

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT'S PRESIDENCY

US History II

WILLIAM H. TAFT

- Ohio
- Attended Yale University
 - 2nd in his class
- Cincinnati Law School
- Youngest Solicitor General of the United States at 32
- Gov of the Philippines
 - Declined TR's offer to become a Supreme Court Justice because he felt his work in the Philippines was not done



WILLIAM H. TAFT

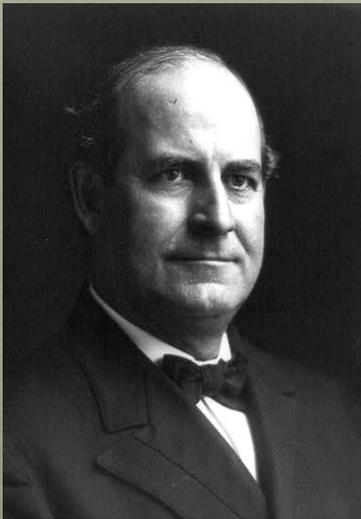


- Secretary of War under TR
- Essentially in charge of the building of the Panama Canal
- Acted as President when TR was away
- Repeatedly turned down offers to be a Supreme Court Justice

1908 ELECTION

Democrat

- William Jennings Bryan
- Popular w/ liberals & populists



Republican

- William H. Taft
- Endorsed Democrat policies & w/ Roosevelt's progressive record, blurred the distinction between the two parties
- Taft wins!
- “Vote for Taft now, you can vote for Bryan anytime!”



TAFT'S PRESIDENCY



- Did not have an easy relationship with the press
- He wanted to, “try to accomplish just as much without any noise.” → referring to TR
- Refused to use the “bully pulpit”
- Very cautious

TRUST-BUSTING

- Busted 90 trusts during a 4 year term
- Did not make him any more popular
- Letter to TR:
 - “When I am addressed as ‘Mr. President,’ I turn to see whether you are not at my elbow”



PAYNE-ALDRICH TARIFF



- Made lowering tariffs as part of campaign (part of the progressive agenda)
- Lowered the overall tariff rate by only 5% and raised rates on crucial resources like coal and iron ore
- Taft signed it into law

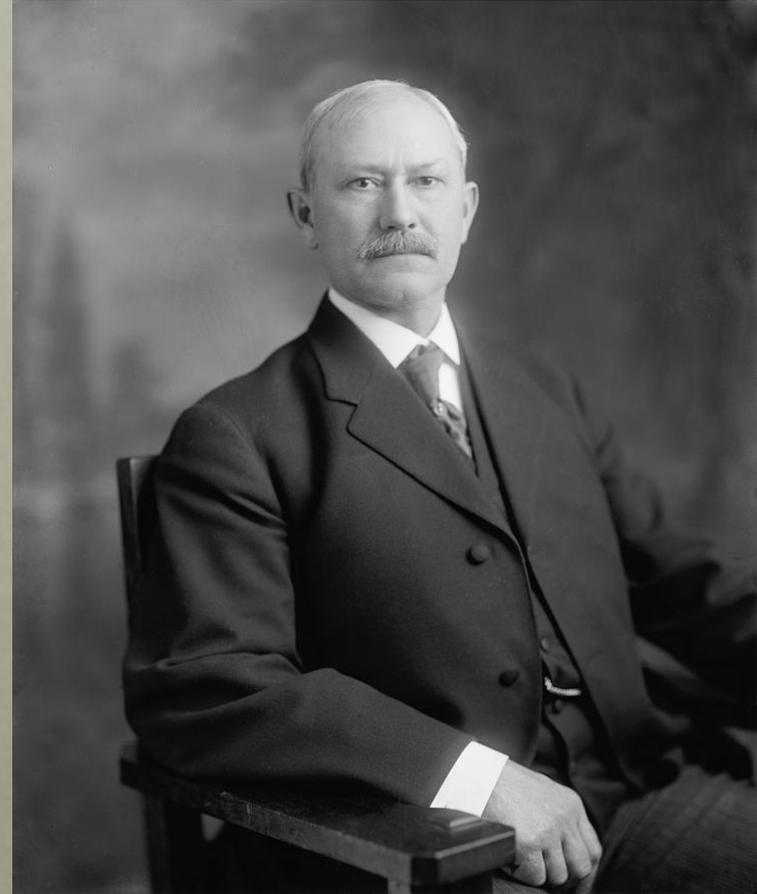
PAYNE-ALDRICH TARIFF

- **Angered Progressives**
- **Increased the tax on print paper**
- **Taft should have provided his own recommendations**
- **Taft felt the President should not dictate lawmaking**

