Wilsonian Progressivism at Home and Abroad

1912 - 1916
Woodrow Wilson’s Background

After the 1910 elections, Democrats realized that with the Republicans split, they had an opportunity to win the presidency

- Woodrow Wilson seemed to be an ideal president
Woodrow Wilson’s Background

- Wilson had been a professor of political science, eventually becoming President of Princeton in 1902.
- In 1910, he became governor of New Jersey as a respectable “front” candidate for the bosses there.
  - The bosses thought they could control Wilson; instead, he attacked “predatory” trusts and promised to return the state government to the people.
- As governor, Wilson championed many progressive reforms in a conservative state, becoming a prominent leader.
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

The Democratic convention in 1912

- Wilson nominated with support from William Jennings Bryan
- Wilson ran on the “New Freedom” platform, including stronger antitrust legislation, banking reform, and tariff reductions
Woodrow Wilson
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

- The Progressive Republican convention in 1912
  - Roosevelt’s rejection by the Republicans laid the groundwork for a 3rd party challenge
  - Roosevelt’s nomination was begun with Christian symbolism and imagery, and had the spirit of a revival meeting
    - “We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord!” Roosevelt said in his acceptance speech
  - The bull moose became the symbol of Roosevelt’s party when he boasted that he felt “as strong as a bull moose”
The Latest Arrival at the Political Zoo
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

The Republicans nominated Taft to run for the presidency from their party, splitting the vote between the Old Guard and Progressive Republicans.

During the campaign, Taft and Roosevelt bitterly attacked each other, demonstrating the deep divisions in the Republican Party.
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

The real conflict was between which type of progressivism would win - Roosevelt’s New Nationalism or Wilson’s New Freedom

- Both favored a stronger government active in economic affairs, but strongly disagreed on specifics
- Because of their economic differences, voters were given a real choice in the election between political and economic philosophies
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

Roosevelt’s New Nationalism

- Preached ideas of progressive thinker Herbert Croly in The Promise of American Life (1910)
- Supported strengthening of both trusts and labor unions, together with stronger regulatory agencies in Washington
- Also supported women’s suffrage and social welfare, including minimum wage and social insurance laws
- This plan foreshadowed Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal (which would come in the 1930s)
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

Wilson’s New Freedom

- Favored small enterprise, entrepreneurship, and free functioning of markets that weren’t regulated by the government or overpowered by monopolies
- Rejected social welfare and instead believed in the power of competition and individualism - the “man on the make” in Wilson’s words
- The key was to break up the monopolistic trusts through strong enforcement of antitrust laws
The “Bull Moose” Campaign of 1912

During the campaign, Roosevelt was shot in the chest in Milwaukee by a deranged man who was having dreams about McKinley and Roosevelt and opposed Roosevelt’s run for a 3rd term.

- The bullet was slowed by the thick speech he had prepared, so the shot only caused a flesh wound.
- Roosevelt finished his speech and then was examined by a doctor; he was forced to take 2 weeks off the campaign to recuperate.
Roosevelt’s Speech and Spectacle Case, both with Bullet Holes from His Shooting
Woodrow Wilson: A Minority President

Wilson won the 1912 election

- He got 435 electoral votes and 6.2 million popular votes
- Roosevelt got 88 electoral votes and 4.1 million popular votes
- Taft received 8 electoral votes and 3.4 million popular votes
The Election of 1912

[Map showing the results of the 1912 U.S. presidential election, with states colored to indicate the winning party: Democratic (Wilson), Progressive (T. Roosevelt), and Republican (Taft).]

**Electoral Vote Total:** 531
- Democratic (Wilson): 435
- Progressive (T. Roosevelt): 82
- Republican (Taft): 16

**Popular Vote Total:** 15,033,669
- Democratic (Wilson): 4,119,538
- Progressive (T. Roosevelt): 3,484,980
- Republican (Taft): 6,293,454
Woodrow Wilson: A Minority President

Wilson had won as a minority president

- He had only received 41% of the popular vote, and had actually received less popular votes than Bryan in all 3 of his previous losses
- Taft and Roosevelt together had gotten 1.25 million more votes than Wilson
GOP Divided by Bull Moose Equals Democratic Victory

(Puck, 1912)
Woodrow Wilson: A Minority President

The real winner in the election of 1912 was Progressivism

- The combined total for Wilson and Roosevelt far exceeded the conservative Taft’s popular vote total
- In addition, socialist Eugene Debs got over 900,000 popular votes
Eugene Debs Delivering a Speech
Woodrow Wilson: A Minority President

Progressive Republicans had done well for a party that had been organized so quickly; after the election they also were able to push the Democrats to pass their reforms.

