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The 1912 Presidential Election in Utah

C. Austin Wahlquist

Brigham Young University - Provo

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THE 1912 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN UTAH

A Thesis
Presented to
the Department of History
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts in History

by
C. Austin Wahlquist
August, 1962
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF TABLES</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE NATIONAL SCENE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. UTAH POLITICS TO 1912</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE UTAH ECONOMY</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE PRESS</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE ISSUES</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE &quot;CHURCH INTERFERENCE&quot; QUESTION</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. THE CAMPAIGN</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total Utah Vote and Per Cent Thereof Won by Major Parties in State Elections from 1891-1910</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Total Utah Vote and Per Cent Thereof Won by Major Parties in Presidential Elections from 1896-1908</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Utah 1912 Vote Cast for Governor and for Representatives to Congress, by Counties</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Utah 1912 Vote Cast for President, by Counties</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Votes Received in 1908 and 1912 in the Eleven Western States by Major Parties</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The election year 1912 began not differently from most election years. The incumbent Republicans started to survey for the public the administration of William Howard Taft and to extol his virtues as President. The office-hungry Democrats, seeking to end sixteen years on the presidential sidelines, began increasing their criticism of Taft and his administration. Both major parties, as well as several minor ones, began to look around for strong candidates capable of winning the national vote in November. By mid-year, the Democrats could see a battle in the making, and when they convened in Baltimore they were not disappointed. It was not until the forty-sixth ballot that Woodrow Wilson was able to swing enough votes from House Speaker Champ Clark to secure the nomination. Wilson's platform was progressive.

All was not well within the Republican ranks, however, and the forces were already afoot which would make this election year memorable. As early as 1911, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt had displayed some concern over the policies of Taft, and by the early months of 1912 he had declared his intention to be a candidate. The Republican Party was somewhat bound to stay with Taft, however, and there seemed to be little doubt that he would receive the nomination at Chicago in June. As convention time approached, the two former friends became bitter enemies. The Taft-controlled convention gave him the nomination easily, and the embattled Roosevelt stormed out—taking his supporters with him. He was duly nominated by his Progressive "Bull Moose" Party in August, and the
die was cast. Not surprisingly, the Republican split eased Wilson into office by a handy margin of both electoral and popular votes. Taft came in a poor third, carrying only two states with eight electoral votes.

The purpose of this study is to determine why, in the light of local conditions and problems, Utah (the other state was Vermont) chose to support President Taft. Why did Utah prefer the conservative policies of this nationally unpopular figure, while the rest of the nation favored the progressivism of Wilson or the progressivism of Roosevelt? What were the national issues which affected Utah? Who exercised political control in the state? What was the party alignment? How important was newspaper opinion? To what extent was personal friendship for Taft, on the part of local Republican leaders, a factor? Did a recent outbreak of Mormon-non-Mormon friction in Utah politics influence the outcome? These are indicative of the questions to be answered in this study.
CHAPTER I

THE NATIONAL SCENE

The election of 1912 was hailed as a victory for those progressive elements in and out of politics which had been becoming more insistent with the years. The Greenback Labor Party of the 1870's, the Farmers' Alliance of the 1880's, and the Populists of the 1890's were the forerunners—with their demands for social, labor, and political reforms. With the turn of the century, these demands came more frequently. Many individuals set themselves to expose the evils of big business, the horrors of the slums, the miserable conditions under which most laborers worked, and the corrupt influences in the Government. Writers of note attacked bitterly these and other areas where reform was needed. The trusts, governmental control by big business, scandals in food and drug processing and manufacturing, child labor, etc.—each was exposed in damning detail in the national press and in best-selling novels.

Theodore Roosevelt, while not the originator of this movement, was sympathetic to it and used the power of his office to support it. Much badly-needed legislation was passed during his years as President, including the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act. However, because of the business influence over Congress, the reformers were able to achieve greater success on the state and local levels. Cities made progress in sanitation, housing, public health, and in
freeing city government from outside control. White-collar workers began joining with the farmers in demanding relief from abuses.

On the state level, Wisconsin, under the fiery Robert M. LaFollette, showed the way. Other states were not slow to follow. Shortly, under the onslaught of crusading progressives, the trusts and influence peddlers were forced to relinquish their strangle holds on state after state. New methods were devised to assure continuing public control of the processes of government. These methods included the initiative, the referendum, and the recall—each of which made the public the final judge of legislation. The secret ballot was introduced and anti-graft laws passed. Such was the course of progressivism.

By 1912 much had been done; but to the militant progressive, much remained to be done. He sought to obtain on the national level the reforms which had been achieved in the more enlightened states. The demands of an aroused citizenry thus set the stage for the campaign and election of 1912.

It will be useful here to outline the development of progressivism in the two major parties prior to, and during, 1912. As indicated above, Teddy Roosevelt was President when the tidal wave of reform first began to break in earnest on the national scene. He lent his support to it and used it to his own advantage. He became extremely popular as the champion of reform; and, even though his party was basically conservative and had long been the friend of business and the "interests," he was able to bring about important changes. Perhaps his greatest appeal to the public lay in his reputation as a trust-buster. The long-idle Sherman Anti-trust Act was brought out and used with frequency.
Effective laws were passed to control the railroads. A Department of Commerce and Labor was formed, with a Bureau of Corporations. The latter was extremely useful in investigating and cracking down on monopolies and helped to pave the way for the era of "trust-busting." Roosevelt considered conservation to be a part of the fight against encroaching big business and was an ardent and enthusiastic conservationist. Shocked by the enormous waste in national resources, he closed thousands of acres to commercial use.

In spite of his accomplishments, Roosevelt as a reformer may have been overrated by the public. Thomas A. Bailey says of him:

He was clearly a progressive with the brakes on, and his reputation as a reformer was inflated. . . . But in his defense one must note that he was confronted by a conservative, unsympathetic, and often hostile Congress. . . .¹

He adds, however, that one of Roosevelt's important contributions as President was that "he helped to direct and make respectable the Progressive movement."²

Roosevelt, satisfied with the start he had made, chose William Howard Taft to carry out his policies, and used his personal prestige to get him nominated and elected. Then, at the age of fifty, he withdrew from the scene.

Taft had some progressive sympathies, but he was no crusader. Although he did aid the cause of reform, notably by attacking some important trusts, this fact was greatly outweighed, in the minds of the progressives, by his other actions. Upon becoming President, he chose

²Ibid.
as advisors a group of ardent Old Guard party members noted for their conservativeness—and their reputation soon became his. The first serious flare-up concerned the tariff, which came to be a key issue in 1912. The 1908 Republican platform had pledged a revision of the existing tariff, but the responsible party leaders in Congress took no action. In 1909, Taft called a special session of Congress for this purpose. The result was the much-criticized Payne-Aldrich Bill. While purporting to end the tariff problem, it made few substantial reductions in rates, and in many cases even raised them. The bulk of the dutiable list was left unchanged. It did, however, contain provisions for a Tariff Board, something Taft very much wanted. Although the Bill fell far short of his expectations, Taft signed it as being better than nothing and to secure the Tariff Board. His critics, angered by his signing, were further antagonized later when, in justifying his action, he stated publicly that "I think the Payne Tariff Bill is the best tariff bill that the Republican Party ever passed. . . ." Senators from the Wheat Belt, led by LaFollette, attempted to defeat the bill. Although unsuccessful, they did manage to convince much of the nation that it had been betrayed. Of the event, DeWitt says, "It was the tariff session of 1909 which, more than any other single factor, drew the line sharper between progressives

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3The statement was made in a speech delivered in Winona, Minnesota, the text of which is quoted by Herbert S. Duffy in his biography, Wm. Howard Taft (New York: Minton Balch and Co., 1930), pp. 239-40. Duffy adds that while Taft's choice of words ( . . . best . . . ever . . . ) was "perhaps unfortunate," he was accurate in his statement, since the Payne-Aldrich Bill was the best Republican tariff bill to that date, in spite of its unpopularity in progressive quarters.
and reactionaries and defined the progressive movement for the country.  

A second source of bitterness in the party was the opening of public lands to private concerns. Lands which Roosevelt had withdrawn were released by Taft’s Secretary of the Interior, Richard Ballinger. Gifford Pinchot, Roosevelt’s conservation head and now Chief Forester, led an attack on Ballinger in which the latter was accused of acting without regard for the public’s interest. Pinchot was subsequently fired for insubordination. In the squabble which followed, a Congressional Committee found Ballinger innocent of any wrongdoing and dismissed Pinchot’s charges. Nevertheless, there were many who questioned Taft’s judgment in firing Pinchot, and the series of accusations and counter-accusations had served to further arouse public and progressive sentiment.

As indicated, there was by this time an important element in the party opposed to the policies of Taft and the Old Guard. The issues are set forth by DeWitt:  

The fight was against the control of the government by special interests. . . . The contest took the form primarily of a struggle against corporations. This struggle had several phases: first, and most important, was the attempt to find some adequate means of controlling and regulating corporate activities; second, and almost as important, was the resistance to the efforts by corporations to exploit the natural resources of the nation in their own behalf; and, finally, came the revolt against the impudent, open revision of the tariff in 1909 in the interest of trusts and monopolies.  

In March of 1910, the Republican insurgents, having discovered that they could outvote the standpat faction in the House by joining with

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5 Ibid., p. 46.
progressive Democrats, revolted against the dictatorial Speaker Joseph G. Cannon and took from him much of his power. By mid-1910 the Republican Party had split wide open. The stage was set for the return of Roosevelt. In June he returned, already informed somewhat as to the condition of things. Almost immediately he set out to change them. He began speaking out against the "perversion" of his program and proclaimed that the government should increase its powers in order to effect the needed social and political reforms.

Early in 1911 the National Progressive Republican League was formed "to promote popular government and progressive legislation." Senator LaFollette was its most likely candidate for the Republican nomination for President. It was assumed that Roosevelt, who had assured the nation that he would not seek a third term, would not be available; but the ex-President had changed his mind. Incensed by what he considered to be Taft's many failings, and seemingly convinced that only he could do the job right, Roosevelt returned to the political arena. He informed the country in February of 1912 that he was indeed in the race and began entering presidential primaries. Pushing the unwilling LaFollette to one side, he assumed leadership of the Progressive wing and dug in. Espousing a comprehensive progressive program, he vehemently attacked Taft as a reactionary and a tool of the interests. His popularity grew and he won most of the presidential primaries he entered. Taft was reluctant to engage in the kind of campaigning his opponent was doing, but as the pressure mounted and the charges shifted from the issues to him personally, he began to fight back with equally angry attacks against Roosevelt and the Progressives, whom he accused of being dangerously radical.
When the delegates met in convention in June, it was almost "no contest." The Taft forces were in complete control of the proceedings, and nearly every contested delegate was decided in his favor. Balked at every turn, the Roosevelt supporters cried "fraud" and stormed from the convention. The Taft-men went on to approve a platform calling for little in the way of reform.

Roosevelt and the Progressives met in convention in August, and Roosevelt was duly nominated for President, with the Progressive Governor of California, Hiram Johnson, getting the call for Vice-President. After some behind-the-scenes debating, the party formed its platform. It called for most of the traditional progressive reforms and added others. These reforms included nation-wide preferential primaries for presidential candidates; direct election of United States senators; initiative, referendum, and recall; an easier method of amending the Constitution; social and industrial justice, i.e., legislation to prevent "industrial accidents, occupational diseases, overwork, involuntary unemployment, and other injurious effects incident to modern industry"; prohibition of child-labor; minimum wage laws; the eight-hour day; "the establishment of a strong federal administrative commission of high standing, which shall maintain permanent active supervision over industrial corporations engaged in interstate commerce"; tariff revision downward; conservation; equal suffrage; the courts; and taxes. "Never before had an important political party taken up in its platform so many vital issues in such a definite way."6 Roosevelt continued his advocacy of a federal government strong enough to carry out these proposals.

6 Ibid., p. 85.
Within the Democratic Party, progressivism had also been an issue for some years. In 1896 William Jennings Bryan ran on a Democratic platform which, borrowing heavily from the Populists, opposed the trusts and the high tariff and favored legislation more advantageous to the working classes. The year 1900 saw these issues take a back seat to "imperialism" versus "prosperity." Roosevelt was progressive enough as President to keep reform from being a Democratic tool in 1904 and 1908. It was not until the Republicans under Taft had acquired the reputation of being anti-reform that the Democrats were able to make appreciable headway under that banner.

By 1909-1910 the progressive Democrats in Congress were joining the insurgent Republicans to thwart the conservatives of both parties. Indicative of the progressive trend, the 1910 election gave the Democrats a majority in the House. Several states were in the hands of progressive Democratic administrations. One of the most able governors of this group was Woodrow Wilson, of New Jersey. He had been elected on a progressive platform by the state machine which expected to be able to control him from behind the scenes. To the chagrin of the "bosses," Wilson actively carried out his promises and in the process wrested state control from the machine.

He then drove through the legislature a sheaf of forward-looking measures—reforms that were tailored to make reactionary New Jersey one of the more liberal states. Filled with righteous indignation, Wilson was at his best. He revealed irresistible reforming zeal, burning eloquence, superb powers of leadership, and a refreshing habit of appealing over the heads of the scheming bosses to the sovereign people.  

7Bailey, op. cit., p. 581.
With this background, Wilson was a logical candidate for the presidential nomination. He carried with him to the convention at Baltimore considerable support. His chief competitor was Champ Clark, Speaker of the House and a man of "only moderately progressive tendencies." While Clark led in the early balloting, he couldn't muster the necessary votes and the nomination went to Wilson. The party matched its progressive candidate with a progressive platform. It called for a downward revision of the tariff and further stated:

We favor the vigorous enforcement of the criminal as well as civil law against trust and trust officials and demand the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States. . . . Believing that the most efficient results under our system of government are to be attained by the full exercise by the states of their reserved sovereign powers, we denounce as usurpation the efforts of our opponents to deprive the states of any of the rights reserved to them, and to enlarge and magnify by indirection the powers of the federal government. . . .

As indicated in the fore-going, all three parties professed to be progressive. The difference lay in the degree to which they favored it. Previous events had pushed to the fore the key issues of trusts and tariff. While the Republicans called for a "stricter regulation of trusts" and for a milder protective tariff, the Democrats demanded an almost complete abolition of trusts and a tariff for revenue only and not for protection. They both favored conservation, banking and currency reform, and a corrupt-practices act. Wilson and Roosevelt differed chiefly on their approach to the trust problem. Roosevelt felt that trusts were not bad as long as they were subject to Federal control; he seemed to be personally less anxious to abolish the tariff than

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8 *Deseret News*, June 26, 1912.
Wilson, although his party favored a sharp revision downward.

The campaign was often heated, and not only the candidates and their backers, but also the press resorted to violent attacks. The outcome was foreseen as November approached, and it was no surprise when Wilson won. He captured 435 electoral votes, compared to 88 for Roosevelt and 8 for Taft. The popular vote gave Wilson 6,293,454; Roosevelt 4,119,538; and Taft 3,484,980. That this was more a victory for progressivism than for the Democrats was evident. Roosevelt and Taft garnered more than a million votes more than Wilson; but the two progressives, Roosevelt and Wilson, received almost three times the vote of the more conservative Taft.
CHAPTER II

UTAH POLITICS TO 1912

It is now necessary to examine briefly the course followed by Utah politics up to 1912. The Mormons in Utah had no strong preference for one national party over the other before 1872, even though they did vote almost as a unit in state elections. As increasing bitterness developed toward the Republican office holders in Washington and the Territory, however, they became predominantly Democrats. During the 1870's and 1880's, the national Republicans passed progressively more onerous legislation, culminating in the Edmunds and Edmunds-Tucker acts, which deprived the Mormon Church of much of its property and took the vote away from men living in polygamy. Although the Church fought back vigorously, it was finally forced to concede defeat. In 1890 President Wilford Woodruff issued his Manifesto, which officially rejected polygamy as a practice of the Church. Since polygamy had been the chief obstacle to statehood, the way was then open for Utah to obtain that long-sought-after status, which it did in 1896.

The territorial parties of that early period were the Mormon People's Party and the anti-Mormon Liberal Party. The Liberals tended to correspond to the national Republicans; and although they were unable to win public office for more than fifteen years, they nevertheless caused the Mormon leaders great concern.

