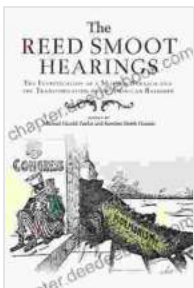


The Reed Smoot Hearings: A Political and Religious Clash in the Senate

The Reed Smoot Hearings were a landmark event in American history that took place in the early 20th century. The hearings focused on the suitability of Reed Smoot, a Republican senator from Utah, to hold office due to his membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), commonly known as the Mormon Church.

The hearings, which lasted for nearly a year, were a contentious affair marked by political intrigue, religious prejudice, and personal attacks. They ultimately resulted in Smoot's confirmation, but they also had a profound impact on the LDS Church and its relationship with the federal government.



The Reed Smoot Hearings: The Investigation of a Mormon Senator and the Transformation of an American Religion by Kondon Smith Hansen

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4134 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 312 pages

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Background

Reed Smoot was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1862. He was raised in the LDS Church and served as a missionary for the church in Europe. After returning to Utah, he became involved in business and politics. In 1895, he was elected to the Utah State Legislature, where he served for six years.

In 1902, Smoot was elected to the United States Senate. His election was controversial from the start, as some members of the Senate objected to his membership in the LDS Church. These objections were based on the belief that the LDS Church was a polygamous sect that was not compatible with American values.

The Hearings

The Reed Smoot Hearings began in 1904 and lasted for nearly a year. The hearings were held by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections, which was chaired by Senator William P. Frye of Maine. The committee heard testimony from a wide range of witnesses, including Smoot himself, LDS Church leaders, and anti-Mormon activists.

The hearings were contentious from the outset. Anti-Mormon activists accused the LDS Church of being a polygamous sect that practiced polygamy, held secret oaths, and was loyal to a foreign power. They also accused Smoot of being a polygamist himself.

Smoot and his supporters denied these allegations. They argued that the LDS Church had renounced polygamy in 1890 and that Smoot was not a polygamist. They also argued that the LDS Church was a legitimate religion and that Smoot's membership in the church did not make him unfit to serve in the Senate.

The Aftermath

The Reed Smoot Hearings ended in 1907 with Smoot's confirmation. The committee voted 42-30 in favor of Smoot's confirmation, with most Republicans voting in favor and most Democrats voting against. The vote was a victory for Smoot and the LDS Church, but it did not end the controversy over the church's practices.

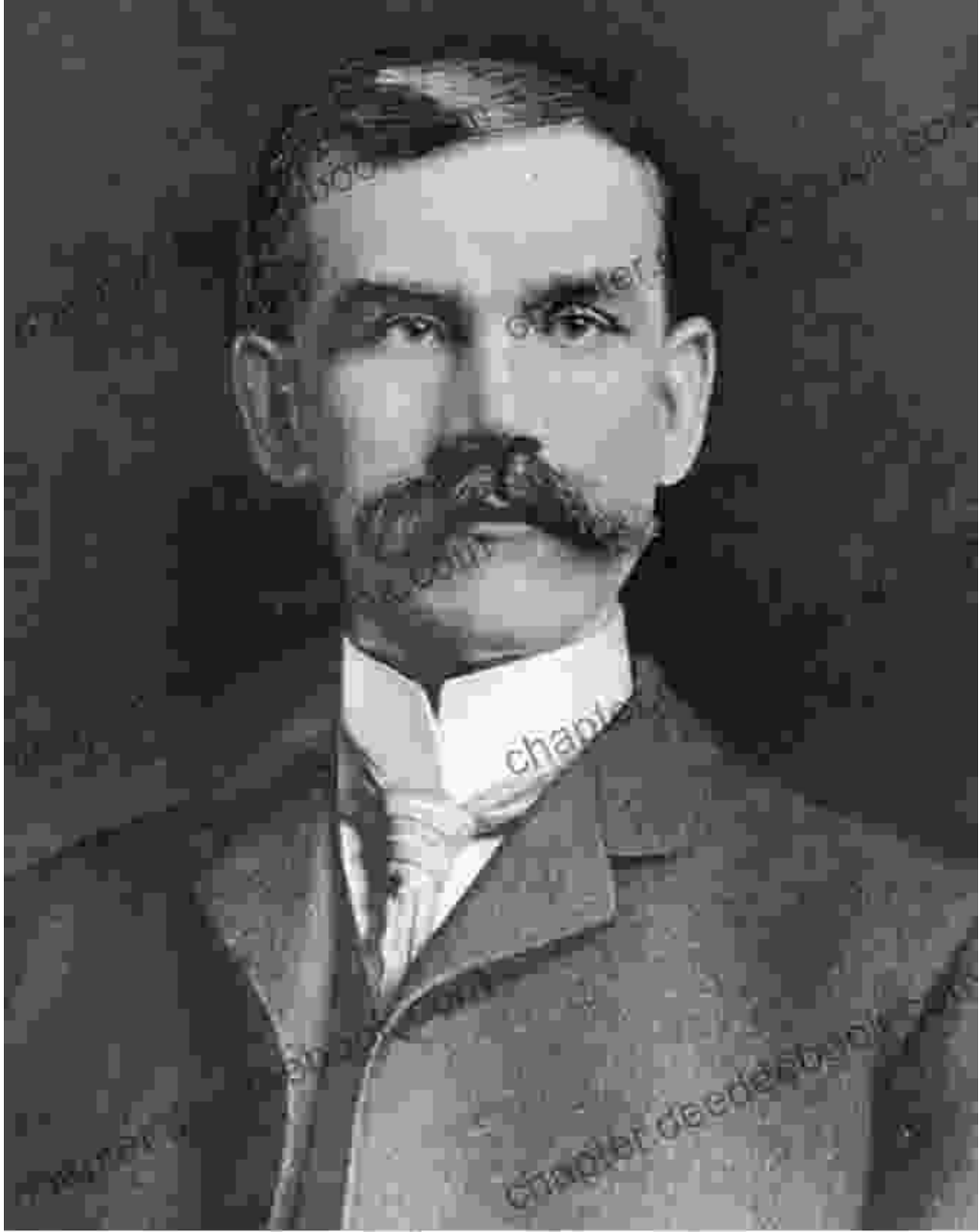
The hearings had a lasting impact on the LDS Church. The hearings exposed the church to intense public scrutiny and criticism. The church was forced to defend its practices and its beliefs, and it was subjected to a great deal of negative publicity.

