reed, we're a Republican Congress, with a Republican President. Roosevelt. All that Bull Moose optimism, that zeal for reform; he's popular with the people. Already with him, we've seen all these . . . mmmm . . . uncomfortable bills. Anti-trust. Food inspection. Railroad rate reform. Health regulations. All on top of that . . . great ditch he's digging. Doesn't it strike you, as a businessman, as . . . overly hasty?

**ALPHA MAE:** So there it is. Quid pro quo.

**SMOOT:** But so smoothly offered.

**ALPHA MAE:** Vote with us, oppose reform, and his committee will let you in their club.

**SMOOT:** Precisely.

**ALPHA MAE:** How do you turn down so . . . oblique an offer?

**SMOOT:** Obliquely.

*(Back to him.)*

I would weigh each piece of legislation on its merits, Senator.

**BURROWS:** *(Satisfied.)* Quite so, excellent.

**SMOOT:** *(Concerned, suddenly, that he's been misunderstood.)* But I will say that I do support the President.

Without reservation.

**BURROWS:** *(Mock impressed.)* Without reservation. My.

**SMOOT:** And beyond that, of course, I can only vote my conscience.

**BURROWS:** Well, that's an admirable stance.

*(Getting up to go.)*

Thank you for your time, Senator.

**SMOOT:** It was my pleasure.

**BURROWS:** We'll begin the hearings in just a few days, Senator. Expect them to be . . . thorough.

**SMOOT:** I never expected anything else.

**BURROWS:** One last thing, Senator. The President is a man of deep moral convictions. Quite a religious man, and a man whose family is everything to him. All this Mormon . . . mmmmm . . . polygamous . . . salaciousness . . . it's something he's likely to find . . . distasteful. You understand me?

**SMOOT:** I . . . think so.

**BURROWS:** I hope you do. Since you're counting on him to . . . take your side.

*(Looks around the office.)*

You really ought to consider renting your furniture. You really ought. Goodbye Reed.

*(He exits.)*

**ALPHA MAE:** So, already your case is in trouble. Am I right?

**SMOOT:** I believe that's the gist.

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**ALPHA MAE:** This place is so infuriatingly . . . unstraightforward.

**SMOOT:** It is a town of winks and nudges.

**ALPHA MAE:** Not for me. I don't even deserve a wink or nudge, I think.

**SMOOT:** Expect that to change.

**ALPHA MAE:** We'll see.

**SMOOT:** In the meantime, perhaps, it's time for me to make another call.

**ALPHA MAE:** The president?

**SMOOT:** I am, after all, a member of his party.

**ALPHA MAE:** Good. See him. He's got a reputation for honesty, at least.

**SMOOT:** I shall. It would be nice to talk to someone who'll say what he thinks.

*(They exit. Lights up on BURROWS, DUBOIS and CHORUS ONE.)*

**CHORUS TWO:** But Senator Burrows was not finished with his calls that day.

**BURROWS:** *(Affably.)* Senator Dubois, Senator Bailey.

*(Nods to CHORUS.)*

Gentlemen. It is time for us to plan our strategy.

**CHORUS ONE:** *(As BAILEY)* Yes, Fred, what's this all about?

**BURROWS:** We're to be part of a public lynching.

**CHORUS ONE:** *(as BAILEY.)* The Smoot matter?

**DUBOIS:** A public lynching? Not at all. Actually, I rather like Reed, personally.

**BURROWS:** In your . . . citizen's protest, you call it . . . treason.

**CHORUS ONE:** Treason? Fred, let's be reasonable. Allegations of treason, ridiculous. And before Privileges and Elections, it's like trying a murder case before a water rights judge.