The bitterness engendered by the oppressive Republican and the vituperative Liberal forces was slow to die out, but important changes
were taking place in both official and unofficial Mormon thinking by the late 1880's. As early as 1888, Reed Smoot and other young Mormons formed a Utah County Republican organization for "discussion and advocacy of Republican principles." Another, largely non-Mormon, group was formed in Ogden about the same time. When the relatively calm Cleveland administration was replaced by Republicans in 1889, Church leaders tried to forestall further contrary legislation and appointment of hostile officers in the Territory by appealing to important Republicans in California. President Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and H. B. Clawson met in San Francisco in April, 1889, with Senator Leland Stanford and other members of the railroad group which controlled California politics. The Californians urged abandonment of polygamy and agreed to write to President Harrison, asking that he not make appointments until he could learn more of the Utah situation.\(^1\) Nothing of value came from this meeting, and the new appointees were less friendly than those they replaced. It was later charged by Utah Democrats that

George Q. Cannon . . . had agreed to make every effort to transfer the Mormon vote in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and other western states to the Republican Party in exchange for assurance by the Republican leaders that Republican support of anti-Mormon legislation and Republican opposition to statehood would be withdrawn.\(^2\)

There is no known record to support the claim.

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\(^1\)B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), VI, 286.

\(^2\)Keith Wahlquist, "Reed Smoot," 1940, p. 606. This manuscript is a detailed account, not only of Smoot, but of the Mormons from the earliest times to the death of Smoot. The writer, a Mormon and prominent educator in Weber County, Utah, died suddenly in 1941, at which time arrangements for the publication of the manuscript were dropped. The manuscript is in the possession of his wife, who is now living in Ogden, Utah.
By 1890, the Liberal Party had won control of the Salt Lake City and Ogden City governments. This was partly because polygamists among the Mormons had been disfranchised by the Edmunds Act. A more sweeping proposal, the Cullom–Struble Bill, introduced in Congress in 1890, threatened to take the vote away from all Mormons. Seeing disaster in the passage of the bill, the Church leaders were driven to further action. Representatives were sent to Washington to try to defeat or at least postpone the bill. The representatives were successful and a delay was granted. Democrats again claimed that a promise to make Utah Republican had been the price for non-enactment of the bill.  

It was also believed that a promise had been made in Washington to “do something about polygamy,” and if so, that promise was kept. In the face of insurmountable opposition to the Church because of polygamy, President Woodruff in September of 1890 regretfully “advised” the Church to abandon the practice. The Manifesto was read in Conference in October and accepted by the Church.

The decision was not immediately believed by many non-Mormons, and there were further setbacks for the Church. Nevertheless, the Church leaders had chosen their course and would not turn back. That a new attitude toward the Republicans was blossoming soon became evident. May 20, 1891, a Republican meeting was held in Salt Lake which adopted resolutions calling for a political division in the Territory along

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3Roberts, op. cit., p. 309.

4Wahlquist, op. cit., p. 616.
national party lines. On May 25, the Central Republican Club of Utah was organized. Many important Mormons took active part in the movement. The People's Party central committee decided on May 29 to dissolve their party to permit a realignment along national lines. The Liberal Party, however, refused to dissolve, and also opposed statehood. They feared that as a state, Utah would easily come under Church control and nullify their own gains. At a meeting on May 29, a Liberal speaker stated:

Now you young men of Utah who have worked with the People's Party heretofore, we don't want you, that is we don't want you in the front ranks; if you join us you must remain in the rear and work that way; but don't come to the front and ask to join in the honor with us, because you are not entitled to it.

This refusal of the Liberals to disband may well have been responsible for the ease with which control of the Republican Party in Utah passed into Mormon hands.

Not only for political reasons, but also for economic improvement was the Church leaning toward Republicanism. Arrington speaks of the period immediately following the Manifesto as one of "accommodation" on the part of the Church, and indicates that there was no practical alternative. He states:

The confiscation of more than a million dollars' worth of Church property, . . . the effect of this confiscation and the depression of the 1890's in creating a two-million-dollar Church debt; the end of the frontier, the deteriorating man-land ratio, and the necessity of providing economic opportunities for its growing membership; the relative growth, in numbers and power, of Gentiles in the Mormon commonwealth—all of these factors compelled Church leaders to

5Roberts, op. cit., p. 298.

6Ibid.

7Deseret News, June 6, 1891.

8Ibid., May 30, 1891.
re-examine the policies and position of the Church.

After the Manifesto Church leaders, for the first time in the Church’s history, solicited the aid of outside capital in developing western industry. For the first time, the controlling interest in important Church-sponsored enterprises was sold to eastern investors. For the first time, Church officials began to think of national economic policy in terms agreeable to the conservative wing of the Republican party. Absentee, individualistic, non-sectarian capitalism thus enveloped the Mormon economy at the turn of the century, seemingly with the encouragement and assistance of general authorities of the Church.9

By the 1890’s both wool and sugar were becoming important crops in Utah, and prominent people in the Church leadership were concerned personally with this development. It was not surprising that they should turn to politics and to that party which traditionally favored business. The McKinley tariff of 1890, which provided a bounty of 2 cents per pound on domestic sugar, helped make Republicanism appealing—not only to refinery owners, but to beet-growing farmers, as well. The Republican approach to the tariff question, vital to both sugar and wool interests, also won support for the party. Thus, when the People’s Party disbanded, those of its members with investments in these burgeoning businesses tended to become Republicans. However, the majority of Mormons, still resentful of Republican-appointed Territorial officers, went into the Democratic Party.

At the dissolution of the People’s Party, the Liberals claimed that the Church was trying to get a majority in both national parties.

Wahlquist states that it was known that in some parts of the Territory leading Church men had been encouraged to become Republicans when their own preference would have been to become Democrats. In answer to protests within and without the Church, the Church's attitude toward politics was summarized in June of 1891 in what is known as the "Times Interview." A digest follows:

1. The Church will not assert any right to control the political action of its members. As officers of the Church, they disclaim any such right.
2. There will be no reason for the members of the Church to come together and vote solidly if political conditions in Utah are similar to those which prevail elsewhere.
3. However much appearances may have indicated that the Mormon people have favored a union of Church and state (reference is made to conditions that existed in earlier days in Utah), there is no real disposition to unite Church and state; in fact, there should be a separation between the two.
4. It is the wish of the Mormon people to unite with the great national parties and conduct politics in Utah as they are conducted in all other states; there is no reason why the members of the Church should not act freely with the national parties at all times.
5. It is conceded that there is nothing to be gained for the Church by securing for it political control in Utah with or without statehood; the members and leaders of the Church desire to place it in a position in the community like that occupied by other churches; the only protection the Mormon Church desires is that which it would obtain under general laws which secure the rights of all denominations. It would be unwise for the Mormon people to endeavor to receive any advantages not shared in by all other religious people. All that is asked for the Church is that it shall have equal rights before the law.

In one form or another this disclaimer was repeated many times in the years that followed, as in election after election the charge of Church interference was raised by Democrats and non-Mormons. How much

10Wahlquist, op. cit., p. 629. Roberts states that Church officials were afraid of a Mormon-Democrat non-Mormon-Republican split in Utah and by 1894 were urging "those with no strong convictions either way to be slow in choosing a party," op. cit., p. 321.

11Salt Lake Times, June 23, 1891.
validity there was in the claims is difficult to ascertain. As shown above, the Church leaders themselves generally favored the Republicans, but to what extent they urged their convictions on the lay members has not been wholly determined. However, the consensus seems to be that Church leaders were largely instrumental in bringing about a realignment of voters, at first gradual, then sudden, which saw a large Democratic margin in 1896 dissolve into a small Republican margin in 1900 (a position maintained through 1912). Jonas and Jones state:

The main body of LDS Church membership and the majority of its leaders had been Democratic before 1890. Gradually through the influence and activity of several strong leaders, Reed Smoot, George Q. Cannon, Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, among others, it became Republican.\(^{12}\)

Merrill states that from his evidence, the switch from Bryan in 1900 was attributable to the "dominant church." He adds:

It was a commonplace among politicians and editors that the Republican National Committee . . . had made a deal with its president Lorenzo Snow. The quid pro quo of the deal was never specified nor the charges corroborated by sufficient evidence, but they were repeated in all parts of the country and generally believed in Utah. . . . The disappearance of Bryan's majority, a shift of 53,000 votes, was incontrovertible evidence of Mormon Church political control, in the opinion of the critics.\(^{13}\)

It should be emphasized, in connection with the foregoing, that Mormons were never without a choice, since those men who might most have wanted them to become Republicans, publicly and repeatedly assured them

\(^{12}\) Jonas and Jones, op. cit., p. 291.

of their complete right to vote however they saw fit. President Woodruff reiterated in 1892:

> If we have any desire in this matter, it is that the people of this Territory shall study well the principles of both the great national parties, and then choose which they will join, freely, voluntarily, and honestly, from personal conviction, and then stand by it in all honor and sincerity.\(^\text{14}\)

The same sentiment was still being expressed in 1912.

> Indicative of the sentiment in the Territory just after the Manifesto were the results of the 1891 and 1892 elections. The Democrats won the first with 51 per cent\(^\text{15}\) of the votes; and the second, with 44 per cent. An indication of what was to come, however, can be seen in those and other figures. The Liberals dropped from 26 per cent in 1891 to 20 per cent in 1892; and the Democrats lost 7 per cent, while the Republicans rose 23 per cent to win 36 per cent of the total. The year 1893 saw the two major parties almost tied for legislative seats, but the Liberals were beaten so badly that they formally dissolved the party in December of that year.

> Not only had Mormon-non-Mormon differences begun to lessen, as suggested by the poor showing of the Liberals, but national feeling toward the Mormons had begun to improve. In October, 1893, the property of the Church was returned to it, and in December the Enabling Act passed the House. It passed the Senate, with the help of California Republicans, in July, 1894, and was signed by President Cleveland on July 16.

\(^{14}\)Deseret News, March 25, 1892.

\(^{15}\)Since the total vote varied so much from election to election, it will be easier to follow the relative strength of the parties by showing each party total as a percentage of the election total.
In keeping with the trend, both economic and political, toward Republicanism, that party won its first Territorial victory in 1894, gaining 52 per cent of the votes to 48 per cent for the Democrats and electing a delegate to the National Congress and a majority of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

A great deal of interest centered around the election of 1895, which was to choose officers for the new state to be proclaimed the following January. The Republicans, hoping to retain their lead, nominated Heber M. Wells for Governor and non-Mormon C. E. Allen for Congressman. The Democrats, thinking to pick up any wavering Mormon votes, named John T. Caine for Governor and Brigham H. Roberts, of the First Council of Seventy, for Congressman, and proposed to name as senators, if they won, Apostle Moses Thatcher and ex-delegate Joseph W. Rawlings.

At this juncture, the question of “permission” was introduced into the campaign, resulting in acrimony both within and against the Church. Scarcely a month after the nominations, President Joseph F. Smith, in a priesthood meeting, commented that, by agreement, men holding important positions in the Church should have permission from the First Presidency before engaging in political office-seeking. Neither Roberts nor Thatcher had done so. The Democrats immediately protested the ruling, while the joyful Republicans reported that the Church wanted the two men defeated.\textsuperscript{16} President Woodruff’s attempt to calm things by explaining the permission rule had little effect, although he again disavowed any desire to dictate how the Church should vote.

\textsuperscript{16}Roberts, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 332.
The Republicans won again, but with another small margin. Wells drew 39.8 per cent of the vote to 36.5 per cent for Caine, and a strong Populist vote (23.6 per cent) was probably the deciding factor.

The year 1896 temporarily reversed the trend toward Republicanism and gave the Democrats a resounding victory. The primary issue for the West was silver, and it was believed that Bryan's enthusiasm for that metal would carry many western states, Utah included. The Republicans in the state were divided on the silver question. Party leaders seemed content to accept a national platform plank unfriendly to silver, after the delegates from Utah and other Western states had walked out of the national convention in protest. In November, Bryan polled 87.7 per cent of the votes to only 17.2 per cent for McKinley. Democrat William H. King was elected representative to Congress with 63 per cent of the votes to 37 per cent for his opponent; and most of the Democratic ticket for the Legislature was successful. (There were nearly 7,500 fewer votes cast for Representative than for President.)

The campaigning had been carried out in a continuing atmosphere of ill will, since the permission rule controversy had not yet been fully resolved. A "Political Rule of the Church," stating that Church officers should seek official permission before accepting any position that would take them away from their Church duties for any prolonged time, was presented to the Church in conference and accepted. After much persuasion, Brigham H. Roberts had agreed to the rule; but Moses Thatcher continued to refuse to submit to it. It was expected that

17 Deseret Evening News, April 6, 1896.
the Democrat-controlled Legislature would name him as senator, at least partly to embarrass the Church. An attempt was made, but he lost by a small margin. He subsequently made his peace with the Church, and the matter of permission did not come up again.

The Democratic momentum gained in 1896 carried over to 1898, although somewhat diminished, as B. H. Roberts was elected as Representative to Congress with 54 per cent of the vote to 46 per cent for the Republican candidate. The Legislature remained Democratic.

Then two things happened which dimmed Democratic hopes for a victory in 1900. First, the Legislature was unable to agree on a choice for senator, even after 150 ballots, so none was named in 1899. Second, because he had been a polygamist, the national House of Representatives refused to permit Roberts to take his seat in Congress, and he had to be replaced in a special election. In addition, the fact that President McKinley had appointed polygamy's to postmasterships and other offices strengthened the Republicans among the former polygamists. ¹⁸

The Republicans hoped that with the return of dissatisfied "silverites" to the party, they would be victorious in the fall of 1900. Planning a vigorous campaign, they approved the Gold Standard and a protective tariff and talked of prosperity and good times under Republican rule. The Democrats campaigned chiefly on a platform of bi-metalism, while condemning the Church-Republican leaders as being in collaboration with the money interests of the East. The Republicans elected their ticket by small majorities, picking up where they had stopped in 1895. The

¹⁸Roberts, op. cit., p. 371.
governorship was won 51.2 per cent to 47.8 per cent for the Democrats; and McKinley polled 50.7 per cent to 48.1 per cent for Bryan. The Republican-dominated Legislature elected Thomas Kearns, a Catholic, as senator for the remaining four years of a six-year term.

As the 1902 election approached, Reed Smoot announced his intention to run for senator. A prominent businessman, he was widely known in rural areas as a result of his wool-buying trips while head of the Provo Woolen Mills. At the same time, his interest in mining, manufacturing, and business had earned him recognition and acceptance by influential urban groups, Mormon and non-Mormon alike. Nevertheless, there was opposition to his candidacy from several sources. First, there were party members who objected to his sudden rise to such an important position. Although he had been one of the very early Republicans in Utah, this was his first attempt to hold public office. His critics felt he should work his way up, as others had had to do. Second, there were Mormon and non-Mormon party members who felt that his closeness to the Church disqualified him for high level politics. Just two years earlier he had been elevated to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, the second highest calling in the Church; and it was believed that allegiance to either job would force Smoot to compromise the other. Also, it was reported that President Roosevelt had serious reservations about his running for this reason, although after his election Smoot was given almost unqualified support by the President. It was charged

then, and on many subsequent occasions by Democrats and disgruntled Republicans in and out of the Church, that Smoot would get or was getting strong support from the Church to the disadvantage of all others. Smoot denied that such was the case. In spite of these objections, Smoot began to work diligently for the election of men who would, in turn, support him. Democratic arguments that a Church official should not seek high office were not enough to win, as the Republicans elected the representative to Congress with 51 per cent of the vote to 45 per cent for the Democrat. They also had a majority in the Legislature, which named Smoot to the Senate in January of 1903.

No sooner had Smoot’s election been announced, than efforts were made, beginning in Utah and spreading through the nation, to keep him from taking his seat. The charges were numerous—including that he was a polygamist, that as an Apostle he could not take the oath of a senator, and that the Church was violating its promises of conformity to law by letting its leaders enter politics. Months of investigation and debate by the Senate—over a period of more than four years’ time, which inquired into Smoot’s private and public life and the practices of the Church—followed before he was allowed to take his place February 20, 1907.

To the men whom he had supported and who had supported him in 1902, Smoot added others and effectively organized them, strengthening his own position within the party until by 1904 he was its most

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20 The evidence shows that he did indeed receive considerable support and encouragement from President Joseph F. Smith and others during his political career, at least through 1912. For a discussion in detail, see Merrill, op. cit., p. 145.
powerful member. Even Senator Kearns, who was running for re-election and who had previously led the party, was unable to regain control. Smoot was able to keep his organization together and to virtually control politics in the state until 1914. During that year, weaknesses which Smoot had been able to overcome in 1912 caused the breakup of his "machine," although he, personally, was successful for many more years.

If Roosevelt had been willing to support Smoot, Smoot was no less willing to support the President. Roosevelt was already very popular in Utah, partly because of his attitude toward Smoot; and in 1904, Smoot spared no effort to further the Roosevelt cause in the state.