As an organized party, the Progressive Republicans were finished after the election:

- They had only relied on Roosevelt, and had elected very few candidates to state and local offices.
- Without officers at the local level, patronage jobs could not be handed out to supporters.
- In contrast, the Socialist Party had elected over 1,000 people to lower offices, ensuring a longer existence.
Woodrow Wilson: A Minority President

Other effects of the election of 1912

- Republicans were the minority party in both houses of Congress, and would be for the next 6 years
- Taft became a professor of law at Yale and then became chief justice of the Supreme Court in 1921
Wilson: The Idealist in Politics

Wilson, the Southerner

- Born in Virginia right before the Civil War, raised in the Carolinas and Georgia
- First man from one of the seceded states to become president since Zachary Taylor (elected in 1848)
- Sympathized with Confederacy and its cause, including its racism
- Shared Jefferson’s faith in the common people, if they were properly informed
Wilson: The Idealist in Politics

Wilson, the moralist
- Raised by strongly religious parents in a Presbyterian house
- Used sincere moral appeal to gain support for his policies
Wilson: The Idealist in Politics

Wilson’s political philosophy

- Believed president should play a strong role in the US; Congress could not function properly unless the president provided leadership
- Gained success by appealing directly to the people over the heads of Congress
Wilson: The Idealist in Politics

Wilson’s serious defects in personality

- He was cheerful and friendly in private, but in public he was seen as cold and distant.
- He did not have the ability to deal directly with people on a one-on-one basis; he loved humanity in the mass instead of individually.
- He was more comfortable with scholars; could be an arrogant intellectual, looking down on people he believed were less intelligent, especially journalists and other politicians.
- He strongly believed in his rightness was very stubborn; he would sometimes rather be defeated than compromise.
Wilson came to the White House with an agenda: to attack the "triple wall of privilege": the tariff, the banks, and the trusts.
Wilson Tackles the Tariff

To get a lowered tariff passed, Wilson summoned Congress into special session in early 1913.

- He also delivered his state of the union address in person, instead of in writing, as every president since Jefferson had done.
Wilson Tackles the Tariff

- The House quickly passed the Underwood Tariff Bill, significantly lowering rates.
- Lobbyists attacked the Senate, pushing for special exceptions in lowering the tariff.
  - Wilson issued a strongly-worded message to the people, urging them to force their senators to resist the lobbyists.
  - Public opinion was on Wilson’s side, and the Underwood tariff passed without the special interest exceptions.
Wilson Tackles the Tariff

 '**Provisions of the Underwood Tariff**

- Substantially reduced import tariffs (from about 41% to 27%)
- It also used the authority granted under the new 16th Amendment to pass a graduated income tax (rates were higher on people with higher incomes)
  - Began with a low tax on incomes over $3,000 (about $57,000 in 2005 dollars)
  - Money from the income tax quickly passed all money gained from the tariff, which before had been the primary way the government got money
Uncle Sam Collecting Income Tax from Wealthy Americans
Wilson Battles the Bankers

The US banking system had not kept up with economic expansion and industrial development

- The system was still governed by the Civil War National Banking Act (which chartered and regulated national banks)
- The most important problem was exposed by the panic of 1907: the currency was inelastic; most currency reserves were held in New York and a few other large cities and could not be moved around quickly in times of financial problems
Uncle Sam’s Need of an Elastic Currency

UNCLE SAM'S NEED OF AN ELASTIC CURRENCY

President Roosevelt: “You see, those galluses ought to have rubber in them, so that when Uncle Sam stoops to move the sheaf there won’t be much strain on the buttons.”

From the Pioneer Press (St. Paul)
Wilson Battles the Bankers

In 1908, Congress had appointed conservative Republican Senator Aldrich to head a commission to study the banking problem.