The hearings also had a significant impact on the relationship between the LDS Church and the federal government. The hearings made it clear that the federal government would not tolerate polygamy or other practices that were seen as incompatible with American values. The hearings also made it clear that the LDS Church would have to be more transparent about its practices and beliefs.

The Reed Smoot Hearings were a pivotal event in American history. The hearings were a political and religious clash that had a profound impact on the LDS Church and its relationship with the federal government.

The hearings are a reminder of the importance of religious freedom and the need to protect minority groups from discrimination. They are also a reminder of the power of prejudice and the dangers of religious bigotry.

Images

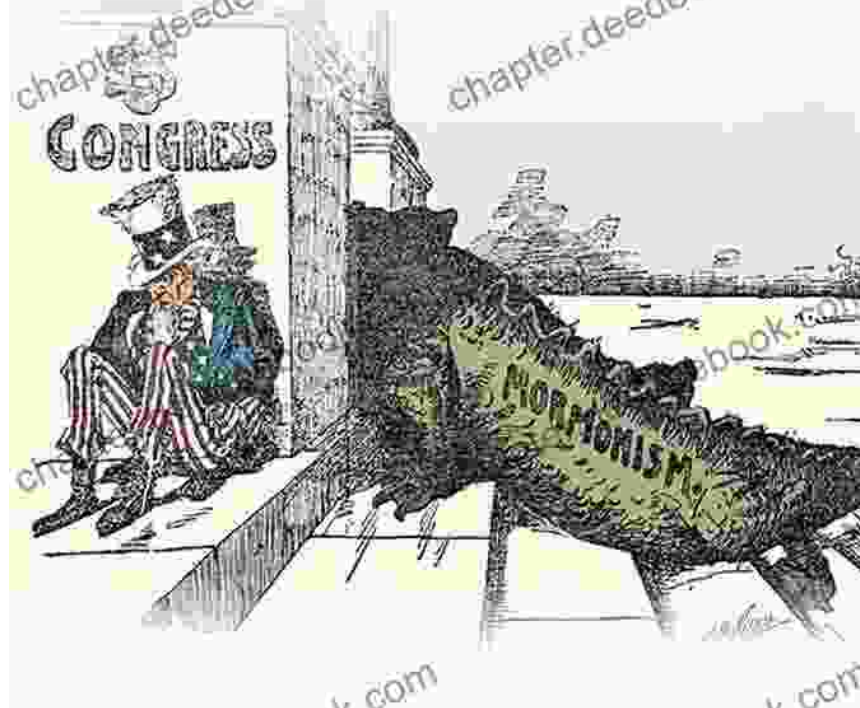


The REED SMOOT HEARINGS

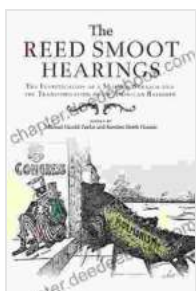
THE INVESTIGATION OF A MORMON SENATOR AND
THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN AMERICAN RELIGION



EDITED BY
Michael Harold Paulos and Konden Smith Hansen



The Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections



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