As his friends rose in the party organization, Smoot's enemies in and out of the party became increasingly bitter. Senator Kearns, who had bought the Salt Lake Tribune in 1901, and Frank J. Cannon—one-time Republican and friend of the Church; but then a Democrat, caustic critic of the Church, and managing editor of the Tribune—began attacking Smoot and the Church in the columns of that paper. On September 7, 1904, these men and other non-Mormons formed the American Party, whose stated purpose was to defeat Smoot and embarrass the Church. After a campaign marked by recrimination, the Republicans again won. Roosevelt defeated Parker with a 61.4 per cent to 32.8 per cent majority; and the Republican candidate for Governor received 50 per cent of the vote to 37 per cent for the Democratic candidate and 8 per cent for the American candidate. The Legislature, in the hands of Smoot Republicans, passed over Kearns and elected George Sutherland as senator.
Although never successful in state elections, the American Party, campaigning hard, was able to elect the mayor and a majority of the city council of Salt Lake City in 1905 and to continue that municipal control until 1911. This was done in spite of Smoot’s efforts and was a continuing source of embarrassment and irritation for him.

All three parties named candidates for representative to Congress in 1906. The Republicans—campaigning on the records of Roosevelt, Smoot, Sutherland, and Joseph Howell (who was seeking re-election)—won easily, as Howell received 47 per cent of the vote to 32 per cent for the Democrat and 14 per cent for the Americanite. (The American Party vote was nearly double the previous vote and was as high as the party ever reached.)

William Howard Taft had been chosen by Roosevelt to be his successor and, as such, he was popular in Utah from the start as the 1908 campaigning began.21 His opponent was William Jennings Bryan, destined to lose for the third time. Three state tickets were named for the offices of Governor and Congressman. The Republicans retained their strong grip on the state, giving Taft a margin of 56.2 per cent of the vote to Bryan’s 39.1 per cent. William Spry, Smoot’s candidate for Governor, gathered 47 per cent to 39 per cent for the Democratic candidate and 10 per cent for the American candidate. Joseph Howell was elected Congressman by similar margins.

The following January, the Republican-controlled Legislature elected Smoot to a second term as Senator. During Taft’s administration,

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21 Ibid., p. 148.
Smoot began to emerge as a power in national politics. From their first meeting, he and Taft were on a very friendly basis. In the Senate he was early named to the important Finance Committee. Voting consistently with the conservatives, he was recognized by them as a dependable, hard-working, and skillful addition to their ranks. He was particularly energetic in his support of the high protective tariff. The mining, sugar, and wool interests in the state approved of his voting record.

The 1910 contest for Congressman again showed the Republican strength in Utah, as Joseph Howell won a fourth term with more votes than his two opponents combined. He received 49 per cent to 32 per cent for the Democratic candidate and 14 per cent for the American candidate. In Salt Lake County, the Republicans broke the American Party hold on municipal offices with a plurality of from 2,600 to 3,200 votes over the Americanites. The Democrats showed a poor third.

Summary

This necessarily brief sketch has outlined the course of political history in Utah through 1910. An analysis of the foregoing establishes several facts:

1. Prior to 1890, the Mormon People's Party was able to elect city governments in all but the non-Mormon mining towns, and such territorial offices as were subject to election.

\[22\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 149.\]
2. When the People’s Party was dissolved in 1891, most of its members switched their allegiance to the Democrats in protest to the way the national Republicans had treated the Church.

3. Church leaders, realizing the need for economic development in the state, turned to Republican financiers outside of Utah for help. Also, hoping to avoid damaging legislation and in their increasing role as businessmen, hoping to benefit from the conservative, protective policies of the Republican Party—they swung their support to that party, beginning in 1888 and 1889 and extending beyond 1912.

4. While maintaining vigorously and repeatedly that Church members were free to vote as they chose, Church leaders did favor certain candidates from time to time and gave them encouragement and support. Knowledge of this practice undoubtedly affected some Mormon votes.

5. During the period discussed, voting superiority passed from the hands of the Democrats to those of the Republicans. The Democrats carried the state in 1891 and 1892; lost out in 1894 and 1895; came on strong for Bryan in 1896, when silver was the issue, and 1898; faded narrowly in 1900; and had not regained state control by 1912.

6. The non-Republicans in every election, to greater or lesser degree, seized upon the “Church interference” theme as a campaign weapon, repeating the charge of “deal” and bitterly criticizing any current statement by the Church bearing on politics.

7. The Republicans under Smoot had an iron grip on state politics from 1900 to 1910 and beyond, polling nearly 50 per cent of the votes each election, in spite of a fairly strong anti-Mormon third party.
Tables 1 and 2 indicate the pattern of change in Utah voting through 1910.

### TABLE 1
TOTAL UTAH VOTE AND PER CENT THEREOF WON BY MAJOR PARTIES IN STATE ELECTIONS FROM 1891-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Total Vote</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Liberals</th>
<th>American Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Territorial Legis-</td>
<td>28,177</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Delegate to Cong.</td>
<td>34,577</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Delegate to Cong.</td>
<td>40,831</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>50,985</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>74,720</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>57,756</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>92,980</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>84,842</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>102,307</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>84,092</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>111,519</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>102,233</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE 2

TOTAL UTAH VOTE AND PER CENT THEREOF WON BY MAJOR PARTIES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS FROM 1896-1908

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Vote</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>82,312</td>
<td>82.7%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>92,145</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>101,616</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>108,656</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER III

THE UTAH ECONOMY

In this and the following chapters a study will be made of conditions, events and people which may have had some bearing on the outcome of the Utah voting in 1912.

Of general concern in an election year is the economic status of the areas involved. Utah in 1912 was experiencing a time of statewide growth in which production records were being raised—not only in agriculture, but also in industry. The newspapers and periodicals of that year manifested a feeling of confidence and satisfaction with the present and of optimism for the future. Leading figures in the state were boasting of bumper crops and pointing happily at the recognition which Utah was receiving from outside the state as a result of her increasing importance in the family of states. The Salt Lake Tribune of March 31 headlined a full page in large print as follows:

UTAH PRODUCTS ADD VASTLY TO STATE’S RICHES——
RESIDENTS ENJOYING YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED ACTIVITY IN INDUSTRIAL LINES AND PRODUCTION OF SOIL, MINES AND LIVESTOCK RANGES——
OUTLOOK NEVER BEFORE SO PROMISING——
HIGH PRICE FOR METAL GRATIFYING——
COPPER, SILVER AND LEAD MARKETS GIVE ASSURANCE OF STABILITY——
FRUITGROWERS LOOK FOR UNPARALLELED YIELD: WOOL PRODUCERS WELL SATISFIED: SALT AND SUGAR OUTPUT GROWS.

If an occasional note of apprehension was sounded, it was out of fear that the Government might do something to hurt the existing prosperity. The chief cause for concern was the debate going on in
Congress about a broad tariff revision. The tariff question, which will be discussed more fully in a later chapter, was of vital interest to Utahns, most of whom preferred to leave duties unchanged. Their uneasiness about it was evident all year long, but there was little else to cause them economic worry.

Slightly more than half (52 per cent) of the state’s people were living on some 21,676 farms in 1912, and the farmers were having another good year. More grain was grown in Utah that year than in any previous year in the history of the state. An average of 29.2 bushels per acre was raised, compared with a national average of 17.2 bushels per acre. Total production of spring and winter wheat was fourth in the nation in bushels per acre. Utah ranked first in bushels per acre of barley; third in potatoes, fourth in oats, and fourth in tons per acre of hay. The total produce in bushels per acre was second in the nation. The total value of the 1912 crop was officially reported as $25,281,822, about one-sixth of the total value of all the state’s products.

Indicative perhaps of Utah’s prestige as a farm state is the following report from the Salt Lake Tribune of September 17:

Salt Lake is to be headquarters for eleven western and northwestern states in a big branch office to be established here by the United States Department of Agriculture. . . . Business connected with the bureau has increased so rapidly in these . . . states that the Department of Agriculture has determined to establish the branch office to more readily care for it at first hand.

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2 Ibid., p. 70.
The work of the bureau is educational as well as supervisory including instruction of farmers, stock raisers and dairymen in the most advanced methods of pursuing their activities.

A follow-up editorial the next day praised the action.

One of the top cash crops year in and year out was sugar beets. Utah was fourth in the nation in production of beets, although by 1912 her total was only a third that of the leading producer, Colorado. Sugar production had been important in the state since about 1890—when with the support and encouragement of the Mormon Church a factory was built at Lehi and successfully operated. By 1898, production had begun in the Ogden area; and by 1912, there were six factories in active operation in the state. The Ogden Standard stated that the industry regularly employed 10,000 people, and 15,000 were employed during the harvest. Ten to fifteen thousand families—or 50,000 to 75,000 people—depended on it.\(^3\)

As early as August it was predicted that the beet crop would probably exceed that of any other year.\(^4\) The 488,000 tons of beets raised that year yielded 120,000,000 pounds of sugar.\(^5\) This production was an increase over 1911 and justified the earlier confidence. The only disturbing factor was the tariff uncertainty.

The raising of sheep was another important part of the Utah scene. Eighth in the nation in amount of wool produced, the 1912 clip was estimated to have been sold for two million dollars. Mutton that

\(^3\) Ogden Standard, April 17, 1912.

\(^4\) Salt Lake Tribune, August 15, 1912.

year brought $2,200,000. Nearly all of the more than four-million-dollar total was "spent within our state to the benefit of the citizens therein." The wool was described as the best ever sheared in the state and averaged 16 cents per pound to the growers. This price was felt by some to be 3 to 7 cents per pound below what otherwise might have been expected, because of tariff agitation. But such loss as there might have been was at least partially offset by a 15 per cent reduction in freight rates by the Interstate Commerce Commission in April, which, it was estimated, would save the growers about $48,000 on a 15,000,000 pound clip. (The 1912 Utah clip was almost 19,000,000 pounds.) Again, except for an uneasiness about the future of the tariff, the sheepmen were satisfied.

Mining was attracting a lot of attention in the state in 1912. Nearly all the newspapers carried extensive mining news; the larger dailies devoted from a half to a full page to mining as a regular feature. Readers were kept up to the minute about production, sales, the stock exchange, new mines, and anything else pertaining to the industry—not only in Utah, but in the West in general. These reports indicated that mining and mineral sales were in good shape, with prices high and many new locations being investigated. During the entire year,

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8State of Utah, Sheep Commissioners' Report, p. 12.
9Ogden Standard, April 13, 1912.
the newspapers were devoid of any important criticism of production, prices, or sales. The tariff uncertainty and a Government regulation received what criticism there was. A Federal Land Department ruling that new mines could not be patented unless it could be proven that they indeed held ore to be mined was viewed with alarm on the ground that it would discourage new developments. This ruling was made in April, and after a few days it dropped from the news and did not reappear; however, the tariff remained a topic of discussion the remainder of the year.

Production of silver, copper, lead, and zinc was higher in 1912 than in the previous year, and only gold production fell off. The total value of mineral production was $42,922,302 for the year. Coal production was valued at $5,219,322.\(^{10}\) Oil fields had been found in the state, and it was felt that a combination of science and capital could make them yield a rich harvest, also.

Industry as a whole was hailed and put on display during what the Salt Lake Tribune called the "biggest week in the history of Salt Lake City."\(^{11}\) The first week in October saw visitors and delegates from many states and foreign countries in Salt Lake for the Irrigation Congress, Electrical Parade, and State Fair. The Fair was called the "best to date," and the other events received wide acclaim.

Earlier in the year, the Tribune stated that "conservative estimates place products at an enormous total for this year" and added


\(^{11}\)Salt Lake Tribune, October 1, 1912.
that the renown of the state was world wide. Manufactured goods alone were placed at $75,000,000; and the total of all products, at $186,000,000. Although exact figures were not found for 1912, the following statistics give an indication of the growth that was then taking place. In 1909 there were 749 manufacturing places employing 11,785 workers. They paid $8,399,634 in wages and produced goods valued at $61,989,277. By 1911 there were 781 manufacturing places (half in Salt Lake City) employing 14,629 workers. Wages amounted to $11,814,000, and good produced were valued at $66,432,000. The estimates named above suggest that this rate of growth was continuing, or even accelerating, through 1912.

The 1912 report of the Bureau of Immigration, Labor, and Statistics had this survey of labor conditions in the state:

Generally speaking, the labor situation in Utah is in first class shape, and prospects for a continuance of this pleasing condition are exceedingly bright. In Salt Lake City and Ogden the skilled crafts are fairly well organized, as well as some classes of common labor; outside of these cities, labor is practically unorganized. Our scales of wages are quite high, much above the average in the country as a whole. This seems altogether necessary because in the principal cities of the State the cost of living is fully equal to that in the largest cities of the Union generally and greater than that in a great many cities of equal size. The building trades are well employed. (Two million dollar Capitol, $600,000 high school, $300,000 State University building, one million dollar hotel.)

The mining industry, employing about 13,000 men, is in splendid shape.

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12 Ibid., June 2, 1912.
The high cost of living referred to here was mentioned editorially by the newspapers a time or two during the year, and was mentioned briefly by the Progressive state platform, but even so it did not appear to generate much interest as a political or campaign issue.

The labor scene was marred by three major and several minor strikes in 1911 and 1912. Several of these had as a primary goal the winning of company recognition of a union, although others were solely for wage increases. The railmen struck in October of 1911 for recognition of their union, but were unsuccessful. There was no violence. The American Smelting and Refining Company at Murray was struck in May, 1912. Six hundred men were out some six weeks, but were unsuccessful in getting the pay raise they wanted. Strike-breakers were brought in and two men were killed in the fighting which ensued. At the Utah Copper Company mine at Bingham, more than four thousand men struck in mid-September, 1912, demanding recognition of their union (the Western Federation of Miners) and a 50 cents per day raise. Company officials refused to recognize Federation spokesmen, and no progress was made. When strike-breakers were brought in, the miners—many of them foreigners—armed themselves and successfully kept the newcomers out. Still refusing to talk to Federation leaders, the Company finally agreed to the pay hike; and the miners, whose position was deteriorating rapidly, accepted. The strike died out in mid-October with no

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16 Salt Lake Tribune, September 14, 1912.

serious casualties.\textsuperscript{18}

None of these strikes seems to have had any political significance, in spite of the bitterness of some of them. An occasional editorial criticized the use of striking as a weapon,\textsuperscript{19} but for the most part the quarrel was left to the antagonists and was reported as straight news by the newspapers. There seemed to be no desire on the part of the press to make a political issue of labor unrest.

From this review of the economic situation in the state, it is evident that, on the whole, Utahns were satisfied with conditions as they existed in 1912. They were optimistic about the future. To say there were no problems and no discontent would be to mislead. However, there was no economic problem or discontent great enough to cause any sizable group to seek its solution by a change of government on either a national or state level.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid. A full account of the strikes was also carried from day to day in the major newspapers, beginning September 17 and continuing through mid-October.

\textsuperscript{19}Deseret News, September 19, 1912.
CHAPTER IV
THE PRESS

The Deseret News was the first and oldest newspaper in the state, having had its beginning in 1850. Owned by the Mormon Church and serving an area at first overwhelmingly Mormon—the News naturally bore the Church's mark. As non-Mormons moved into the area, this preoccupation of the News with Church affairs prompted the formation of opposition papers. During the 1870's and 1880's, when the Mormon-non-Mormon strife was so intense, conditions forced the News into an especially close relationship with the Church. All Church news, as well as some secular news, was printed therein; and, editorially, the News defended the faith against all comers. Politically, during this period, the News naturally championed the cause of the People's Party, which represented the Mormons. With the dissolution of this party and the passing of Mormons into the Republican and Democratic parties, the News assumed a non-partisan position in politics which was maintained for several years.\(^1\) The News continued to be the official organ of the Mormon Church, however, and as the Church leaders began to give support to the G.O.P. in the late 1890's and early 1900's, the paper also began to change its position. By 1912, the paper was definitely, although not rabidly, Republican in its views.

As the official Church newspaper, the News undertook to answer criticism toward the Church. When the American Party was organized in 1904, as a protest against Church "interference" in politics, a most vitriolic editorial battle began between the News and the Salt Lake Tribune, organ of the anti-Mormon opposition. It continued without abating until about 1910 when it began to subside, only to flare up again with new vigor in 1912. This aspect of the campaign will be treated in another chapter.

Since the Church and the Deseret News had accepted Republicanism by 1912, it was not surprising that they were both solidly behind President William Howard Taft in the campaign of that year.