- In 1911, this special commission recommended a huge bank with many branches (in effect a third Bank of the United States).
Wilson Battles the Bankers

- Democrats listened to other sources
  - Democratic Congressman Arsene Pujo chaired a House committee that investigated the “money monster” and its influence in the US
  - Attorney Louis D. Brandeis (also a Democrat) wrote *Other People’s Money and How the Bankers Use It*, that was scholarly but also stirred up controversy and strong feelings
    - The book attacked investment bankers and large corporations because they exploited middle class investors and squashed competition
  - In June 1913, Wilson again made a personal appearance in Congress to push for the Democrats’ bank reform plan
Wilson Battles the Bankers

1913 - the Federal Reserve Act was passed and signed by Wilson

- This law set up a decentralized bank in government hands, instead of the Republican proposal of a huge private bank with 15 branches
- The president appointed a Federal Reserve Board to oversee the 12 regional reserve districts (each district also had its own central bank)
- The board could also issue paper money ("Federal Reserve Notes"); with this, the amount of money in circulation could be quickly increased in case of financial panic
The Twelve Federal Reserve Districts
A Federal Reserve Note
This law was the most important economic law passed from the Civil War to the New Deal; it allowed the US to modernize and industrialize much more quickly and efficiently than otherwise would have been possible.
Reforming Our Currency

Ireland in the Columbus Dispatch
The President Tames the Trusts

In early 1914, Wilson again spoke before Congress to urge restrictions of the trusts, the 3rd of his “triple wall of privilege”
The President Tames the Trusts

In late 1914, Congress passed the Federal Trade Commission Act

- This law allowed a commission appointed by the president to investigate companies involved in interstate commerce
- The commission was to break up monopolies by investigating unfair trade practices, such as unlawful competition, false advertising, mislabeling, adulteration, and bribery
The President Tames the Trusts

Further, the Clayton Anti-Trust Act of 1914 was passed, strengthening the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

- Added price discrimination and interlocking directorates (the practice of members of corporate board of directors serving on the boards of multiple corporations) to the things trusts were not allowed to do.
Organization of Holding Companies

SUPER HOLDING COMPANY

Holds more than 50% of voting stock

HOLDING COMPANY A

Holds more than 50% of voting stock

CORP. A  CORP. B  CORP. C  CORP. D  CORP. E

HOLDING COMPANY B

CORP. F  CORP. G  CORP. H  CORP. I

HOLDING COMPANY C
The President Tames the Trusts

The Clayton law also reversed a court trend to use the Sherman Act against unions.

- For example, a case against a union of hatmakers on strike ruled the union had to pay over $250,000 because they violated the Sherman Law, forcing the members to lose their savings and homes.
- The Clayton law exempted unions from the Sherman Act and specifically allowed strikes and peaceful picketing.
- Although an important law for labor, conservative judges would restrict its application for several more decades (until the 1930s).
Union Membership, 1864 - 1921
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

- During his first 18 months in office, Wilson had completed his attack on the “triple wall of privilege”
- At the peak of his power, he got many further reforms passed beyond his original goals
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916
- Made credit available to farmers at low interest rates (a Populist demand that was finally enacted)

Warehouse Act of 1916
- Authorized loans to farmers on the basis of staple crops as collateral (another Populist idea)

Other laws benefited rural America by paying for highway construction and agricultural classes in state colleges
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

Seamen’s Act of 1915

- Required decent treatment and living wages for American seamen on merchant ships
- An unintended consequence was that the merchant marine was crippled as freight prices increased to pay for the higher wages
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

- Workingmen’s Compensation Act of 1916
  - Granted assistance to federal civil-service employees during times of disability

- 1916 - passed a law restricting child labor on goods being shipped across state lines, but this law was overturned by the Supreme Court

- Adamson Act of 1916
  - Established an 8-hour day for all employees on trains in interstate commerce, with extra pay for overtime
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

Wilson and race relations

- 1916 - nominated Louis D. Brandeis as the first Jew to be on the Supreme Court
- At the same time, Wilson (who was from the South) was undeniably racist against blacks; segregation in federal jobs actually increased and he refused to listen to a group of black leaders who were protesting this fact
Louis D. Brandeis
Wilsonian Progressivism at High Tide

To get elected in 1916, he attempted to satisfy business leaders by appointing favorable appointments to the Federal Reserve Board and Federal Trade Commission.

But he mostly concentrated on portraying himself as the candidate of Progressivism.
New Directions in Foreign Policy

In foreign policy, Wilson broke with fellow Progressive Roosevelt and even Taft.

- He hated imperialism and rejected an aggressive foreign policy, both Roosevelt’s “big stick” policy and Taft’s dollar diplomacy.
New Directions in Foreign Policy

After only a week in office, Wilson ended Taft’s dollar diplomacy, declaring that the US would not longer offer special support to US investors in Latin America or China.