**DUBOIS:** We're a kind of Ethics committee--

**CHORUS ONE:** And we deal with cases of minor corruption, dishonest elections--

**DUBOIS:** Quite so. And I'm saying that Reed Smoot was elected dishonestly, just as B.H. Roberts was.

**BURROWS:** Because of the Mormon influence in Utah politics?

**DUBOIS:** Exactly.

**CHORUS ONE:** So you're declaring his election invalid? Or are you trying to remove him from office?

**DUBOIS:** As long as he leaves, what does it matter?

**CHORUS ONE:** It's a difference of some twenty votes.

**BURROWS:** Jack looked it up this morning. To censure and remove a sitting U.S. senator requires a mmmm two thirds majority vote. To declare his election invalid is a simple majority.

**DUBOIS:** Well then, the latter.

**CHORUS ONE:** It won't wash, Fred. Removing a colleague is too serious a business.

**BURROWS:** I agree. I lean towards censure and remove.

**DUBOIS:** You say you've read the charges--

**BURROWS:** And an impressive list it is. I suppose that my . . . mmmm . . . difficulty with it, Fred, is that so many items add up to one.

**DUBOIS:** That one being?

**BURROWS:** Smoot is a Mormon.

**DUBOIS:** A Mormon apostle--

**BURROWS:** Because the Church . . . mmmm . . . interferes inappropriately in political matters. Polygamy,

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revelations, business holdings, they all add up the same way. You oppose Smoot because he's a Mormon.

**DUBOIS:** Well, all right, because he is a Mormon, then.

**BURROWS:** And Mormons are certainly an unpleasant people. I have a niece who became one, you know.

Turned her back on the whole family. Nasty business. But, Fred, I'm still not sure what it matters.

**CHORUS ONE:** After all, why should a polygamist who doesn't polyg be worse than a monogamist who doesn't . . . monog.

*(He laughs at his own joke.)*

**DUBOIS:** Gentlemen, let me tell you a story. A young Mormon man of my acquaintance left to serve a mission in France, but no sooner did his ship leave New York harbor than it sank. The fellow found a job in New York, earned enough for another ticket, and again boarded ship. This one sank mid-Atlantic; nearly all passengers perished. The missionary was among the few survivors rescued and taken to England. In London, he found another job, saved his money, and again bought passage to France. On arriving in Calais, he was detained, as he had no papers or documentation, and it took several weeks before our embassy learned of his plight. When, finally, he was released, he walked to Bayonne, where he was to serve, preaching all along the way. In English, as he knew only a few words of French, with no money, no scriptures, nothing but the clothes on his back. And he's been preaching for nearly two years.

**BURROWS:** Sounds a resourceful young chap.

**DUBOIS:** You miss my point.

**BURROWS:** Which is?

**DUBOIS:** Mormons never give up. When any sensible person would have packed it in and quit, he absolutely refused. He'd have swum the whole ocean if he had to. That's why they're so dangerous. That's why they must be stopped. They set their minds on what they want, and they never, ever give up.

**BURROWS:** Mmmmm. And just what is it they want, Fred?

**DUBOIS:** To convert the whole world to their beliefs. To enslave all of humanity in the net of that . . . that family destroying barbarism.

**CHORUS ONE:** Surely, Fred, you're overstating the case.

**DUBOIS:** Am I? Gentlemen, look. Here is a copy of their sacred book, the Doctrine and Covenants. . .

*(Blackout on them. Up on CHORUS.)*

**CHORUS SIX:** Meanwhile, at the White House, other plots are laid.

**CHORUS FOUR:** Mr. President. Reed Smoot, senator-elect from Utah.

*(Enter ROOSEVELT, BEVERIDGE, SMOOT.)*

**ROOSEVELT:** Mr. Smoot. You know Albert Beveridge.

**SMOOT:** By reputation only. Senator, it is a great privilege.

**BEVERIDGE:** Likewise.

**ROOSEVELT:** Senator. What can I do for you?

**SMOOT:** Mr. President.

*(Takes a deep breath.)*

As you know, my election to the Senate has been . . . a matter of dispute--

**ROOSEVELT:** Yes, and it's before Privileges and Elections. Don't bore me with things we already know.

**SMOOT:** I'm sorry--

**ROOSEVELT:** None of this shilly-shallying around. I hate that. Waste half my life in meetings where people don't know what they want. Tell me what you want, and I'll tell you yes or no.