The Salt Lake Tribune got its start in 1870 as the Mormon Tribune, the "Organ of the liberal cause in Utah." Edited by malcontents in the Church, W. S. Godbe, E. L. T. Harrison, et al., it was from the beginning critical of the Church. After six months, the word "Mormon" was dropped from its title, and the paper went on to become the chief journalistic tormenter of the Church for more than sixty years. In 1883, C. C. Goodwin, a bitter opponent of the Church, became its editor. He was succeeded by others as capable and bitter as he. For a while in 1904, Frank J. Cannon, a prominent anti-Church Democrat, was the editor.

In 1901, the Tribune was bought by Thomas Kearns and David Keith. Kearns had served as a Republican senator, but had had a falling out with the state Republican leaders, many of whom were Mormons. A Catholic himself, Kearns was angry with the Church also for its refusal to support his candidacy for a second term in 1904. For these and
other reasons he joined with other non-Mormons to form the American Party. Their aim was to discredit the Church and destroy Reed Smoot, who had replaced him as the state Republican Party leader. The Tribune appears to have been the chief weapon of the Americanites and later anti-Mormons, and its pages were filled daily with ridicule, sarcasm, and insults.

Thomas Kearns was attracted to the Republican Party through his interest in mining. He had worked himself up from mine hand to chief figure in the Utah Mining Company and was vitally interested in the protection offered by the G.O.P.; in 1912 he and the Tribune were solidly behind William H. Taft.

The Herald-Republican, organized in 1909, was formed from two other papers, the Daily Herald and the Intermountain Republican. The Herald had been started in 1870 and, in its early days, had "sought honestly and valiantly to be an independent paper," but even then it was accused by anti-Mormon papers of being Church oriented. In 1891 the Herald became the official organ of the Democratic Party, with Democratic stalwart B. H. Roberts as editor. Roberts resigned in 1896 because of the stand the paper took on the "permission manifesto" of the Church, which he was opposing at the time. The paper continued with Democratic leanings, however, until about 1898, from which time on the Herald remained non-partisan. In 1909 it was bought out by a group of prominent Republicans—including Reed Smoot, D. C. Jackling,

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3 Supra, pp. 21-22.
E. H. Callister, and others. Smoot already owned the Intermountain Republican, which he had set up in 1906 in the belief that newspaper support was essential to his political success.

Prominent in business and in the Mormon Church, Smoot associated with men in and out of the Church whose interests were similar to his own. Not only for his own benefit, but for the benefit of his friends and the Church as well, Smoot and the Herald-Republican were solidly behind William H. Taft.

A fourth Salt Lake City paper was the Evening Telegram, owned in 1912 by the Kearns-Keith interests, and a companion to the Tribune. Called an independent newspaper by its owners, it, too, was quite solidly behind Taft. There were several other newspapers in Salt Lake City, but as they were all weeklies, they did not have the importance of the dailies—particularly the News, Tribune, and Herald-Republican.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the Salt Lake papers were in an interesting but awkward position in 1912—that of having to agree while disagreeing. The lengths to which they sometimes went were ludicrous when viewed from the present, but they show how strong the feeling was. Each supported Taft, but the Tribune fought the Herald-Republican to get at Smoot and fought the News because of the Church. The Herald-Republican fought back at the Tribune and occasionally took a swipe at the News when either opposed Smoot. The News battled the Tribune on the Church issue and made an infrequent sally in the direction of Smoot and the Herald-Republican. The effectiveness of the part each paper played in the progress of the campaign is difficult to evaluate, as one must depend almost entirely on the contents of the
papers themselves, which, one suspects, may be misleading. In a battle for subscribers and prestige, irresponsible or exaggerated claims were made, abusive language was employed editorially, and the relative importance of the contenders was debated frequently.

The Herald-Republican is examined first in this study because it is the only one for which exact circulation figures were found. Presumably accurate, they provide a point of departure. A 1912 law required that in April and October all newspapers make a sworn statement of their total circulation, beginning in 1913. The Herald-Republican announced on October 3, 1912, its intention to publish figures for the six months just ended and challenged the others to do likewise. It especially dared the Tribune to publish its figures, suggesting in editorials over a week’s time that it was afraid to do so. Whatever the reason, no other Salt Lake paper responded, which may suggest that their circulations were smaller than that of the Herald-Republican. The latter boasted an average daily circulation from April to the end of September of 18,924, and an average Sunday circulation of 30,518.4 Editorialy the paper claimed a larger daily and Sunday circulation than any two papers in Utah. This was obviously not true, but no refutation of the claim was found in other papers. In 1910 the Tribune had had an average daily circulation of 15,975 and a Sunday circulation of 22,783.5 The News had had 8,296 daily and 10,897 semi-weekly, with no Sunday edition.6 These figures must have increased some by 1912.

4Herald-Republican, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 3, 1912.
5Alter, op. cit., p. 360.
6Ashton, op. cit., p. 399.
By 1913 the **Telegram** could claim only 8,406 with no Sunday edition.⁷ These figures may support the **Herald-Republican**'s claim to the highest circulation; but, if so, the margin must have been very small except in the case of the **Telegram**.

The **Herald-Republican** campaigned vigorously for both the national and state Republican tickets, with much more concern over Roosevelt than Wilson. Its methods, in this writer's opinion, were often shoddy and unethical, if not dishonest. The most thoroughly one-sided of all, it slanted the news in numerous ways. Everything which Taft did received careful coverage. Lead articles nearly every day called attention to his every speech and act, and editorials praised his strong points. When Roosevelt entered the campaign, his speeches were often not even printed. When they were, the editors tore them apart and ridiculed them. When he was shot in October, an editorial emphasized that a "lunatic" had done it and that the incident had nothing to do with the campaign—the intimation being that Roosevelt had not caused that much interest. Sympathy was extended to the "ex-president," but it was cautioned that no one should let his sympathy lead him to vote for the man. It was added that Roosevelt himself would not want a lot made of the affair.⁸

Never one to back down, the **Herald-Republican** reported even Taft setbacks as victories. The Roosevelt win in Ohio was headed: **Estimate**

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⁷ *Evening Telegram*, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 4, 1913.

⁸ *Herald-Republican*, October 16, 1912.
is Ten Ohio Taft Votes,"^9 and when Taft lost in Illinois, the article was preceded by the official excuse of Taft's Illinois manager.

Local opposition was bitingly dealt with. The report of the Bull Moose Convention at Provo was preceded by a box containing the following:

Two hundred persons who professed themselves eager to gratify Colonel Theodore Roosevelt's wish to be president of the United States, held a state convention of the "third party" in the Opera House here today. Of the delegates in the delegation, two-thirds were former members of the American Party and the remaining one-third was made up of former state and federal office holders and has-been politicians.

To the casual observer at the convention, the bandana-bedecked delegates suggested a South American army, nine-tenths generals and one-tenth privates. The impression of the gathering today was that it was nine-tenths office-seekers and one-tenth small bore politicians... there were few former real Republicans in the Convention.10

Anyone who came out for Roosevelt was labeled insincere and an office-seeker. Editorials reiterated the theme; and, by September, the paper was referring to the "Bull Con Party"—not only in editorials, but in lead articles on the front page.

During the national convention, news service articles were not used by the Herald-Republican, although they were used by the other papers. Instead, Arthur J. Brown, the paper's correspondent in Chicago, wired back heavily-loaded stories. His lead article of June 23 began as follows:

Grimly determined to stem once and for all the tide of demagoguism that threatened from day to day to roll over the Republican national convention and to tear it loose from its moorings, setting

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^9 Ibid., May 23, 1912.

10 Ibid., July 28, 1912.
the Grand Old Party adrift upon a sea of doubt and uncertainty with no more appeal to the voters of the United States than can be presented by the Democracy, the delegates of the fifteenth quadrennial gathering renominated William Howard Taft of Ohio for president of the United States. . . . 11

Until the Democratic convention, very little was said about Wilson; but, once nominated, he began to receive the unkind attention of the editors. 12 He was pictured as a dishonest scoundrel who had changed his opinions to win votes, and who could not be trusted. When he had won, the Herald-Republican editorial comment was to the effect that “we hope he will do a good job but we doubt it.”

During the entire campaign, Reed Smoot’s name appeared with great frequency in the pages of his paper. He was given credit for numerous bills with which he had been associated, and reference was made to his standing with the Republican hierarchy. His views, along with those of other leading Republicans in the state, were quoted in lead articles and discussed editorially, and his state candidates were regularly in the public eye. Without a doubt, the Herald-Republican was used to the utmost to secure the votes of Utahns first for Taft, and second for the state ticket.

As stated earlier, the Salt Lake Tribune also favored Taft, and for reasons similar to those of the Herald-Republican. Only slightly, if any, less extreme than its competitor, the Tribune also praised Taft and pilloried Roosevelt. Taft was described as a friend of Utah, and speeches by him and his supporters were headlined on the

11 Ibid., July 23, 1912.

12 The editors of the Herald-Republican were not named in the paper, and this writer was not able to ascertain who they were.
front page and enthusiastically reviewed editorially. On the other hand, Roosevelt was reviled as being dishonest, a liar, as deliberately misleading the country, as being self-centered, and as wanting to win only for personal power and gain; in short, he was accused of almost every moral and ethical crime known to politics.

However, when it came to state politics, the Tribune was hopeful of a great future for the third party. The Tribune was dead set against Smoot and what it repeatedly called "the federal bunch." It berated almost daily "machine control" of the state; and its editorials were equally, if not more, vitriolic toward Smoot on the state level than toward Roosevelt on the national. An editorial on July 29 stated that "the Progressive Republicans in this state have a grievance right here at home that far outweighs any interest which they might feel in the personal fortunes of Colonel Roosevelt."13

In an attempt to discredit Smoot, the Tribune questioned his motives from time to time. After relating how Roosevelt had helped Smoot when his Senate seat was in question, the editors say, "It would therefore be almost unpardonable for Smoot to be really opposed to Roosevelt. We cannot believe that he is. There is something going on that is under the surface and that means treachery to President Taft."14

So it was that the Tribune had to praise Smoot's and the Herald-Republican's presidential candidate, while condemning both of

13Salt Lake Tribune, July 29, 1912.
14Ibid., April 8, 1912.
them. It was sometimes difficult, but never a friendly word passed between these two papers. The following passages further illustrate the tenor of their exchanges. The **Herald-Republican** spoke of the **Tribune** as follows:

Always ponderous as an elephant and with the ostrich-like habit of thrusting its head into the sand in the fond belief that it is entirely hidden, the **Tribune** clumsily continues its attempts to destroy the Republican Party. That party in Utah, however, is still a good risk for the insurance companies. Being opposed by the **Tribune** is a badge of respectability for any individual or any party, and is a guarantee of success. The only irremediable misfortune that might befall the party in Utah would be **Tribune** support.15

And the **Tribune** spoke of the **Herald-Republican** as follows:

The **Smoot** organ appears to be much disconcerted over the present situation in Utah. It disputes the proposition stated by us that "if President Taft carries Utah it will be because the **Tribune** supports him and not because of the vicious, interested, arrogant, base, pie-counter support rendered him by the organ of the Federal bunch." This statement, of course, was meant as a comparison between the effectiveness of the support of the **Smoot** organ of the **Tribune**; for without the **Tribune**’s support, President Taft would not carry Utah. We believe he will carry the state, in spite of the evil, interested, and office-seeking support of the Federal bunch and its organ.16

It is of interest here to note that each paper claimed sole credit for advancing the Taft cause and denied the other any credit whatever.

Little attention was paid to Wilson until after his nomination, but then he came under attack from the **Tribune** also. He was accused, among other things, of not being really progressive and of not having the interests of the West at heart.

15*Herald-Republican*, May 10, 1912.

16*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 31, 1912.
In addition to its fight with the Herald-Republican, the Tribune was usually at odds with the Deseret News—but for other reasons. Early in the campaign, the Tribune raised the question of Church influence in politics, and the rather frequent Tribune-Deseret News editorial exchanges—late in the campaign especially—revolved primarily around this topic. More will be said concerning this in another chapter. Editor-in-chief of the Tribune at this time was William Nelson, a non-Mormon who had moved to Utah from the East.

While the Deseret News also campaigned for Taft, it did so rather dispassionately. Using the national news services, as did the Tribune, its headlines were less biased and the choice of articles was more fair to all candidates. The editorials were pro-Taft and critical of Roosevelt, but were much less biting and sarcastic than those of either the Tribune or the Herald-Republican. The editors usually followed the line that no man could do all that Roosevelt had promised, no matter how hard he tried, so why try a new man when the one in office was doing an acceptable job.

The News and the Herald-Republican were at odds with each other on local issues; and it appeared that the editor, J. M. Sjodahl, might have been a Democrat, or at least an anti-Smoot Republican. As a Church-owned paper, it reflected the Republican views of the Church leaders; and, in its historic role of defender of the faith, it stoutly supported the right of those leaders to express their preferences. It did not, however, necessarily approve every Republican just because he was a Mormon. Merrill states that the News was unreliable in Smoot's opinion; and that while it was supposed to be non-partisan, Smoot felt that it
was much too critical of him and generally uncooperative. His efforts to change the attitude of the News toward him were unsuccessful.  

The Evening Telegram, while favoring Taft, was less critical than any of the others. Its new articles gave fairly even coverage to all candidates, and its editorials were usually more subdued. The editor, C. C. Goodwin, did suggest, however, that Roosevelt was a tool of the Democrats with the purpose of splitting the Republicans.  

Regardless of their differences and rivalry on local issues, all of the daily papers (and most of the weeklies) in Salt Lake City continually filled their pages with pro-Taft material. The approximately one hundred thousand citizens of the city had almost no opportunity to hear the Democratic or Progressive sides fairly presented. For that matter, almost no one in the state did. Nearly half of the Tribune Sunday edition was being sent out of the city, and it may be supposed that similar quantities of the News and Herald-Republican were also being read in the rural areas. The result was that this one-sided approach to the campaign was felt throughout the state. Even Ogden, with two dailies of its own, seems to have preferred the others. The editor of the Ogden Standard complained in April that Ogdenites were not loyal to the home papers, even though the Standard had spent considerable money to pick up the same news services used by the bigger papers.

17Merrill, op. cit., pp. 172-75.
18Evening Telegram, October 15, 1912.
19Reporting October 5, 1913, the Tribune stated that 15,048 Sunday papers were going out of the city, compared to 18,983 which went to the city and its suburbs. It is assumed that a proportionate part of the dailies also were sent out.
The **Standard** was the only pro-Roosevelt paper found. Calling itself the "only champion of the cause of the common people in Utah," it was progressive from the start. First LaFollette, then Roosevelt received its editorial support. Its news stories were quite fair in presenting the three sides, and the editorials were usually calm. Roosevelt's speeches were printed in full, and any new song or slogan of the Bull Moose was prominently played up. From February to mid-August it referred on its editorial page to the Progressive-Republican ticket; but with the nomination of Roosevelt, "Republican" was dropped from the heading.

The **Standard** carried charges of "thievery" for days after the Republican Convention and stepped up its assault on Taft. It steadfastly denied that Taft could in any way win. By October it was saying that since he had no chance, people interested in the tariff should vote for Roosevelt to get the tariff they wanted.

Wilson, too, was the subject of much discussion. The criticisms varied, but centered around charges that he was not what he said he was and that he said for the record things which he did not believe. In an editorial on September 10, for instance, it was charged that "his conduct before the public entitles him to be classified as a friend of labor for political purposes only."  

In a town of some 30,000 population, the Standard sold just 3,700 copies daily, indicating that the voice of Progressivism was not heard.

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20Ogden Standard, September 10, 1912.
very widely—at least not outside of the immediate area. William Glassman, owner of the Standard, took an active part in Progressive Party affairs.

The other Ogden daily was the Examiner, whose stockholders from April, 1912, on included Governor William Spry and D. C. Jackling, both of whom had strong connections with the Herald-Republican. This paper was quite naturally Republican, although it editorially expressed some doubt that Taft could win and therefore wished he would not try. Once he was committed, though, the Examiner supported him. The Examiner circulation was somewhat less than that of the Standard.

Other newspapers in the state were weeklies and enjoyed very limited distribution. Of the sixteen weeklies of which copies were found, five made no mention of politics, eight gave at least limited coverage to the campaign but took no stand editorially, and three were outspokenly Republican. Two others, referred to in the newspapers examined, but of which no record was found, were apparently pro-Democrat. One was in Provo, where it battled a highly partisan Republican paper, and the other was in Logan. The combined population of the two towns was barely more than 15,000.

In summary, nearly everyone who followed the course of the campaign was forced to do so in the columns of a Republican-oriented newspaper. Mormon and non-Mormon alike, city people and most country

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22 Wasatch Wave, Mount Pleasant Pyramid, Iron County Record, Park Record, Coalville Times, Ephraim Enterprise, Spanish Fork Press, Beaver City Weekly Press.