- US bankers immediately pulled out of a 6-nation loan to China.
1914 - Wilson got Congress to repeal the Panama Canal Tolls Act of 1912

- This law had exempted US shipping from paying tolls in the canal (which Britain had strongly protested)
New Directions in Foreign Policy

Jones Act of 1916

- Gave the Philippines territorial status and promised independence as soon as a “stable government” could be found
- This finally happened 30 years later, July 4, 1946
Ceremony Granting Independence to the Philippines, July, 1946
New Directions in Foreign Policy

1913 crisis with Japan

- California (trying to get rid of all Japanese) prohibited Japanese settlers from owning land
- Japan was extremely angry; US bases in the Philippines were put on high alert in case of an attack
- Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was sent to persuade the California legislature to back down, easing tensions with Japan
New Directions in Foreign Policy

Haiti

- In 1915 the Haitian people overthrew the Haitian president
- Wilson then sent in the marines to protect US lives and property
- 1916 - a US-Haitian treaty gave the US the right to supervise Haitian finances and police
- The Marines then stayed for the next 19 years, making Haiti a US protectorate
US Marines in Haiti
New Directions in Foreign Policy

The Dominican Republic

- 1916 - Marines were sent to put down rioting there
- Marines then stayed in the country for the next 8 years
US Marines in the Dominican Republic
New Directions in Foreign Policy

The Virgin Islands

■ 1917 - Wilson bought the islands from Denmark
■ This purchase increased US power in Caribbean, which was becoming more important because of the Panama Canal
The United States in the Caribbean

The map illustrates the United States' involvement in various Caribbean countries and regions, including:

- **U.S. possession**:
  - Cuba
  - Puerto Rico
  - Guantanamo Bay (U.S. naval base)
  - Virgin Islands (U.S., 1917)

- **U.S. protectorate or quasi-protectorate**:
  - Dominican Republic (U.S. troops, 1914–1934; financial supervision, 1916–1941)
  - Costa Rica
  - Panama (U.S. acquires Canal Zone, 1903)
  - El Salvador
  - Guatemala

The map also highlights significant events and dates, such as U.S. seizures and interventions, indicating the extent of U.S. influence and control in the region.
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

Exploitation in Mexico

- US investors had pumped over $1 billion into the country’s oil, railroads, and mines.
- While Mexico was rich in natural resources, the people were poor, leading to frequent revolts and uprisings against the government and the upper classes.
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

1910 - the Mexicans revolted, installing Francisco I. Madero as president

1913 - a small group of revolutionaries killed Madero and made General Victoriano Huerta president
Victoriano Huerta
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

How the upheavals in Mexico impacted the US:
- A massive migration of Mexicans into the US occurred
- American lives and property were endangered
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

The upheavals led jingoists in the US to demand war

- William Randolph Hearst, an influential newspaper publisher, pushed for war; his views were probably influenced by the huge ranch (larger than Rhode Island) that he owned in Mexico
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

Wilson’s policy toward Mexico

- Wilson refused to send troops to oppose Huerta
  - It was “perilous” to determine foreign policy “in the terms of material interest” (Wilson)
- Wilson refused to recognize Huerta’s government, even though most foreign countries already had
- Wilson did allow US arms to be sent to Huerta’s rivals, Venustiano Carranza and Francisco (“Pancho”) Villa
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

The Tampico Incident

- In April 1914, Mexican authorities in the port city of Tampico arrested a small group of US sailors
- Mexico immediately released the sailors, but refused the US admiral’s demands for a 21-gun salute
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

After the Tampico Incident, Wilson asked Congress for authorization to use force against Mexico

- Before Congress could authorize force, Wilson ordered the US navy to seize the Mexican fort of Vera Cruz
- Huerta as well as his enemy Carranza strongly protested this act
- Only the intervention of the ABC powers (Argentina, Brazil, Chile) prevented a war between the US and Mexico
Raising the US Flag at Vera Cruz
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

July 1914 - Huerta collapsed under the pressure from the US and his enemies inside Mexico and went into exile

- Venustiano Carranza took over as president of Mexico; Carranza was still angry about the intervention of the US in Mexico under Huerta
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

“Pancho” Villa emerged as Carranza’s primary enemy

- Villa hoped to provoke a war between the US and Mexico (to weaken Carranza and to take revenge on the US for its intervention in Mexico)
- In January 1916, Villa took 16 mining engineers off a train in northern Mexico and killed them
- In February 1916, Villa rode into Columbus, New Mexico and killed another 19 Americans
Pancho Villa
Moralistic Diplomacy in Mexico

