

**HANDOUT**

# 1908 ELECTION



**WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT**

and James Sherman

POPULAR VOTE: 7,678,098

ELECTORAL VOTE: 321

**REPUBLICAN**

Taft was Roosevelt's **Secretary of War**.

Republicans helped elect Taft with a **businesslike campaign**.

Taft ran as the **handpicked candidate** of popular president Teddy Roosevelt.

Taft supported **banking reform**.

Taft lost support from **Civil War veterans** for criticizing Ulysses S. Grant for drinking too much.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Taft was the first president to throw out the opening ball of the baseball season on April 10, 1910. This reflected the status of baseball as the "national pastime" as well as the importance of presidents maintaining a high profile in the media while serving in office.

All the candidates **stumped** during the election, ending the taboo against actively promoting themselves during a campaign.

All candidates supported an **income tax**, as the concentration of wealth became a major issue.



**WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN**

and John W. Kern

POPULAR VOTE: 6,409,104

ELECTORAL VOTE: 162

**DEMOCRAT**

Bryan was the **Democratic presidential candidate** in 1896 and 1900.

Bryan's **world tour** of 1905-06 provided international publicity.

Bryan accused Taft of being "**Teddy's Boy**."

Millionaire publisher **William Randolph Hearst** criticized Bryan for bank guarantees.

Some **Democratic newspapers** rejected Bryan and endorsed Taft.

**Morality** became a major issue as Bryan became more evangelical.

Democrats supported an **8-hour workday**.

**THIRD PARTIES**

Eugene **Debs' Socialist Party** received nearly 1/2 a million votes and called for **unemployment assistance** and an **inheritance tax**.

The **Prohibition Party** ran a candidate and convinced seven states to criminalize alcohol.

**Labor** supported Bryan or Debs.

**"Men of ordinary physique and discretion cannot be Presidents and live, if the strain cannot be somehow relieved. We shall be obliged to always be picking our chief magistrates from among wise and prudent athletes, a small class."**

—Woodrow Wilson, commenting on the 1908 campaign in which all major candidates stumped for the first time