23 Box Elder Journal, Manti Messenger, Provo Post.
people who were told anything at all were told that only Taft and the Republicans could insure the continued well-being of the state and the nation. Regardless of how one felt about local politics, a decision to vote against Taft nationally had to be made on some other basis than what was read in the newspapers.
CHAPTER V

THE ISSUES

From several of the things mentioned previously, it is evident that the major campaign issues of 1912 fell into two general groups: those of a national nature and those of importance primarily in the state. To the first group belonged the candidates themselves and the tariff question. The second group included "bossism" and Reed Smoot and the charge of Mormon Church "interference." There were, of course, others, but they can be considered in connection with those named.

The most talked about "issue" of all was the candidates. Great attention was paid to their backgrounds, their reasons for running, the likelihood of their helping the state if elected, and their political records to that time. As indicated earlier, most of the discussion was from a Republican point of view.

President Taft was hailed by the party organs in Utah as the only logical candidate. He had done a good job, they said, and deserved the continued support of the party. In the words of the Ogden Examiner, "The President has been capable and clean . . . he has been a progressive in the safest and most effective manner . . . his whole service has been in the genuine interest of the whole people."¹ This sentiment

¹Ogden Examiner, May 1, 1912.
was repeated in various ways and many times by the other Republican papers during the entire campaign.

That he was progressive was maintained staunchly, it being pointed out that just a few years earlier Roosevelt had chosen him personally as the man best able to carry out his progressive program. Where he had been successful, he was given the credit; where he had failed, the blame was put on a "contrary" Congress. The Tribune said, "We believe that he genuinely desires to have the combines and trusts broken up and protective wages actually paid to American labor." Taft was claimed as a friend of Utah and the Mormons, and was credited with having sought and obtained legislation favorable to the area. Attention was called particularly to his concern for the Mormons in Mexico who were being caught up in the revolution there; his support of a high protective tariff and legislation aiding railroads in the interior of the country and consequently in Utah; his friendship toward the members of Congress from Utah; his support of labor legislation then before the House; and his stand on such things as conservation, which stand was called progressive by his backers, although his opponents denied it. In short, Taft received the unqualified support

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2Salt Lake Tribune, March 21, 1912.

3Herald-Republican, May 12, 1912.

4Utah State Republican Platform, quoted in the Salt Lake Tribune, September 6, 1912. These statements were the subjects of editorials and news stories nearly every day in the pro-Taft papers before and after his nomination.
of the regular Republicans of the state.

Those Republicans who opposed him did so on the grounds that he was not progressive enough. They charged that he had failed Roosevelt in not carrying out his program, and that he was disinterested in reform. Ignoring his progress along reform lines, they accused him of being too much the agent of the conservative pressure groups and greedy friends. Nephi L. Morris, Bull Moose candidate for Governor, was quoted as saying that Taft was not a bad man, but that he was in bad company.\(^5\) His record as President was severely criticized, and he was accused of gross ineptitude in affairs of government.

The Democrats, of course, opposed him on many grounds also—often paralleling the complaints of the Progressives. His lack (in their eyes, at least) of real progressive ideas, his association with the monied interests, his own inefficiency, and the corruption of his friends disqualified him for office, they said.\(^6\)

Opposition to Roosevelt followed several patterns. First, it was argued that he should not have a third term—although the News finally conceded that, technically, this might not be a third term, since he had only been elected once. The other papers were not so generous prior to the convention. Much was made of the fact that he had retired from politics and had even gone out of the country. Now he was coming back and trying to crowd in again where he not only was not needed, but not wanted. However, after his nomination, this issue

\(^5\)Ogden Standard, October 7, 1912.

\(^6\)Utah State Democratic Platform, quoted in the Tribune, August 30, 1912. These charges were the themes of Democratic speeches throughout the year.
received an insignificant amount of attention and appears not to have been an important factor in his defeat.

His motives for returning were questioned time and again. Editorials demanded why, if Taft had been the right man four years earlier, he was not still the right man. Acknowledging that Roosevelt had done a good job, the News wondered why, having not achieved his goal in seven years in office, he thought he could do it now. Others, less mildly, called him a greedy egomaniac, hungry for the power and prestige of high national office. He was an intruder, they said, bullying his way to the fore, without regard for anyone else. He was, in fact, a menace to rational government and must be defeated at all cost. The regular Republicans added the accusation that he was willfully trying to destroy the party.

The Roosevelt followers saw him as a crusader returning to the wars. Prior to the convention, the Ogden Standard eulogized: "He would, with his added years and somewhat wider experience in world affairs, make the greatest head of a nation the world has ever known. . . ." He would pick up the progressive torch where Taft had dropped it and lead the country to new heights. He had the training, the ability, the desire and the energy to be a great President; and, above all else, he was progressive—more progressive, even, than Wilson. He could and would do the job which they felt needed to be done; and he, too, had been a friend of Utah.

7Deseret News, August 30, 1912.

8Ogden Standard, January 30, 1912.
The Democrats in Utah supported Woodrow Wilson as a true progressive. They talked of his attitude toward the trusts and toward labor and cited his successful governorship of New Jersey. They approved his desire to lower the tariff and called him a friend of the common man. In their speeches (they lacked newspaper support) they applauded his attacks on Taft and the conservatives around him.

In reply, both the Republicans and the Progressives accused Wilson of being an aristocrat, class conscious, and a friend of the trusts. His present liberalism, they said, was for political reasons only; and reference was made to his earlier writings in an attempt to prove these charges. The Republicans also opposed his liberal tariff views, fearing they would be harmful to the West.

Perhaps because of the previously-shown Republican strength in the state, the regular Republicans seemed more concerned over Roosevelt than Wilson. The partisans of Taft and Roosevelt, for whatever reason, fought each other more bitterly than either of them did the Democrats. Even after Wilson's nomination, most of the newspapers paid him less attention than they gave to the other two.

The foregoing were claims and counter-claims with which Utahns were bombarded daily in the press and by campaign speakers and were all most people knew of the candidates, having had no personal contact with any of them. Even though some 6,000 heard Roosevelt speak in Ogden in September, and Taft had been in the state earlier in 1912, the large majority of voters had to depend for all their information on second-hand accounts.
This being the case, it is doubtful that the actual personalities of the candidates had any important bearing on the outcome of the voting in Utah. Rather it was the programs that each was reported to espouse and the above-outlined image of each man built up by the papers and speakers that influenced large numbers of voters. Remembering the one-sided newspaper alignment, it is evident that far more people heard only complimentary reports of Taft and derogatory reports of the other two than heard criticism of Taft and praise of either of the others. This in itself gave Taft a marked advantage, especially over Wilson who was virtually unknown in Utah.

Another issue, much discussed nationally and in the state was the tariff. As stated earlier, many people in the state had reason to favor a high protective tariff. Congress and President Taft had been battling over this explosive question during much of his term in office; Taft had called a special session of the Congress to deal with the matter in 1909. The result was the Payne-Aldrich tariff which left much undone, but which Taft signed. The Democrats gained control of the House in 1910 and almost at once began trying to revise various tariff schedules downward, only to have their attempts vetoed if they got that far. As the controversy moved into 1912, many Utahns were visibly disturbed. It was not always that the tariff was too high or too low that bothered them, but that it was unsettled. The State Bureau of Immigration, Labor, and Statistics, for example, in its report on sugar, commented that tariff agitation had stopped the construction of plants that might otherwise have been built and added optimistically that "with the tariff question affecting sugar once eliminated, an opportunity will
be opened up here to place Utah in a rank equal to Colorado in its production of this great commodity."\(^9\)

Many people in the state, however, would not be content with simply stabilizing the tariff unless it was stabilized at a high protective level. President Taft was an advocate of the high tariff as protection to home industry (which was partly his reason for vetoing the Democratic bills); and the sugar, wool, and mining interests in Utah applauded his stand with vigor. The *Herald-Republican*, which was always outspokenly in favor of the high tariff, editorialized:

> Of the tariff record of Mr. Taft in connection with those products upon which Utah and other western commonwealths depend, but little need be said. He has incurred some opposition in the eastern states, whose citizens are consumers rather than producers, because he has favored the West. Shall this great empire west of the Mississippi refuse to do as much for Mr. Taft as he has done for it?\(^10\)

The Republican state platform said in part:

> The people of Utah, irrespective of party, are vitally interested in the upholding of this policy [Protection]. Without it the profitable cultivation of the sugar beet and the manufacture of sugar from the beet root would cease, the flocks would be swept from our hills and plains, our low grade lead and silver mines would be closed and with other kindred pursuits would disappear from the industrial life of Utah.\(^11\)

Roosevelt, who was somewhat less dedicated to protection, and Wilson, who favored tariff for revenue only, frightened men engaged in or dependent on the then protected industries referred to. The Ogden *Examiner*, in giving its allegiance to Taft, stated: "This state needs

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\(^10\) *Herald-Republican*, May 12, 1912.

\(^11\) *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 6, 1912.
at least the present degree of protection in order that its industries may not be crippled."\textsuperscript{12} The \textit{Herald-Republican} added, ". . . as to the tariff for revenue only or free trade theories of the Democracy, the West has never approved them and never will. . . ."\textsuperscript{13}

The Democrat-supported Underwood Tariff Bill, which was introduced in Congress early in 1912, caused much consternation in Utah business circles. Taft had set up a Tariff Commission two years earlier to study and report to him the various phases of the tariff. He refused during 1911 to approve any tariff measure until he had heard the report of the Commission. As he continued this policy until 1912, he met with increasing opposition in the Democrat-controlled Congress. The Underwood Committee, ignoring the Tariff Commission, wrote bills covering a variety of items and, one at a time, began pushing them through Congress.

The controversy over what was to be done with the tariff lasted beyond the election and was followed carefully in the Utah newspapers. The use of the Tariff Commission was seen as a business-like approach to the matter, and the Democrat's lowering of rates without consulting it was decried. Indeed, the lowering of them under any condition brought cries of anguish from many Utahns.

March 2, a Democratic caucus in the House approved a bill to put sugar on the free list, although the bill was angrily opposed by Democrats from sugar states. The response in Utah was immediate. The

\textsuperscript{12}Ogden \textit{Examiner}, July 7, 1912.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Herald-Republican}, March 31, 1912.
Ogden Standard of March 4 said in an article:

The Underwood bill, providing for free entry of sugar, has caused consternation among Utah beet sugar producers, nearly all of whom feel that the suspension of the sugar tariff would force them to abandon the cultivation of beets in this district.\(^\text{14}\)

David Eccles, President of the Amalgamated Sugar Company, was quoted as saying:

The Underwood Bill sounds the death knell of the beet industry. It rewards the eastern sugar refineries by giving them cheap foreign sugar, and punishes the western beet farmers by discriminating against the beet industry.\(^\text{15}\)

Figures were given to show that tariff-free sugar could be obtained from Cuba for less than the farmers were being given in the state.

On the other hand, the Tribune, perhaps as a slap at the Church sugar interests which it had criticized before, insisted that the dropping of the sugar tariff would not destroy the industry, but only cut the dividends of the big companies, which, it said, were too high anyway.\(^\text{16}\)

The House formally passed the sugar bill on March 15 and sent it on to the Senate. The Senate had already started work on a more moderate sugar bill of its own, which it was hoped, the President would sign in preference to the House bill (thus appeasing those who demanded a reduction, but not really hurting anyone). The Senate bill, passed July 28, lowered duties from $1.90 to $1.60 per hundredweight and so was more to the liking of Utahns. T. R. Cutler, General Manager of the

\(^{14}\)Ogden Standard, March 4, 1912.

\(^{15}\)Ibid.

\(^{16}\)Salt Lake Tribune, April 14, 1912.
Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, was quoted as saying,

This is a natural reading representation of the provided document.
Democrats in their desire to lower the rates.\textsuperscript{19} (It should be added that fellow Democrats in neighboring states did not share his opinion.)

The \textit{Herald-Republican} immediately accused him of favoring a tariff when it was in danger, and then deserting when it was quite certain that Republicans would save it.\textsuperscript{20}

The bill passed the Senate on July 27 and was sent to the President on August 6. He quickly vetoed it. In his message he stated:

> I stand by my pledge to maintain a degree of protection to offset the differences in cost of production here and abroad and will heartily approve any bill reducing duties to this level. Most of the rates in the submitted bill are so low in themselves that if enacted into law the inevitable result would be irretrievable injury to the wool growing industry, the enforced idleness of much wool combing and spinning machinery and of thousands of looms and the consequent throwing out of employment of thousands of workmen.\textsuperscript{21}

The House just as quickly overrode the veto, but the Senate refused to do so and the wool bill died.

A tariff measure on metals, including lead, had been passed by the House on January 29, and by the Senate on May 30. This, too, was criticized in Utah; and when it was finally vetoed in August for lack of a Tariff Commission study, Taft was congratulated. The House again overrode the veto, but the Senate balked and the bill died.

The failure of these three bills added to the stature of President Taft in the eyes of many Utahns. He had proven that he was indeed a friend.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Salt Lake Tribune}, April 7, 1912.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Herald-Republican}, April 8, 1912.

\textsuperscript{21} U. S., \textit{Congressional Record}, XLVIII, 10603-04.
Who causes all the crops to grow?
Reed Smoot.
Who makes the seasons come and go?
Reed Smoot.
Who shapes the current of events?
Who regulates the elements?
Who takes the place of Providence?
Reed Smoot. 22

The sarcasm in this bit of verse does not keep it from showing something of the illustrious position occupied by Senator Smoot in 1912. As a United States Senator, and a friend of presidents, he had acquired in a few short years considerable influence and importance nationally. Traveling in the highest political circles, he gained prestige and popularity which stood him in good stead both in the Senate and at home. Although somewhat indebted to Roosevelt for his Senate seat, he was convinced that Roosevelt was wrong to enter the campaign and gave Taft his not inconsiderable support in 1912. As a senator, he was conservative, and he made no apologies for it.

The head of the dominant party in Utah for some ten years past, he was undoubtedly the strongest political figure in the state. To the satisfaction of his friends and the irritation of his enemies, he directed the affairs of his party with skill and a firm hand.

A Mormon, Smoot had been a member of the Church’s highest governing body, excepting the Presidency, since 1900. In this position, he had traveled throughout the state and was well known. Even among those Mormons who opposed him politically, he was welcomed in his religious capacity. As an Apostle, he met frequently with the heads of

22 Ogden Standard, October 29, 1912.
the Church and joined in their councils. Among his close friends he
counted President Joseph F. Smith and several others of the Church’s
top men.

Prominent in business circles since his early twenties, Smoot
by 1912 had considerable wealth and wide financial interests. After
starting out in the wool business, he had expanded his investments to
mining, banking, stock raising, sugar, and other concerns.

With a habit of success—in politics, in his church, in business—
Reed Smoot was indeed a man to be reckoned with, especially in Utah.

Smoot was personally admired and respected in Utah. His concern
for the Mormons in Mexico, and his sponsoring and backing of bills
beneficial to Utah groups added to the esteem in which he was held in
1912. That President Taft should consent to visit such a relatively
small state, which he had done earlier, was also laid to the credit of
Senator Smoot. Smoot was recognized as a prodigious worker, both in the
Senate and at home, and no job seemed too big for him. Not a good
speaker, he made up in organization and preparation what he lacked as
an orator.

His early contact with the wool industry had given Smoot an
interest in tariff protection and had impelled him toward the Republican
party. Later developments did nothing to lessen his convictions in that
regard, and he became a staunch friend of protection. After stating
that Smoot believed 100 per cent in protection by means of the tariff,
Merrill adds, “The senator’s beliefs were fundamental—not political.”
And speaking of his special regard for sugar, he says:

The protectionist philosophy which he nurtured would not account wholly for the fervor he exhibited for sugar. Sugar beets were grown in Utah on a reasonably important scale. During much of Smoot’s senatorial career, sugar beets were the principal cash crop of the Utah farmer of irrigated land. But it was not only the Utah farmers who were interested in sugar. Utah capital was invested in sugar manufacturing. Further, it was not only Utah capital that was invested, but it was the Mormon Church capital in considerate degree. . . . All of the three eminent churchmen with whom Smoot cooperated most closely . . . were sugar men in greater or lesser degree . . . . To many the relationship suggested an insidious and dangerous type of church influence in politics. To Smoot’s mind there was no issue. He was following a course which he would have followed under any circumstances. The fact that the Church leaders approved the course and would have directed him to it if he were not already there, was merely substantiation of their good judgment. . . .

As indicated earlier, the tariff question was prominent in the campaign, and Smoot spoke out for protectionism on every opportunity.