General John J. “Black Jack” Pershing was ordered to hunt down Villa and break up the band

- Pershing quickly penetrated Mexico and fought with Carranza’s forces and Villa’s group, but did not capture Villa
- In January 1917, because war with Germany was becoming imminent, Pershing was withdrawn from Mexico
Conflicts with Mexico, 1914 - 1917
Uncle Sam’s Chasing a Mexican Bandit into Mexico
Thunder Across the Sea

In the summer of 1914, Europe exploded into war

- A Serb patriot (Gavrilo Princip, part of the Black Hand, a Serbian nationalist organization) killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian-Hungarian throne
- Austria-Hungary, backed by Germany, gave Serbia an ultimatum
Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand
Thunder Across the Sea

The chain reaction of war

- Serbia, backed by its Slav ally Russia, refused to give in fully to the demands of Austria-Hungary
- Russia began to get ready for a war on Germany’s east, while France did the same to Germany’s west
- Germany suddenly attacked France through Belgium, hoping to knock France out of the war and then attack Russia
- Britain was drawn into the war because of an alliance with Belgium and Germany’s threat to its coastline
World War I Alliances Chart

- Italy
- Austria-Hungary
- Germany
- Russia
- France
- Britain
- the Ottoman Empire
- Bulgaria
- Serbia

Red - Triple Entente
Blue - Triple Alliance
Purple - the Balkans

- aid
- treaty
- alliance
Europe’s Tangled Alliances
The Schlieffen Plan
Thunder Across the Sea

Almost overnight, all of Europe was at war

- The Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and later Turkey and Bulgaria
- The Allies: France, Britain, Russia, and later Japan and Italy

Meanwhile, the US felt confident that the Atlantic Ocean would protect them from the war
Europe Goes to War, 1914

1. June 28: Assassination at Sarajevo
2. July 28: Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia
3. July 30: Russia began mobilization
4. August 1: Germany declared war on Russia
5. August 3: Germany declared war on France
6. August 4: Great Britain declared war on Germany
7. August 6: Russia and Austria-Hungary at war
8. August 12: Great Britain declared war on Austria-Hungary
1914 – 1917, Europe Descends into Bloody Trench Warfare

![European Alliances and Battlefronts, 1914-1917](image-url)
A Precarious Neutrality

President Wilson immediately issued a proclamation of neutrality

- He urged Americans to be neutral in thought as well as in deed
- Staying neutral proved to be difficult as both sides tried to get the US on their side
A Precarious Neutrality

Britain

- Had close cultural, linguistic, and economic ties with the US
- Britain controlled most of the transatlantic cables, controlling the news
  - The US was flooded with news of German atrocities (many of which were false), while stories that were harmful to the Allies were censored
A Precarious Neutrality

Germany and Austro-Hungary

- Believed that immigrants in the US from those countries (about 11 million in 1914) would be supportive of the Central Powers
- Although some were supportive, most were glad to be out of the fight
A Precarious Neutrality

Most Americans were strongly anti-German

- Kaiser Wilhelm II was seen as the symbol of autocracy
- Germany’s attack on Belgium, a neutral country, was condemned in the US
- German and Austrian spies planned violence in US factories
  - The plan was stopped when a German briefcase was found with the plans in it
- Even though they opposed Germany, most Americans wanted to stay out of the war
In 1914, the US was in a business recession, but British and French war orders pulled the economy up and out of the recession.

- The US sent huge amounts of war supplies and food to the Allies.
- To pay for these purchases, the Allies borrowed over $2.3 billion from US bankers, led by JP Morgan and Company.
Germany protested, but the trade between the US and Allies did not violate international neutrality laws

- Germany was technically free to trade with the US
- However the British navy controlled the sea lanes and set up a blockade across the North Sea, so that neutral ships could not sail to German ports
- Although US shippers and manufacturers protested, Britain forced US ships to their ports, blocking almost all trade between the US and Germany
US Exports to Europe, 1912 - 1917
America Earns Blood Money

To retaliate, in February 1915 Germany announced a policy of submarine warfare around Britain

- The submarine was so new that there was no provision in international law to cover it
- The rule that a warship must stop and board a merchant ship obviously could not apply to submarines, which could be rammed or sunk if they surfaced
America Earns Blood Money

Germany promised to try not to attack neutral shipping, but warned that mistakes might happen

- Wilson’s decided to continue shipping goods to the Allies and claim neutral shipping rights, hoping that no incident on the ocean would force the US to fight
- Wilson also warned that Germany would be held to “strict accountability” if US ships were attacked or citizens killed
America Earns Blood Money