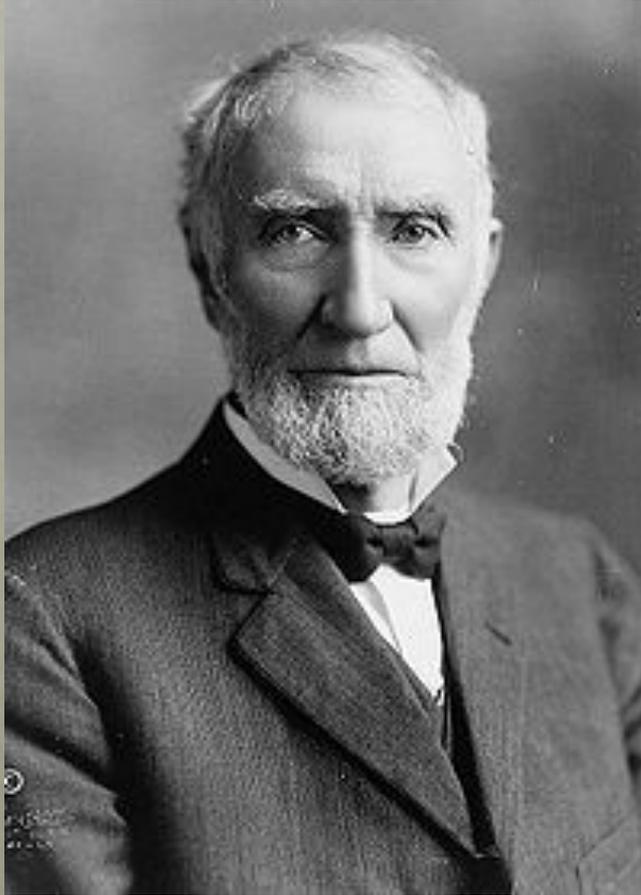


PUBLIC LANDS

- Richard A. Ballinger
 - Lawyer from Seattle
 - Secretary of the Interior
- Removed 1 million acres of forest lands from the reserved list
- Gifford Pinchot & muckrakers protested against him
- Taft sided with Ballinger and fired Pinchot



REPUBLICAN PARTY SPLIT



- Taft supported Joseph “Uncle Joe” Cannon
 - Chairman of the House Rules Committee
 - Weakened or ignored progressive bills
- 1910 midterm election, Republican Party splits
 - Progressives
 - “old guard”
 - Democrats gained control of the House for the first time in 18 years

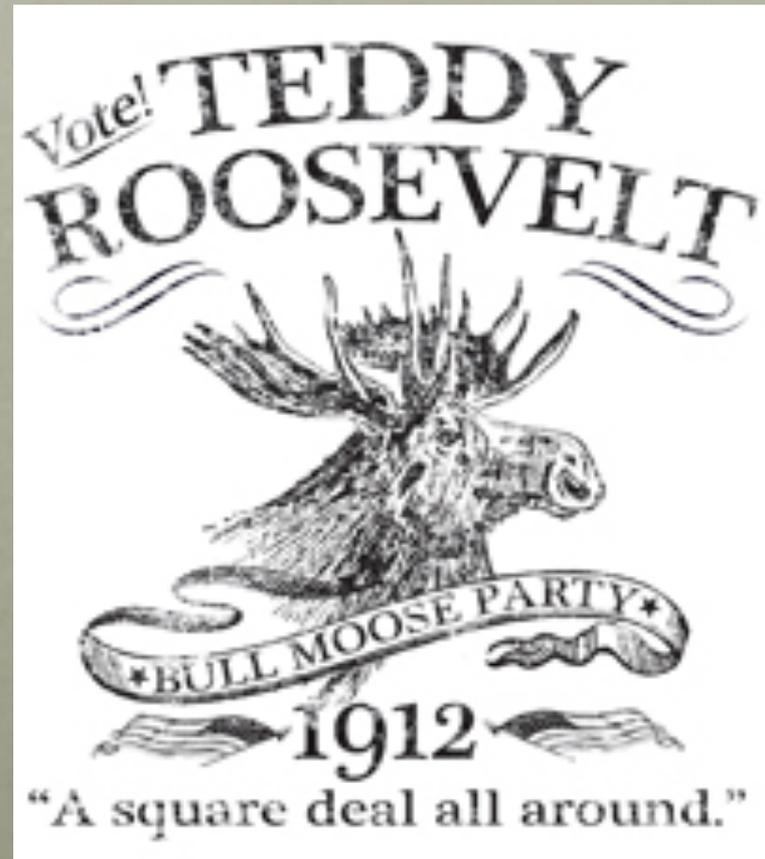
TR RETURNS

- 1910 TR returns from Africa
- “New Nationalism”
 - Gov’t would exert its power
“for the welfare of the
people”



BULL MOOSE PARTY

- 1912, TR wants to run for a 3rd term as a Republican
- Primaries were messy, Taft supporters tried to remove delegates that would vote for TR
- Republican progressives formed their own party
 - Progressive Party/Bull Moose Party



BULL MOOSE PARTY

- Platform – “New Nationalism”
 - Direct election of senators
 - Initiative referendum
 - Recall
 - Women’s suffrage
 - Workmen’s compensation
 - 8 hour workday
 - Minimum wage for women
 - Federal law against child labor
 - Federal trade commission





BULL MOOSE CONVENTION

BULLY YOU BET

WONDER WHAT HE'LL SAY?

HE'LL SOAK 'EM

HE'LL GIVE US PEOPLE & CANCELS

I'M CRAZY ABOUT HIM

LET HE'LL SOAK 'EM!

OH - I CAN HARDLY WAIT

HE WON'T DISAPPOINT US!

IT'S ALL OURS

DELEGATE

Delegates

Delegates

Bridges