Smoot’s influence and strength in Utah cannot be denied. Because of them, he himself was to some extent a campaign issue. His enemies outside the Church made much of his dual position as Senator and Apostle, and accused him of exerting undue pressure on other Church leaders to bend them to his will. He was credited with—or blamed for—having caused the political turn which the October Conference of the Mormon Church took and was said to have persuaded President Smith to write his controversial editorial (discussed in Chapter VI). 25

Mormons and non-Mormons alike protested his control of the party.

B. H. Roberts, as temporary chairman of the Democratic state convention,

24Ibid., p. 385.

25Salt Lake Tribune, October 12, 1912.
Utah is known to be the worst boss-ridden and trust-bound state of the Union. . . . Locally the state is in the control of a political machine that shames all precedent, but is worthy of the Congressional delegation who constitute its head. . . . Everything must be considered and acted upon with reference to the effect upon this political machine. . . . The election of all officers in the state . . . must be made to subserve this same end—the strengthening of the machine.26

A Progressive resolution complained:

Such conditions in the nation are insufferable, and conditions in this state are no better. From a party devoted to social service the Republican party of our state has become dominated by an aggregation of persons banded together for personal ambitions. Those persons have throttled the most beneficial and humane legislation. They have manipulated conventions, dictated platforms and named tickets without regard to the voice of the people. We have remained patient under these and many other abuses, striving for reform within the party, but all hope of such reform has long since passed away.27

Progressive Governor Hiram Johnson, speaking in Utah, rather mildly took up the charge thusly:

Have we bosses in Utah? For four years at least, I have been convinced that we have. Our bosses in Utah, however, are above the average of bosses in other states, I think they are considerably superior to the average bosses . . . no charge of graft or bribery can be brought against them. They have not used money unlawfully. I am certain that the conspicuous bosses in the state have not been the recipients of one tainted dollar. But they have held office and done that with considerable success. As I understand it, the affairs of their offices have been well administered.26

Then after accusing the "bosses" of dumping the previous governor, who deserved another term (he said), in favor of the present governor, he added: "Of late those bosses have been less active in

26 Ogden Standard, August 29, 1912.
27 Salt Lake Tribune, July 28, 1912.
28 Deseret News, August 29, 1912.
politics, but they have nevertheless been able to continue to dictate
the political destinies of the state.\textsuperscript{29}

The Salt Lake Tribune took frequent opportunity to run down the
"Federal bunch" editorially and otherwise.

How many people voted for or against Taft because of their feel­
ings about Reed Smoot would be impossible to guess. This writer believes
that those voters who were swayed either way by Smoot (because he was
Smoot) were far fewer in number than those who were influenced either
way by some other campaign question. In other words, those who favored
Taft solely because Smoot did, or those who opposed Taft because of
Smoot), the former was substantially larger. The writer feels that
there were too many other issues on which to base a choice for one man--
even Reed Smoot--to have been a decisive factor. (In a campaign with
no important issues and no strong feelings, as prestigious a man as
Smoot could have been the decisive element, carrying a large block of
votes because of his own appeal. Such appears not to have been the case
in 1912.)

This is not to say that Smoot did not exert considerable
influence. On the contrary; but he did it by convincing voters that
President Taft believed in the things that would benefit them. In his
newspaper and in his public speeches, he constantly reiterated this
contention until people supported Taft because they thought he was the
right man, and not simply because Smoot had told them to. Those who
opposed Taft did so believing that he was not the right man, and not

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid.
because they didn’t like Smoot. Evidence of this can be found in the strong support given Taft by bitter enemies of Smoot and in the fact that Church associates of Smoot were found in both the other parties.

Yet another factor in the campaign was party loyalty and an inherent dislike among many Republicans of a third party. There is reason to believe that many Utah Republicans who voted for Taft would have preferred Roosevelt, and—had he received the nomination—would have gladly voted for him. When he went against the party and seemed bent on “destroying” it, however, they chose the party over the man.30

As the campaign moved into the final two or three weeks, attention shifted more to the local scene and the state government came under fire. Governor Spry was accused of misuse of funds. He had, it was claimed, put state money in a bank where it would draw no interest and of whose board of directors he was a member. The charge was denied, and no evidence was produced either way.31

It was also charged that the railroads in Utah were finding preferred treatment by the national and state Republicans by means of money and other favors. They were not, it was said, paying enough taxes compared to other Western states. The Ogden Standard seemed to have started the debate, but it spread to the Republican Salt Lake papers which immediately took up the challenge. Figures were quoted by both sides “proving” conflicting claims. Just before the election, the State Board of Equalization, made up of two Democrats and two

30 Individuals who voted in 1912 to whom the writer spoke expressed this belief. The fact that Roosevelt was splitting the party was often mentioned in the press. Supra, p. 58.

31 Ogden Standard, October 30, 1912.
Republicans, published an open letter in the *News* giving the correct figures which showed that Utah assessments actually exceeded those of other Western states.\(^{32}\) This didn't settle the problem, however, and the election came with no final answer having been accepted.

These were the issues of the campaign of 1912. A final evaluation of them will be attempted in a later chapter.

\(^{32}\) *Deseret News*, November 2, 1912.
CHAPTER VI

THE "CHURCH INTERFERENCE" QUESTION

A bitterly fought campaign issue which perhaps could have been avoided was that of whether the Mormon Church was interfering in state politics. This had been a charge made by the American Party during its short life and by earlier non-Mormons. The fighting between the Church and the non-Mormons over this question, carried mainly in the columns of the Deseret News and the Salt Lake Tribune, reached bitter heights in the 1908 campaign, but in the succeeding two or three years it subsided. Coming into 1912, the battlefield was relatively quiet in this regard, perhaps because both groups were politically of one mind. Unfortunately, the truce, if such it was, didn't last. A random shot in April was followed by more than four months during which attention was on other things. Then in September and October the opponents took up arms in earnest. It will be of interest now to pursue the course taken by each side.

For no apparent reason, save perhaps from habit, the Tribune unburdened itself just prior to the spring Mormon conference as follows:

It is not likely that any particular or significant public deliverance will be given at this conference . . . it would be desirable, indeed, if the First Presidency would give out and the Conference sustain a positive and vigorous rule that would keep all of the general officials of the Church out of politics and forbid them "counseling" or lending the weight of their ecclesiastical authority either for or against any political party, or on the action of their membership with respect to civil affairs. No doubt this sort of deliverance will come some time, but we do not expect it this year. It must come, however, eventually, because
the control of politics and civil affairs by ecclesiastical authority is something that is so foreign and repugnant to American ideals that it cannot last as a permanent proposition in this country.¹

The only comment with even mild political implications came when Anthony W. Ivins referred to President Taft as a just, wise man of peace who would not permit the country to become involved in war with Mexico, in spite of the difficulties then existing between the two countries. (Among other things, the Mormons in Mexico were being seriously harassed by revolutionary forces, and the United States Government was attempting to help them return safely to this country.) No one took exception to Ivins' statement.

The next foray came late in August, when the Tribune quoted from the Boston Globe a biting reference to Church control of the Republican party.² The News did not reply.

Subsequent Tribune editorials had two main objectives: the first, to chastise the Church for any appearance of interference; and the second, to seize any suggestion that what the Church leaders said was not binding on the membership. The Deseret News took the stand that any man had a right to voice an opinion and that Church leaders who stated a preference were doing only that. Therefore, the people were free to do as they saw fit. In spite of the seeming agreement of these two positions, and in spite of the fact that the Tribune backers stood to profit from any Republican votes the Church might secure, their

¹Salt Lake Tribune, April 5, 1912.

²Ibid., August 28, 1912.
longstanding animosity toward the Church would not let them be quiet. While pleading for the right of each individual to vote his preference, the Tribune consistently branded the News' contention that he could, as a lie.

The first exchange in September concerned a speech by Francis M. Lyman, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, at a stake conference, in which he specifically told each person to vote his own choice. After noting the content of the speech, the Tribune added:

It was, as reported to us, a good, square, impartial talk, quite inoffensive politically, and morally strengthening to individual purpose.

But the chief value of President Lyman's sentiments is in the indication which it affords that no one will be authorized this year to play upon the loyalty of Mormons to their Church by "counseling" them that "the will of the brethren" is for the election of one candidate or another, thus freeing them all to vote as they choose.3

The News retorted the following day that, of course, what Lyman had said was true, and added that no one had ever been authorized "to play upon the loyalty of Mormons to their Church" for political reasons.

An article datelined Provo, September 9, was printed in both the Tribune and the Ogden Standard, saying that "Apostle-Senator Reed Smoot" in addressing a conference had gotten into a eulogy of President Taft. According to the article, many took exception to politics in a religious meeting, and a few had gotten up and left.

The single item which generated the most heat was an editorial published in the Improvement Era, the official magazine of the Church, over the signature of President Joseph F. Smith. Reaching the public

3Ibid., September 4, 1912.
the last week in September, it brought a storm of protest. A portion
of the text follows:

The forthcoming presidential election is one of profound impor-
tance, and opens to the student a wide field for the study of
applied political economy as well as for leading social questions
that are before the nation to be solved.

No reasonable citizen who has investigated the political
situation, with a view to learning the true status of the claims
set forth by the various political parties, can in any way justly
find fault with the present administration. President William H.
Taft has met the just needs of the people and economic demands of
the country with steadfastness and wisdom. In the treatment of
the great questions that have come before the nation, he has
risen to the occasion and applied such conservative legal remedies
as have won him true admiration from patriotic citizens of all
parties.

The extremely delicate situation with Mexico has been handled
by him in a way to establish confidence in his ability, and not­
withstanding the criticism of his action, in this matter and in that
of the Central American republics, time will doubtless prove that
his policy is best. . . . Everything considered, the administration
has dealt properly with this very delicate situation. The colonists
who were driven out were well treated by our government, being
provided in their extremity in great kindness, with food and means.

The only charge of any consequence that the opponents of
President Taft bring against him is that he has been and is the
tool of the "interests," which means doubtless that he unduly favors
"big business," or trusts. His administration has proved the
contrary and the careful student will find that he has done as much
to regulate the trusts as was ever done by any other incumbent of
the presidential chair and he has done it legally. He believes
strictly in the judicial application of the law in these cases,
and as firmly as anyone in the need of just and fair laws to deal
with the important question. It is a perplexing problem which not
even the experts know just how to handle, and which can not be
solved by a mere change of presidents. Pres. Taft believes in
finding out what is necessary, then applying the law as a remedy
without resort to unconstitutional means, to lawlessness and
anarchy. This has been his policy, and what he has accomplished
has been effective without being revolutionary and illegal.

At no time has the country been more prosperous than now and
as far as politics may affect prosperity, the people of the country
have no occasion to complain at the administration on this matter.
So that, on the whole, whatever may be the outcome of the people's
choice, it is clear that President William H. Taft has made a good
president, and his administration has been a success. Should the
people call him once again to the presidential chair, it is not
likely that they will regret it, but, on the contrary, will find their action wise, sensible and sound.

Joseph F. Smith

The Tribune of September 26, quoted part of the editorial and added:

That will certainly be reassuring to the supporters of Taft in Utah, and in all of the communities where President Smith's word carries special weight. [But] while it will be satisfactory to the Taft men, how about the other fellows?

The Ogden Standard mentioned the matter briefly the 26th, and on the 27th wrote:

The editorial . . . we trust is not intended as an expression of the church, but rather as the individual utterance of the distinguished leader who always has been a strong Republican partisan. We would feel deeply aggrieved if a less radical Republican, occupying the presidency of the Church, saw fit to commend the candidacy of Taft, but Jos. F. Smith's Republicanism is so deep-dyed that but few will mistake it to be the voice of the church or other than the personal opinion of one of strong conviction who is for his party though the heavens fall.

The word spread fast, and on the 27th, the News felt constrained to clarify the situation. Its editors stated:

The editorial . . . we understand, caused a great deal of comment among local politicians, and some have construed it as an evidence of Church interference in politics.

President Joseph F. Smith, today authorized us to say that he alone assumes responsibility for the views expressed in the article referred to. It . . . was not intended as anything but the expression of his personal regard for the President of the United States and his personal opinion of the policy of the administration. It is not meant as a declaration of the political faith of the Church. President Smith added emphatically that, as an American citizen, he considered himself as much entitled to hold and express

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5Salt Lake Tribune, September 26, 1912.

6Ogden Standard, September 27, 1912.
his personal views as any official of this, or any other church, or his friends or his critics.

The President of the Church stated, further, that there is no intention on the part of the Church authorities to interfere in politics, nor would there be any interference in behalf of any political party.

During this campaign the Church has no candidates and does not advocate the success or defeat of any political party. The editorial referred to must not be taken as, or used as, a declaration of political preference by the Church.

A Tribune editorial of September 27 insisted that when President Smith wrote in the Improvement Era, an official Church publication, he was not speaking simply as an individual, but as the leader of the Mormon Church, with all the powers claimed by him as such. By the 28th the Tribune had its editorial guns really warmed up as it summarized conditions thusly:

The editorial... was the sensation of the day in this community yesterday. The emphatic endorsement of President Taft contained in that editorial was construed to be a guidance to thousands of Mormons who looked to the head of the church for directions in their politics as in everything else... It will undoubtedly affect the vote.

...the Roosevelt following here... will undoubtedly be extremely resentful of this editorial... The Democrats who are free from church fetters will also resent that editorial and those who have been claiming that the aggression which has kept the people in a state of agitation for decades has come from sensational newspapers, and that the church and church leaders have been the victims in place of assailants, will be put to confusion and shame. For here is a case of a political bomb dropped from a clear sky. There was nothing to call for it so far as is known; there was no agitation against the church, there was no [anti-church] party... In fact, it had been hoped and supposed that they would this year keep out of politics. But here President Smith comes into the fight as a partisan... and lends the weight of his powerful position to the support of the Republican candidate.

While the Tribune is anxious to see Mr. Taft re-elected and commends every sentiment uttered in his favor, it has serious criticism upon the wisdom of President Smith's course... 

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7Deseret News, September 27, 1912.

8Salt Lake Tribune, September 28, 1912.
After soundly berating President Smith further for allegedly stirring up an otherwise peaceful scene, the editors close with the following printed in capitals:

Although the Era article may be exasperating to Democrats and Progressives, it is humiliating to thousands of Taft supporters who have felt that Utah's place in the Taft column was assured without resorting to measures which invariably do the state more harm than anybody's election would do it good. However, no one now doubts that Taft will carry Utah.9

Politicians quickly became involved. Joseph J. Cannon, Mormon temporary chairman of the Progressive county and legislative conventions, in his opening speech on September 28 discussed the matter. He reported that the Democratic Party had referred the editorial to the national party, and that some had suggested reviving the American Party. He then stated his conviction that there was no attempt being made to direct Mormon votes, and that each was free to vote for whomever he chose. He denied any desire on the part of the Church heads to sway any votes, and said he had been told this by President Smith himself.10

At a Progressive rally in Logan, Nephi L. Morris, candidate for Governor, and a stake president, told his audience that voters should not be intimidated by the editorial.11

The controversy continued over the editorial until the semi-annual Mormon conference held October 4-6 afforded new material for discussion. The major speeches of the Conference were carried in all of the papers, and the editorial fighting was intense.

9Ibid.
10Deseret News, September 28, 1912.
11Salt Lake Tribune, September 29, 1912.
A difference of opinion existed even among the leaders of the Church as to the extent to which the Church could or ought to give counsel for the guidance of Church members. Democrat Brigham H. Roberts in his speech divided things into two groups: the essential and the non-essential. All Church members should heed Church advice, and Church advice should be given in the area of essentials, he said; but when it came to non-essentials, where every man's judgment may be as good as another's, liberty and tolerance should exist. In the area of non-essentials, he included commercial and industrial affairs and "civil government."¹²

At the end of the meeting in which Roberts spoke, President Smith made some remarks. He believed, he said, in all that had been stated, but he also believed a little further. Most of the mistakes made in the world were in the area of liberty and personal judgment, he claimed. All men should use great care not to abolish or change the things "which God has willed and has inspired to be done. Even in the realms of freedom and the exercise of their own judgment, they may individually go unto God in faith and prayer, and find out what should guide and direct their human judgment and wisdom. . . ."¹³

The following day, President Charles W. Penrose, counselor to President Smith, rather pointedly discoursed on "Inspiration." Some excerpts from his speech follow:

¹²Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Report of the 83rd Semi-Annual Conference, October 4-6, 1912, Salt Lake City, Utah.

¹³Ibid., p. 41.
Indeed, I do not know anything that is really true and that is divine that is not essential. . . .

And we should have our eyes open to the light and willing to receive good counsel and good advice, and to hearken to the voice of the Lord through the appointed channel. . . .