German submarines (U-boats from the German word “Unterseeboot” or “undersea boat”) began attacking.
- About 90 ships were sunk in early 1915
A German U-boat
America Earns Blood Money

May 7, 1915, a British passenger liner called the Lusitania was sunk

- 1,198 people, including 128 Americans were killed
- The Lusitania had 4,200 cases of ammunition, which was why the Germans sunk the ship
The Sinking of the Lusitania
LUSITANIA SUNK BY A SUBMARINE, PROBABLY 1,260 DEAD:
TWICE TORPEDOED OFF IRISH COAST; SINKS IN 15 MINUTES;
CAPT. TURNER SAVED, FROHMAN AND VANDERBILT MISSING;
WASHINGTON BELIEVES THAT A GRAVE CRISIS IS AT HAND
America Earns Blood Money

American reaction to the Lusitania

- The fact that the ship had weapons bound for the Allies was concealed
- Americans were swept up in a wave of anger against Germany and their “mass murder”
- Americans on the East Coast, closer to the war demanded military action against Germany
- Americans in other parts of the country were angry but not willing to fight
Wilson’s reaction

- He did not want to lead a disunited nation into war, as Madison had in 1812
- Instead, he used strongly-worded letters and diplomacy to get Germany to stop its submarine warfare against the US
  - “There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight.” (Wilson)
America Earns Blood Money

Some Americans thought Wilson went too far, even in the moderate approach that he took.

- Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan resigned rather than sign a document that might lead to war with Germany.

However, many Americans, including Roosevelt, viciously criticized Wilson for refusing to fight.

- Roosevelt called Wilson a coward who used “weasel words.”
Wilson’s diplomatic approach appeared to make progress in 1915

- August - another British passenger liner, the Arabic, was sunk, killing 2 Americans
- As a result, the Germans agreed to not sink unarmed passenger ships *without warning*
America Earns Blood Money

The Sussex pledge

- In March 1916, the Germans sunk a French passenger liner, the Sussex, violating their 1915 promise.
- Wilson threatened to cut off diplomatic relations (a step to certain war) unless the Germans stopped sinking unarmed ships without warning.
- The Germans pledged to do this, but also attached the condition that the US must get the Allies to lift the blockade (which Germany saw as illegal).
- Wilson accepted the pledge without accepting the condition, winning an insecure victory, since Germany could demand that the US enforce the condition at any time.
Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

- The Progressive Republicans nominated Roosevelt, but he refused to run because he didn’t want to split the Republicans again
  - This ended the Progressive Party
- Republicans also wanted Roosevelt, but the Old Guard refused to support him
  - Instead, the Republicans nominated Charles Evans Hughes, a former governor of New York, cold intellectual, but solid Progressive
  - Hughes’ platform attacked the lowering of the tariff, attacks on trusts, and weakness in dealing with Germany and Mexico
Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

Hughes was not a good candidate
- He had a cold personality and did not relate well to people
- He was contradictory regarding criticism of Wilson, depending on the audience
  - For anti-German crowds he harshly criticized Wilson for not standing up to Germany; in isolationist areas, he was much softer
- Hughes also had problems from Roosevelt
  - Publicly he made some bitter speeches against “that damned Presbyterian hypocrite Wilson”
  - In private, he also charged that Hughes was a “whiskered Wilson”; the only difference between the two was “a shave”
Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

- Wilson didn’t directly attack Hughes himself
  - Instead he ran on the slogan, “He Kept Us Out of War”

- Other Democratic politicians warned that electing Hughes would be choosing to fight, hinting at the idea that Roosevelt would be pulling the strings and getting the US into war
Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

The results of the election of 1916

- Hughes won in the East and it looked as if he would win the election
  - Wilson and New York newspapers even believed he had lost
- However, the Midwest and West turned the tide in favor of Wilson
  - These people supported Wilson for his progressive reforms and antiwar policies
  - The final result of the election turned on California, where Wilson won by 3,800 votes, out of over 1 million cast
- Wilson barely won with 277 to 254 electoral votes and 9.1 million to 8.5 million popular votes
The Election of 1916

1916

ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 531

POPULAR VOTE TOTAL: 18,528,743

Democratic (Wilson)

Republican (Hughes)
Wilson Wins Reelection in 1916

Wilson had not promised to keep the country out of war, but only that he had kept us out of war.

- The idea that the US would not get involved in the war was soon to be proven wrong.