

America's Most Dynamic President

Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt was unquestionably America's most dynamic President (1901-09). How did this human dynamo come to occupy America's highest executive office?

President McKinley was re-elected in 1900. He was inaugurated in March, 1901, and only six months later (on September 6th) he was *assassinated* by a mad anarchist who had confessed to a strong urge to kill a "great ruler." The assassin, Leon F. Czolgosz, was later electrocuted.

Teddy Roosevelt was vacationing in the Adirondack Mountains when he learned that McKinley had been shot and was near death. Hurrying back to Buffalo, traveling about 20 hours by train and carriage, Roosevelt took the oath of office as President of the United States on September 14th, the day McKinley died. The same day, President Roosevelt proclaimed September 19, a "day of mourning and prayer throughout the U.S." That official proclamation revealed the sentiments of the nation for the fallen President:

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A PROCLAMATION

To the people of the United States:

A terrible bereavement has befallen our people. The President of the United States has been struck down; a crime not only against the Chief Magistrate, but against every law-abiding and liberty-loving citizen.

President McKinley crowned a life of largest love for his fellow men, of earnest endeavor for the welfare, by a death of Christian fortitude; and both the way in which he lived his life and the way in which, in the supreme hour of trial, he met his death will remain forever a precious heritage of our people.

It is meet that we as a nation express our abiding love and reverence for his life, our deep sorrow for his untimely death.

Now, therefore, I THEODORE ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, do appoint Thursday next, September 19, the day in which the body of the dead President will be laid in its last earthly resting place, as a day of mourning and prayer throughout the United States. I earnestly recommend all the people to assemble on that day in their respective places of divine worship, there to bow down

in submission to the will of Almighty God, and to pay out of full hearts the homage of love and reverence to the memory of the great and good President, whose death has so sorely smitten the nation.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, the fourteenth day of September, A.D. 1901, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-sixth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

By the President:

JOHN HAY,

Secretary of State.

Among America's strongest and most outstanding Presidents were Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln — and Teddy Roosevelt. These four U.S. Presidents have their likenesses carved in solid granite on the face of Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Teddy descended from a well-known and wealthy family of Dutch ancestry who had settled in New York in the 1640s. His mother was from a prominent Georgia family of Scotch-Irish descent.

As a boy, Teddy was weak and puny. He suffered from debilitating asthma and was frequently ill. Also, he learned early that he was quite near-sighted.

Fortunately for Teddy, his father built a gymnasium in the family home, and told him when he was about 12 that he would need a strong body to give his mind a real chance to fully develop.

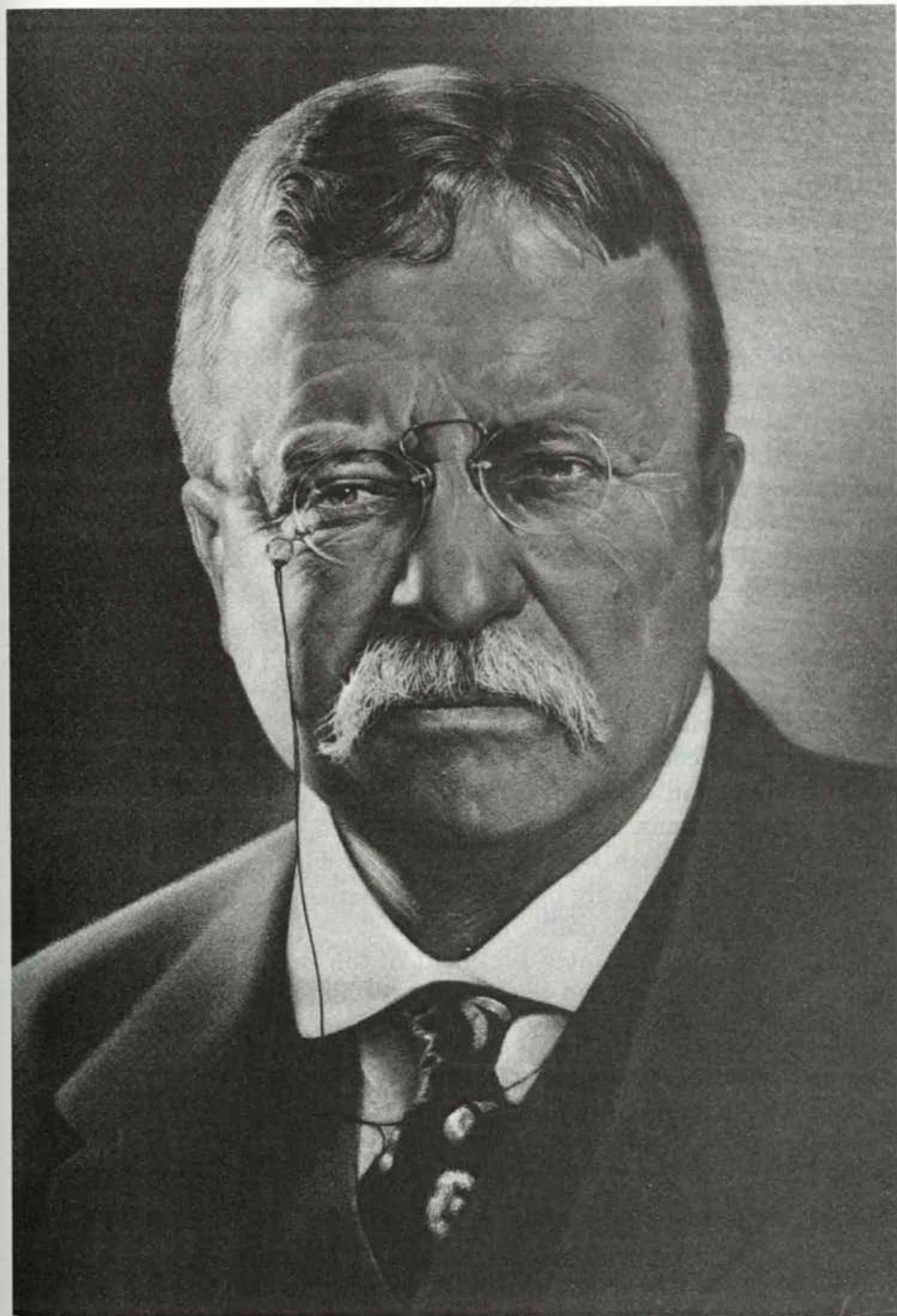
Young Teddy took his father seriously and began exercising regularly in order to build himself up. He soon developed a strong and virile body and overcame his asthma. Forever thereafter, he was a strong believer in the "strenuous life." And he practiced what he preached — often exercising, riding horses, swimming, playing tennis, hunting, hiking.