Now we should be very careful when we hear the word of the Lord, to receive it and to obey it, and we should be very careful when men utter their own opinions and ideas, whether in regard to the principles of the Gospel or to anything that pertains to the welfare of the human family, about accepting it. . . .

It is the right and privilege of the man who stands at the head to give forth his opinions and his views. . . . If at any time he tries to enforce his private opinions upon others by way of edicts against them, by ecclesiastical force, by physical force, by any pains or penalties, that will be another thing; but that hasn't occurred in our history as far as I know, and I will support my brethren with whom I am associated in pointing out the truth as they see it, and exposing the wrong as they understand it, and in trying to convince and convert those who go astray to come into the right path, that good government may prevail; that is our privilege. 14

Both Smith and Penrose seemed to be saying that while an individual is entirely free to make up his own mind with regard to anything, he should be careful not to reject what may be superior—even inspired—wisdom.

The Tribune and the Ogden Standard ran critical editorials about these views; and the News, as usual, defended the right of the Church men to have expressed them. The Standard seemed less interested than the Tribune in embarrassing the Church, and on October 8 printed an interview with then Apostle David O. McKay. He was quoted as saying that the Church leaders had a right to differ among themselves and to express themselves.

14 Ibid., pp. 62-68.
The Church doctrine accords every man and woman his free agency and that right shall not be abridged. President Smith and Apostle Penrose firmly believe in the representative form of government, while Elder Roberts is more Democratic and he believes that the people should more directly voice their political sentiments.

Many differ on the political question and every person, in or out of the Church has the right to voice his honest convictions pertaining to it. I do not think the talks were made for political effect, and yet I think it rather unfortunate that the subject was brought up at this time, on the eve of a political campaign.¹⁵

Additional charges of interference were made and denied in editorials similar to those cited during the remainder of the campaign, although they became less frequent toward the end.

Summary

How much influence did this campaign by-play have on the voters of Utah? An exact answer is, of course, impossible. The best this writer can do is to make a cautious estimate.

From the foregoing, two conclusions can be readily reached. First, that the Church presidency approved of the Taft administration and desired his re-election. Their own statements suggest that they considered this the wise and proper course, and that Church members would do well to heed their council. Second, that in spite of this open invitation to Church members to vote Republican, the way was left wide open for them to reject it if they chose. Church leaders themselves reiterated their right to express an "opinion," and they repeatedly denied that these "opinions" were in any way binding on the membership. Over and over it was stated that each individual should and did have the right to form his own conclusions, and that the Church in no way wanted to dictate how its members should vote. Democratic and Progressive

¹⁵Ogden Standard, October 8, 1912.
leaders, who were Mormons in good standing, opposed, and encouraged opposition to, the political beliefs of the Presidency. Church members were told time and again by their party leaders, by News editorials, and by high Church officials to vote their own convictions. There was no anti-Mormon persecution or other force outside the Church to cause the members to band together, as had been the case other years.

It must be supposed that some, perhaps many, Mormons were persuaded to vote Republican by the expressed views of their president. Many others must have voted for Taft because of personal preference based on other considerations. However, certain figures available for that year indicate a large-scale disregard by Mormons both of Taft and of his supporters among Church officials.

Population and Church membership figures for 1912 show that approximately 75 per cent of the inhabitants of the state were Mormons. It can be assumed that approximately that same percentage of the voters of the state were likewise Mormons. Nevertheless, President Taft garnered only 37.4 per cent of the Utah vote. It must be assumed that this figure includes some non-Mormon votes—probably a large number of them. If the above assumptions are correct, it must be concluded that at least half, and probably more than half, of the Mormon voters did not vote for Taft. However, Taft won by a plurality of only 5,434 votes out of 112,280. It seems not unreasonable that that many undecided voters might have been picked up by the comments of the

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Church leaders, in which case it might be claimed that the Church swung the election. However, this is not the final answer, as will be shown in Chapter VIII.
Utah moved into 1912 completely in the hands of the Republicans as far as the state and national offices were concerned, and party leaders in the state seemed confident that such would continue to be the case. With Senator Smoot at its head—and backed up by Senator George Sutherland, Congressman Joseph Howell, and Governor William Spry—the party organization began working smoothly for another victory. At the outset, Taft and the Republicans seemed the favorites, but as Roosevelt eased himself into the contest, ripples of dissension began to form and party leaders began to worry.

In late January and February, the newspapers were following the movement toward Roosevelt with great interest and, usually, alarm. Only the Ogden Standard could find any joy in Roosevelt's announcement of candidacy, and it believed that Utah progressives would unite behind him.\(^1\)

William Jennings Bryan spoke in Ogden on February 26—and while his speech was not primarily political, he managed to count out both of the Republicans as possible winners in November.\(^2\) A second speech, given in Salt Lake City the same day, turned into a denunciation in

\(^1\)Ogden Standard, February 23, 1912.

\(^2\)Ibid., February 26, 1912.
some detail of Roosevelt and the Taft administration.\textsuperscript{3}

From February to June, as the two Republican candidates battled through the primaries, Utah partisans for both men foresaw certain victory in the national convention.

Political activity in the state grew apace. In March and April, Roosevelt clubs began to spring up around the state, beginning first in Ogden; April and May saw the calling of mass meetings in several localities. In mid-March, C. E. Loose, friend and political associate of Reed Smoot, and Republican state chairman, resigned as president of the pro-Taft \textit{Herald-Republican}, an expression of his preference for Roosevelt.\textsuperscript{4} Roosevelt forces made a determined effort to send their men to the state convention and were successful fairly often. Confidence ran high; and much was made of the victories, although they usually represented a very small vote.

Early in April, the Republican State Central Committee formally endorsed Taft as the party nominee, but there was real concern that the Roosevelt threat could be disastrous. Thomas Kearns, returning from the East, reported that if the party didn't overcome its differences, it would lose the election.\textsuperscript{5} An appeal was made by Smoot, Sutherland, Howell, and Spry—in May—that Utah delegates to the convention be instructed for Taft.\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Deseret News}, February 27, 1912.
\textsuperscript{4}\textit{Salt Lake Tribune}, March 13, 1912.
\textsuperscript{5}\textit{Ibid.}, May 3, 1912.
\textsuperscript{6}\textit{Herald-Republican}, May 6, 1912.
In the midst of the Republican struggle in the state for control of the party, attention shifted briefly to the Democrats, whose state convention for the choosing of national delegates was held May 14. Adopting a platform very like the national—calling for direct primaries, direct election of senators, lower tariffs, labor laws, and most of the nationally debated reforms—the convention instructed its delegates only that they "support progressive candidates and all our progressive measures."  

The following day the Republicans met in Convention and the Taft forces successfully carried the field. In spite of a vigorous attempt by the Roosevelt wing to block instruction, the delegates were pledged to vote for Taft. Among the delegates were the four state officeholders—Smoot; Spry; Sutherland; Howell; and C. E. Loose, the only Roosevelt partisan in the group. The platform was mainly an affirmation of allegiance to the party and a vote of approval for Taft's administration, and for the work of the senators, the representative, and Governor Spry. It also favored a tariff policy that would protect home industry.

As national convention preliminaries got underway, apprehension rose in both groups in the state. C. E. Loose, pledged to Taft, nevertheless voted for the Roosevelt man for convention chairman, which action brought him both praise and criticism from party members at

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8 Additional delegates to the Republican National Convention were C. R. Hollingsworth, Jacob Johnson, and J. N. Peterson.
home. Newspapers on both sides declared that Roosevelt would surely bolt if defeated; and again some cheered the prospect, while other jeered.

When Taft won, Loose resigned as state chairman, saying that he had supported Roosevelt because he thought it was right. Now he didn’t feel that he should be on a committee trying to elect Taft. He was duly replaced and became a leader in the Progressive camp.

In spite of the drawn-out balloting in the Democratic National Convention, there did not seem to be in Utah the interest in it that had prevailed during the Republican meeting. This might have been a reflection of the newspaper bias, although the papers did give full coverage to the happenings. While the Salt Lake papers did not favor any candidate, the Ogden Standard kept boosting the progressives among the Democrats. Utah’s delegates, uninstructed, voted for Wilson 6½ to 1½ for Clark until the last ballot.

A meeting of Progressives in Salt Lake on July 23 brought representatives from the “principal counties,” and showed “strong” sentiment in Weber, Summit, Sanpete, Salt Lake, Rich, Davis, Juab, and Tooele Counties. Some counties already had named a full ticket of Progressives. Steps were made toward calling a state convention and a $5,000 campaign fund was raised.

The Progressives met again July 27, this time in Provo, and for the purpose of naming delegates to the national convention. At that

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9Herald-Republican, June 24, 1912.
10Ogden Standard, July 3, 1912.
11Delegates to the Progressive National Convention were J. H. Mays, S. B. Tuttle, N. A. Robertson, Glen R. Bothwell, Mrs. Charles J. Adams, Preston G. Peterson, F. F. Schade, Wesley K. Walton. They took
time it was also decided to put up a full slate of candidates for the state offices. A platform was adopted which outlined the abuses of the Republican "machines," both national and local, and which called for a return to rule by the people. It stated that since the Democrats were not progressive enough to handle the nation's problems, there was clear need for a new party.\textsuperscript{12}

Following their national convention, the Wilson forces began to move in the state, organizing clubs and holding rallies.

Hiram Johnson, Progressive Governor of California, arrived in Utah late in August and spoke for Roosevelt in both Ogden and Salt Lake. He was generally well-received; and because he scolded the "bosses," even the \textit{Tribune} wrote him up favorably.

On August 29, the state Democrats nominated a ticket with John P. Tolton of Beaver for Governor and Attorneys Mathonihah Thomas, Of Salt Lake, and Tillman D. Johnson, of Ogden, for Representatives to Congress. (For the first time, Utah was entitled to two Congressmen.) A detailed platform was adopted which applauded Wilson; deplored the inefficiency of Taft and the corruption of his friends; berated the state Republicans for machine politics, misuse of state funds, suspected graft in the State Land Board; and urged a non-partisan judiciary, health and safety laws, a direct primary, labor laws, conservation, a tariff revision downward, and more firmness toward Mexico.\textsuperscript{13}

no special part in the Convention. Freeman Morningstar was appointed at a later time.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Deseret News}, July 28, 1912.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Salt Lake Tribune}, August 30, 1912.
During the first days of September, most of the papers reported the results of a "careful and impartial" canvass of the state, which showed that the Republicans would probably carry the entire state—but by reduced margins. Only Salt Lake County was held in doubt, the Democrats being strong there. The Progressives were given no chance to win, but it was felt they would make the other contests closer.14

The state Republican Convention, September 5, nominated Congressman Joseph Howell, of Cache County, for a fifth term and gave the other position to Judge Jacob Johnson, of Sanpete. Governor William Spry, a personable and politically astute cattle man from Tooele, was duly re-nominated. The proceedings seemed to be routine. A short platform was approved which praised national and state office-holders; pointed to progressive labor legislation passed by the Senate but still before the House, and urged its passage there; pointed to railroad laws which helped the interior of the country; noted that the state tax system was being reviewed; and defended the tariff.15

Meeting in Ogden on September 13, the Progressive State Convention was honored by the presence of Roosevelt, himself. Enthusiastic delegates from all over the state thronged to hear him. Speaking from an outdoor podium, he held the attention of some 6,000 listeners as he restated his views and berated Utah delegates to the national convention for taking part in the Chicago "theft." As an ex-President, he was well received, although some of the listeners might not have agreed with what he said.

14*ibid.*, September 1, 1912.
15*ibid.*, September 6, 1912.
Later, the convention nominated Nephi L. Morris, Salt Lake businessman, for Governor and Stephen H. Love, of Salt Lake County, and Louis Larson of Sanpete for Congressman. Love had earlier been considered for a similar post within the Republican ranks. Approval was given to a platform much like that of the national party. It called for support of all the parent party's reform measures, both for national and state improvements, and called down the Republicans in the state for not doing what they had promised in the way of reform. The longest of the three, the Progressive platform was detailed and specific.\textsuperscript{16}

William Jennings Bryan returned to Utah in September and spoke in several towns on behalf of Wilson. As the campaign moved into the final weeks, local politicians began stumping hard. Prominent men in all three parties spoke often and their attention was now divided between the national candidates and those for state offices.

Bearing the brunt of a two-sided attack, Governor Spry and the Republicans were accused of misuse of funds, collusion with the railroads, extravagance in state offices, and illegal voting procedures.\textsuperscript{17} The Democrats especially pushed these charges, while the Progressives assailed machine politics and Reed Smoot. The Republicans stoutly defended themselves, while denying the fitness of either Morris or Tolton to govern the state.

As the election day neared, doubt was expressed in the Tribune about the outcome of the voting. An October 28 article reported:

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., September 14, 1912.

\textsuperscript{17}These charges are explained in more detail on page 71 herein, on this page below, and on the following page.
Utah this week passes from the "safely Republican" to the "doubtful" column. . . . The trend has been away from the Republican Party. Indications still point to Republican success in the state, but the signs are uncertain enough to justify placing the state in the doubtful column. . . . 18

On November 2, an article claimed that "on the eve of the election the situation in Utah is more in doubt than at any other time during the campaign. . . . 19 It went on to say that while the Republicans would probably win, the Democratic candidates for Congressman were in a strong position. The November 3 Tribune carried four separate articles naming Wilson as the probable winner nationally.

In a last ditch effort, the Democrats ran a full page ad in the November 2 Deseret News and a similar one in the November 5 Tribune, charging that the Republicans would probably try to commit fraud some way or other—especially in connection with voting machines, to be used that year for the first time. (There had been ample explanation and diagrams of their use in all the papers for days before the election.) Other charges of misconduct were also made, including that of an improper appeal to Church loyalty. The ads were headed, "Republicans are making appeals to religious prejudice but there will be no investigation of a democratic state by a democratic national administration."

The night before the election, leaflets were distributed picturing Smoot and others and asking for Mormon support for Taft. All sides later denied knowledge of them, and it was decided that some individuals had printed them to embarrass the Republicans. 20 So went the campaign, hard fought to the last day!

18 Salt Lake Tribune, October 28, 1912.
19 Ibid., November 2, 1912.
20 Ibid., November 5-6, 1912.
The post-election tabulation of votes showed that the Republicans had again carried the state, but by a much smaller margin than in 1908. Both Democrats and Republicans lost votes to the Progressives and to the Socialist Party, which polled almost 9,000 votes. Taft had 42,013, or 37.4 per cent of the total. Wilson received 36,597, or 32.5 per cent; and Roosevelt, 24,174, or 21.5 per cent. The votes for Governor and Congressman did not vary greatly from these, as all the Republicans won. (The Socialist state ticket also kept up with the national ticket, with some 8,700 votes.)

Of the twenty-seven counties in the state, twenty were carried by Taft, five by Wilson, and two by Roosevelt. Of the larger counties, only Cache and Utah went for Wilson, with pluralities in each case of about 400 votes; and only Weber went for Roosevelt, again by about 400 votes. Table 3, on the following page, and Table 4, on page 95, show how the voting went in each county.

There was no noticeable trend based on location, industry (i.e., mining, agriculture, etc.), size of county, or other important considerations—except that Roosevelt was markedly stronger in urban areas, and Taft was somewhat more popular in rural areas. It is difficult to say whether Utah, Cache, Weber, and Salt Lake counties may have voted as they did because of actively partisan newspaper influence, or whether newspapers with political bias prospered in those areas because of the sympathetic political climate already established. Did Weber, for instance, vote Progressive because of the Standard, or was the Standard able to be so outspokenly Progressive because the people felt the same way? In any event, the voting in areas of strong-minded newspapers seemed to follow the lead of those papers.
### TABLE 3

**UTAH 1912 VOTE CAST FOR GOVERNOR AND FOR REPRESENTATIVES TO CONGRESS, BY COUNTIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Socialist</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Progressive</th>
<th></th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Socialist</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Progressive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governor</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>William Spry 432</td>
<td>Homer P. Burt 84</td>
<td>John F. Tolton 1,748</td>
<td>Nephi L. Morris 152</td>
<td></td>
<td>Howell-Johnson 689</td>
<td>Knerr-King 99</td>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson-Thomas 605</td>
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<tr>
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<td>58</td>
<td>1,371</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>1,067</td>
</tr>
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<td>129</td>
<td>3,158</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,337</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>3,289</td>
<td>1,067</td>
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<td>446</td>
<td>471</td>
<td></td>
<td>793</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>486</td>
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<td>1,282</td>
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<td>1,135</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,336</td>
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<td>803</td>
<td>970</td>
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<td>610</td>
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<td>161</td>
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<td></td>
<td>438</td>
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<td></td>
<td>336</td>
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<td>164</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>54</td>
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<td>902</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>277</td>
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<td>957</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>619</td>
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<td></td>
<td>959</td>
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<td>161</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>627</td>
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<td>4,374</td>
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<td>8,958</td>
<td>36,640</td>
<td>22,358</td>
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TABLE 4

UTAH 1912 VOTE CAST FOR PRESIDENT, BY COUNTIES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counties</th>
<th>Republican W. H. Taft</th>
<th>Socialist E. V. Debs</th>
<th>Democrat Woodrow Wilson</th>
<th>Progressive Theodore Roosevelt</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaver</td>
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<td>602</td>
<td>307</td>
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<td>936</td>
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<td>3,296*</td>
<td>1,179</td>
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<td>350</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>541</td>
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<td>1,142*</td>
<td>460</td>
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<td>Emery</td>
<td>762*</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>673*</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>249*</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand</td>
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<td>Iron</td>
<td>690*</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>63</td>
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<td>Sevier</td>
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<td>915</td>
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<td>Tooele</td>
<td>950*</td>
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<td>646</td>
<td>261</td>
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<td>Uintah</td>
<td>544</td>
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<td>566</td>
<td>641*</td>
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<td>Utah</td>
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<td>842*</td>
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<td>Wayne</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3,148</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>2,986*</td>
<td>3,608*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Totals: 42,013  8,999  36,579  24,174


*The winner in each county.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

President Taft won the election in Utah for several reasons. First, there was little, if any, dissatisfaction with the economic condition of the state. Crops were good, prices high, and jobs plentiful. The state had prospered during Taft's administration, and morale was high. People were generally optimistic and apparently had no economic reason for wanting a change of president.