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**SMOOT:** Well . . . Well. In short, I maintain that this attack is prompted solely by a spirit of religious antagonism. I contend that a religiously motivated attack cannot be condoned in a free nation. And I urge you . . .

*(Running out of steam)*

well, I urge you to oppose it. To support me.

**ROOSEVELT:** They're out to get you because you're Mormon.

**SMOOT:** That's right.

**ROOSEVELT:** No other reason.

**BEVERIDGE:** No political reasons? For example?

**SMOOT:** Political considerations, I suppose.

**BEVERIDGE:** It's politics, Senator. Just Idaho politics, and Utah politics, and Washington D.C. politics.

**SMOOT:** There's a political element--

**BEVERIDGE:** So, politically speaking. Why should the President support you?

**SMOOT:** I suppose it might be politically damaging for him to support me.

**BEVERIDGE:** There you have it.

**SMOOT:** But Senator, beyond politics, tell me, what am I to do, but as a loyal Republican, to appeal to the leader of my party? As a loyal citizen, to appeal to the leader of my country?

**BEVERIDGE:** You're the junior senator, from a state with three electoral votes and a habit of voting Democratic. We have a lot of work to do this session. What makes you so special? What makes you a priority?

**SMOOT:** I have won my seat lawfully, senator. I must be seated, lawfully. If Utah is a state, it must be enfranchised as a state. If Mormons are citizens, we must be enfranchised as citizens. Otherwise, we are not citizens at all, but only quasi citizens, existing by your suffrage within your borders, but unequal in every way that really matters.

**ROOSEVELT:** Bully. Bully for you. So, what do you want me to do about it?

**SMOOT:** Speak up.

**ROOSEVELT:** I can't interfere with a Congressional investigation. That would be unconstitutional.

**SMOOT:** You can let it be known you support me.

**ROOSEVELT:** Will you campaign for me in Utah?

**SMOOT:** I would have in any case.

**ROOSEVELT:** You would, eh? Tell me. How am I likely to fare?

**SMOOT:** It depends on who the Democrats nominate.

**ROOSEVELT:** Well, let's talk politics. Suppose it's . . . who Albert? . . . Judge Parker.

**SMOOT:** I've heard him mentioned.

**BEVERIDGE:** He makes more sense than Hearst or Bryan.

**SMOOT:** Bryan's popular in Utah. Free silver.

**ROOSEVELT:** Ah, yes, silver, the universal elixir.

**SMOOT:** There's still an enthusiasm for it. Misplaced, but there we are.

**ROOSEVELT:** Bryan's a spent force. Let's say it's Parker. Can you deliver me Utah over Alton Parker?

**SMOOT:** Mr. President, I am a Republican. Utah is a Democratic state; indeed, in my home town of Provo, I often think I am the only Republican in town. I will campaign for you, willingly. But I cannot promise--

**BEVERIDGE:** You can't?

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**SMOOT:** No more than you can promise to deliver Indiana, Senator.

**ROOSEVELT:** Good for you.

**BEVERIDGE:** You won your own election. In Utah, you have . . . unusual credentials.

**SMOOT:** You refer to my apostleship.

**BEVERIDGE:** Yes.

**SMOOT:** Senator. One of the charges against me is that the Church exerts too strong an influence over Utah politics; undemocratically instructs its members how to vote. What you are asking, in essence, is for me to prove that charge true.

**BEVERIDGE:** Not at all, I . . .

**SMOOT:** In other words, if the next election proves that this charge against me is correct, it will incline you to overlook it in my favor. Surely you can see why I can enter no such covenant.

**ROOSEVELT:** (Laughs heartily. I like you, Senator. I like your spunk. All right then, no deals. I'll stand by you regardless. Shake on it.

**SMOOT:** (*More relieved than excited.*) Thank you, Mr. President.  
(*Enter CHORUS FOUR.*)

**ROOSEVELT:** Show the Senator to the door, will you?

**CHORUS FOUR:** Certainly, Mr. President. If you'll follow me, Senator.  
(*He and SMOOT exit. BEVERIDGE crosses to ROOSEVELT.*)

**BEVERIDGE:** So you'll support him, Ted. But, what priority shall we make it?

**ROOSEVELT:** A low one, I think. Pass the word where you think it will help, but no public support. I like the man. But he does, after all, only represent three electoral votes.  
(*Music. BLACKOUT. END ACT ONE.*)

**18 pages in ACT TWO**  
**9 pages in ACT THREE**

## **‘SEATING OF SENATOR SMOOT’ A SMOOTH BIT OF UTAH HISTORY**

By Christi C. Babbitt, Staff Writer Deseret News Published: Wednesday, June 5 1996 12:00 a.m. MDT

“The Seating of Senator Smoot,” a historical drama at Brigham Young University, offers some interesting insight into the life of one-time Provo resident and U.S. Sen. Reed Smoot. The play is a great way for audiences to be entertained and learn a little about Utah's history in the process.

"The Seating of Senator Smoot," a historical drama at Brigham Young University, offers some interesting insight into the life of one-time Provo resident and U.S. Sen. Reed Smoot. The play is a great way for audiences to be entertained and learn a little about Utah's history in the process.

The plot centers around congressional hearings conducted early in this century regarding the election of Reed Smoot, an apostle in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to the U.S. Senate. Sen. Fred Dubois of Idaho challenged the election, calling attention to the question of whether Smoot could distance himself from the church enough to make his own decisions or whether his votes would be controlled by church authorities.

A major issue was polygamy, even though Smoot was not a polygamist himself. Dubois argued that the LDS Church's teachings were offensive to family values.

Playwright Eric Samuelson and director Bob Nelson have produced a fine theatrical work which re-creates some of the highlights of these hearings and explores the issues raised during them. "The Seating of Senator Smoot" is well-researched and offers many details of the events while also providing some good dramatic moments. It is interesting to watch the mingling of church and politics and how each character deals with the various issues and questions that are raised.

One of the most impressive aspects of this production is the way it smoothly and quickly flows from one scene to the next. A lot of information is packed into the drama; a chorus of players takes on various roles with simple costume additions and also announces new scenes so the audience can keep up. Rings of a cow bell and short blasts on whistles aid the audience by drawing attention to a player just before he or she announces more helpful information.

The set changes are handled just as smoothly, with a few platforms and chairs quickly moved around to create everything from a bed to the table where senators question their witnesses.

Actual headlines and newspaper stories published at the time of the hearings are projected onto a screen behind the stage. This was an interesting element because it emphasized that the events in the play actually happened while also giving the audience more information to help them understand the story.

The characterization of Fred Dubois and his wife Edna, played by Paul DeWitt and Alisha Watts, is interesting, as they both believe what they are doing to remove Smoot from office is right and good. Edna declares at one point that Fred stands for everything that is good and decent in the United States. Watts is excellent in the role of a strong wife who is deeply involved in her husband's political career.

The actors portraying the senators who conduct the hearings are all good; David C. Simmons portrays a wonderfully annoying and sly Sen. Julius C. Burrows while Lincoln Hoppe is confident and strong in his role as Sen. Albert J. Beveridge. The chorus in this play also deserves mention for the way the members keep the action going and meet the demands this play makes of them.

Although one leaves this play with a great admiration for the struggles of Smoot through his ordeal, it would have been nice to hear from Smoot a little more through the play. The other senators' characters seem a little more fleshed out; it would be enlightening to learn more about Smoot's emotions during his experience.

But overall, this is an excellent production that definitely deserves a larger audience. Celebrate the centennial of Utah by attending "The Seating of Senator Smoot."