Second, a good many Utahns received most of their campaign information from Republican-oriented newspapers. Mormon and non-Mormon papers alike actively supported Taft and just as actively opposed Wilson and Roosevelt. No very large papers supported either of the latter two, and only two or three of the smaller ones did. Such one-sided newspaper support probably did not exist in the larger western states, although it may have in the smaller ones.

Weber County, which favored Roosevelt, and Utah and Cache counties, which favored Wilson, had a total population in 1912 of about 96,000. (These were the only counties having active anti-Taft papers and only one of the three was a daily.) Subtracting this figure from the total population of the state, 373,000, leaves a balance of 277,000, or about 74 per cent of the population (living in Salt Lake County and the smaller, primarily rural counties) which received the bulk, if not all of, as much campaign writing as it saw in the columns.
of pro-Taft papers. Also, while it is doubtful that very many people outside the three counties named had access to the anti-Taft papers, it is known that pro-Taft papers were readily obtainable in those three. Weber and Utah counties, too, had pro-Taft papers of their own.

Third, Utah voters were told endlessly that tariff protection was vital to Utah industry. Many of them depended on sugar, mining, or wool for a livelihood and even those who did not, stood to benefit from taxes paid by those concerns to the state. President Taft proved throughout the campaign his friendship for protection, and—by extension—for Utah.

Why was there no consumer demand for a lower tariff? There was, but it was weak. Utahns were less dependent as a whole on manufactured goods than were their counterparts in the East and in some Western areas. Nearly 64 per cent of the population still lived in towns of fewer than 4,000 inhabitants or on farms. Less than 25 per cent lived in towns of more than 10,000. As suggested earlier, many who were not farmers worked in the industries being protected.

Fourth, Utah was a Republican state (as were most of its neighbors), having shown its preference in presidential and state elections since 1900. Republican party leaders worked from a position of strength with the prestige of their national and state offices behind them. Having been successful for some ten years, the party organization entered the campaign strong and practiced in winning. The top party man, Reed Smoot, was well known and popular in the State.

The Republicans won more than 50 per cent of the votes in 1900, 61 per cent in 1904, and 56 per cent in 1908. Whatever the cause for
their initial Republican vote, it seems likely that many Utahns voted Republican in 1912 because they had done so before. It was their party. Particularly in the absence of any real reason for changing was this apt to be the case. Even with the party split, these earlier Republicans sided in 1912 with either the Republican or the ex-Republican, rather than supporting the Democrat. Taft and Roosevelt together received nearly 59 per cent of the total, compared with 32 per cent for Wilson. Especially in the twenty-three smaller counties did the voters remain faithful, giving Taft 41.4 per cent of the vote, compared to 34.5 per cent in the four larger counties. Wilson did almost equally well in both areas, but Roosevelt did substantially better in the larger counties (24.3 per cent to 17.5 per cent).

Fifth, Taft gained and Roosevelt lost votes because of sentiment against a third party. Republicans who would have liked to vote for Roosevelt refrained from doing so because of party loyalty. As mentioned earlier, Taft and Roosevelt picked up nearly twice as many votes as Wilson. Had either of them received all the party votes, it would have been no contest. As it was, Roosevelt had to draw his support mostly from within the party, and the fact that he was splitting the party hurt him. Roosevelt may also have taken some votes from Wilson, which in turn helped Taft.¹

Sixth, the strength of the Socialist Party was a determining factor in the outcome. Polling nearly 9,000 votes, it represented considerably more than the difference between Taft and Wilson (5,434 votes). It is doubtful that in the absence of a Socialist Party many of those

¹Supra, p. 71.
votes would have gone to Taft. The nature of the Socialist philosophy would more likely have led its partisans to the Democratic or Progressive parties. If Wilson could have received the 9,000 votes, or even slightly more than half of them, he could have beaten Taft.

Seventh, the fact that Utah was largely rural, with more than 35 per cent of its population in Salt Lake County and another 19 per cent in neighboring Utah and Weber counties, worked to the advantage of the Republicans. Had there been several major population centers in the state instead of just one, state control would have been harder to achieve. In other words, had Cache County—with its Democrat edge—been of a size with Salt Lake City or Salt Lake County, it might have canceled out the Republican edge in the latter. Or if Utah or Weber counties had been in Southern Utah, away from the watchful eye of the Republican central headquarters, perhaps their trends toward the Democrats and the Progressives, respectively, would have been more pronounced. And again, had they compared somewhat in size with Salt Lake, the outcome might have been different. As it was, nearly half the population was within easy reach of the Republicans, and the rest was so scattered as to not be readily accessible to anyone. (Of course, the other parties faced the same situation; but the Republicans, already in control in the state, stood to profit more from it than their opponents.)

Eighth, when President Joseph F. Smith, of the Mormon Church, announced for Taft, even though he labeled it his opinion, he undoubtedly swung some votes to Taft. Certainly Taft’s prestige in Utah was enhanced by the support of such an important person. How many votes were affected cannot be calculated, but this writer believes they were fewer than has
been thought in the past. The way had been left open for Mormons to vote as they pleased, and important Church leaders belonged to all three parties. As indicated in Chapter VI, large numbers of Mormons disregarded the president's counsel at the critical moment. It is doubtful, then, that very many Democrats changed their vote to Taft; and Roosevelt certainly received Mormon votes. Undecided Mormons and very probably a few extremely conscientious ones may have followed the president's lead.

It is this writer's opinion that President Smith's remarks and those of other pro-Taft churchmen, rather than causing voters to change their minds, only confirmed them in doing what they had decided to do already. As explained in the various chapters, there were several reasons why Utahns should have been expected to elect Taft independent of any Church action. The opinions of the Church leaders, expressed as they were rather late in the campaign, could hardly have been a primary factor in the decisions of very many voters. Had those opinions had a very great effect, the plurality for Taft should have been much higher.

It is conceded that many Republicans who voted in 1912 may have aligned themselves with that party originally in earlier campaigns at the request of the Church, or for other reasons having to do with the Church. To the extent that they continued to be Republicans, the Church can be said to have influenced the vote. However, in 1912 the Mormon-Republican vote was predominantly based on other considerations than the comments of Church leaders.
Thus the concerted effects of numerous forces in the state were needed to bring about the Taft victory. No one of them can be given all the credit, nor can the credit be distributed among them with any degree of accuracy. Yet so narrow was the margin of victory, that it appears that a substantial change in any of them might have altered the outcome.

In view of the barrage of pro-Taft propaganda, a proper question would seem to be: Why did Taft not win by a larger margin? The answer is the Progressive Party. The Democrats lost 6.6 per cent of their 1908 vote to either the Socialists or the Progressives, or both. (Possibly some had been converted to Taft.) The Republicans lost 18.8 per cent of their 1908 vote, nearly all of which probably went to the Progressives. As a liked and respected ex-President, Roosevelt had appeal for many Republicans who willingly followed him out of the party. He also appealed to the more progressive element of the party who saw no chance in Taft of getting what they sought. Without the Progressive Party, Taft would surely have done much better than he did.

Although Taft did have a plurality in the election of 5,434 votes, the over-all figures indicated keen interest in progressivism within the state. Wilson, Roosevelt, and the Socialists combined received 70,262 votes—28,249 more than Taft—so that in spite of the Taft victory, Utah followed the national trend. One is led to speculate that if Roosevelt had run on the Republican ticket, he would have drawn 50 per cent or more of the Utah vote. (He would have had all of the Taft advantages, plus his own appeal as a progressive.)
None of Utah's neighbors in the West voted as she did, even though some of them had some of the same problems. The answer again seems to lie in the popularity of the Progressive Party. To explain why that party was popular would require a study of conditions in each state concerned. Suffice it to say that in every one of the ten other Western states except Arizona, the Progressives and Republicans together outpolled the Democrats—often by sizeable amounts—although the Democrats carried all but two (California and Washington were carried by Roosevelt). Arizona and New Mexico voted for the first time as states, and both went Democratic. The Progressives were a poor second in Arizona and a poor third in New Mexico. California, strongly Republican in 1908, went to the Progressives by a handful of votes (283,610 to 283,436 for the Democrats). The Republicans won fewer than 4,000, while the Socialists received 79,201. This can, in part, be explained by the fact that the popular Governor Hyrum Johnson was running for Vice-President on the Progressive ticket. Colorado, in the Democrat column in 1908, remained there in 1912, but by a reduced margin. The Republicans, who had run close in 1908, lost heavily to the Progressives. Idaho went to the Democrats by a thousand votes, although they polled fewer votes than in 1908 when they lost. Montana was Republican by 3,000 votes in 1908; Democratic in 1912 by nearly 10,000. The Progressives had 22,456. Nevada remained Democratic in 1912, although both the old parties lost heavily to the Progressives. Wyoming moved narrowly into the Democratic ranks, after being strongly Republican the previous election. Oregon went to the Democrats, and the Progressives beat out the Republicans there. In Washington, the Progressives ran a strong first, with the Democrats second.
In four of these states where the Democrats won, they polled fewer votes than in 1908, in spite of a larger total vote. In two, where the Democrats won, and in one (Washington) which the Progressives carried, the Democratic increase over 1908 was less than their proportionate share of the total increase of votes cast. Only in California did the Democratic per cent of increase equal or pass the per cent of increase in total votes, and this was not enough to win for them.

Table 5 on the following page shows the relative votes cast in 1908 and 1912 in the eleven Western states. These figures indicate that it was not an increase in the Democratic vote, but in most cases a diminution of the Republican vote caused by strong Progressive inroads, that led to Wilson's victory in the West. Because of the reasons listed earlier, Utah Republicans were more successful in holding their ranks intact than were their fellows in the states around them. Thus Utah became the only Republican state outside of New England adding her four electoral votes to the four of Vermont in a futile endorsement of William Howard Taft.
### TABLE 5

**VOTES RECEIVED IN 1908 AND 1912 IN THE ELEVEN WESTERN STATES BY MAJOR PARTIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>1908 Republicans</th>
<th>1908 Democrats</th>
<th>1908 Total</th>
<th>1912 Republicans</th>
<th>1912 Democrats</th>
<th>1912 Progressives</th>
<th>1912 Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3,021</td>
<td>10,324</td>
<td>6,949</td>
<td>23,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>214,398</td>
<td>127,492</td>
<td>386,597</td>
<td>3,914</td>
<td>283,436</td>
<td>263,610</td>
<td>673,527</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>123,700</td>
<td>126,644</td>
<td>253,877</td>
<td>58,386</td>
<td>114,232</td>
<td>72,306</td>
<td>266,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>52,621</td>
<td>36,162</td>
<td>97,288</td>
<td>32,810</td>
<td>33,921</td>
<td>25,527</td>
<td>105,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>32,333</td>
<td>29,326</td>
<td>61,659</td>
<td>18,512</td>
<td>27,941</td>
<td>22,456</td>
<td>79,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>10,775</td>
<td>11,212</td>
<td>22,987</td>
<td>3,196</td>
<td>7,986</td>
<td>5,620</td>
<td>20,115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>20,846</td>
<td>14,918</td>
<td>35,764</td>
<td>14,560</td>
<td>15,310</td>
<td>9,232</td>
<td>42,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>17,900</td>
<td>22,139</td>
<td>8,347</td>
<td>51,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>62,530</td>
<td>38,049</td>
<td>100,579</td>
<td>34,673</td>
<td>47,064</td>
<td>37,600</td>
<td>137,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>106,062</td>
<td>58,691</td>
<td>164,753</td>
<td>70,445</td>
<td>86,840</td>
<td>113,698</td>
<td>322,799</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>61,028</td>
<td>42,601</td>
<td>103,629</td>
<td>42,100</td>
<td>36,579</td>
<td>24,174</td>
<td>112,275</td>
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</table>

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THE 1912 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN UTAH

(107 pages)

An Abstract of the Thesis of

C. Austin Wahlquist

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

History

Dr. Eugene Campbell

Chairman, Advisory Committee

Brigham Young University
August, 1962
ABSTRACT

The year 1912 was an unusual political year because of the development of an important third party, the Progressives. Theodore Roosevelt returned from abroad to find his reform program lagging under the Taft Administration and decided to run for the presidency himself. His announcement of intent to run and subsequent bolt from the Chicago convention split the Republican Party into two belligerent factions. Taft claimed to be progressive enough and had the support of the regular party members. Roosevelt was nominated for President by his supporters and formed the "Bull Moose" Progressive Party. The Democrats had also adopted a progressive program and then nominated Woodrow Wilson, reform-minded Governor of New Jersey for President. The three-way race was bitterly contested, but the split among the Republicans handed the victory to Wilson.

In Utah the campaign was followed closely. For several important reasons, the people of Utah had voted Republican with regularity since 1900 and the governorship and Congressional posts were held by Republicans in 1912. The most powerful political figure in Utah was Reed Smoot, United States Senator and Apostle in the Mormon Church. Under his direction, the G.O.P. was able to retain control of the state in spite of deep inroads made by the Progressives.

For Utahns the issues were: (1) The candidates themselves: Each was described in detail as to his beliefs and his past record and the likelihood of his helping Utah. Both Taft and Roosevelt were
claimed as past friends of Utah. Wilson was little known. (2) The Tariff: Most Utahns seemed anxious to have the tariff kept high. When Taft vetoed two tariff-lowering bills in succession and one died when the Senate and House refused to compromise, the people of the state were pleased. (3) "Bossism": The Democrats and Progressives assailed Reed Smoot as being a boss as bad as any and of engaging in "machine" politics. (4) Corruption and extravagance in the state government: Governor William Spry was criticized for being too easy on the railroads and for misuse of state funds. (5) Church "interference": A month before the election, President Joseph F. Smith stated in an Improvement Era editorial that he favored Taft. The resulting furor had not died out by election day.

The press in Utah was almost entirely pro-Taft. The other candidates received fairly full, though less flattering, coverage. The editorials were decidedly in Taft's favor, and little good was said about the others. The bulk of the Utah population had to follow the campaign from a pro-Taft point of view.

The campaigning in Utah began slowly, but gained momentum as the fall approached. In the closing days, party leaders stumped hard and rallies were held frequently.

The reasons for the Taft victory were: (1) A favorable economy and optimism for the future. (2) A preponderance of pro-Taft newspaper reporting and editorializing. (3) The belief that a high tariff, which Taft favored, was necessary to the Utah economy. (4) Utah had a ten-year tradition of Republicanism, and the party was strong. (5) Many Utahns were opposed to the splitting of the Republican Party which
Roosevelt was causing. (6) The Socialists had a strong vote, almost double the difference between Taft and Wilson. Had those votes gone to Wilson, he would have won. (7) Utah was largely rural, giving the party in power an advantage. (8) The expressed preference of Joseph F. Smith for Taft brought some voters to support him.

The reason Taft's margin of victory was not greater was that the Progressive Party hurt the Republicans much more than it did the Democrats.

Sept 29, 1942
Date

Eugene E. Campbell
Chairman, Advisory Committee

Mark W. Cannon
Member, Advisory Committee

Eugene E. Campbell
Chairman, Major Department

Typed by Virginia Swenson