Roosevelt studied under tutors until he entered Harvard in 1876 at the age of 18. Teddy Roosevelt graduated from Harvard in 1880.

After graduating from Harvard, Teddy began studying law at Columbia University. But he never developed a liking for the study of law, and finally dropped out, after which he decided to see if he could get into government where he might be better able to use his talents. He was elected to the New York state assembly in 1881 at the age of 23. He was re-elected in 1882, and again in 1883.

A Double Tragedy

When Teddy was 22 he married Alice H. Lee. But a double tragedy was soon to strike the Roosevelt family. On February 14, 1884, his wife



Theodore Roosevelt, America's most dynamic President, was an advocate of the strenuous life and national preparedness. Painting by Sam. J. Patrick.

Alice died two days after having given birth to a daughter. His mother also died on the same day!

It took him some time to recover from this severe blow. He purchased two cattle ranches on the Little Missouri River in the Dakota Territory and began living a hard life of endless activity. He lived for three years on his ranches, and often spent 14 to 16 hours a day in the saddle. He hunted wild animals, buffalo, herded cattle, and also helped law officers capture a band of outlaws. Long hours, hard work and constant activity helped him to take his mind off the death of his wife and mother.

In the winter of 1885-86, terrible snowstorms destroyed most of Roosevelt's cattle. This severe financial blow cost him nearly all his investment in the cattle business.

When Roosevelt had recovered sufficiently from his wife's tragic death, he gave up ranching, returned to New York and was persuaded to run for Mayor of New York City in 1886. He was badly defeated.

Teddy Roosevelt re-married in 1886. This second marriage was to a childhood friend, Edith Kermit Carow. She had a very strong influence on her husband, and he came to depend on her advice: "Whenever I go against her judgment, I regret it" he said. They had five children — four sons and a daughter, and were a happy family. Teddy Roosevelt loved to play and frolic with his children.

President elect Benjamin Harrison appointed him to the Civil Service Commission in 1888. Roosevelt improved the merit system by establishing examinations for some Civil Service jobs. Previously, Civil Service men had often been appointed, not for merit, but because of favoritism. Teddy strongly opposed the practice of handing out government jobs as a reward to political friends.

Roosevelt was appointed president of the Board of Police Commissioners in New York City in 1895. This gave him a golden opportunity to use some of his pent-up energy. For two years he vigorously fought to stamp out dishonesty in the New York police force. He sometimes patrolled the streets at night to check on corrupt policemen — or to check on those who were suspected of illegal activities.

Teddy Roosevelt had strongly supported McKinley for President. When McKinley was elected President, he rewarded Roosevelt by appointing him Assistant Secretary of the Navy. But President McKinley didn't want this brash young man in Washington.

As Assistant Secretary of the Navy Teddy worked vigorously to strengthen the navy. He firmly believed that sea power would be decisive in the future. Teddy became impatient with McKinley's attempt to avoid war with Spain. To Roosevelt, President McKinley had "no more backbone than a chocolate éclair."

Teddy's Rough Riders

When the Spanish-American War broke out, Roosevelt resigned as Assistant Secretary of the Navy and started recruiting volunteers for a cavalry regiment. This cavalry unit became the First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, and achieved great fame under the command of Teddy Roosevelt. The men in this regiment were called the "Rough Riders." Most of them were either western cowboys, or former college athletes.

After landing in Cuba, and getting into position, on July 1, 1898 American troops attacked a ring of fortified hills surrounding Santiago. During this attack, Colonel Roosevelt led his "Rough Riders" in a wild charge up Kettle Hill. They actually dashed up the hill on foot, since horses had been left behind. After this charge the "Rough Riders" — and their commander in particular — became famous.

Roosevelt had nothing but disdain for army red tape, and his impetuous charge up Kettle Hill did not endear him to his military superiors. But his colorful, heroic feats endeared him to the men under his command, and turned him into a national hero. From that day forward, Teddy Roosevelt had caught the attention of all America.

Governor of New York

In 1898, the Republicans faced what appeared to be certain defeat — because of a scandal over state canal contracts. Senator Thomas C. Platt, the state's party leader, did not particularly like Roosevelt, calling him "a perfect bull in a china shop."

But Senator Platt believed Roosevelt's reputation as an incorruptible official might save the Republicans. As a result, Roosevelt ran for governor and won — primarily because of his war record.

It was during his tenure as governor of New York that Roosevelt told a friend his philosophy: "I have always been fond of the West African proverb: 'Speak softly and carry a big stick, you will go far.'"

After one term as governor of New York, the Republican leaders nominated Roosevelt for Vice-President on a ticket with McKinley. Teddy knew the Republican party leaders did this to get rid of him, and Roosevelt didn't think the position of Vice-President was very important. Such a dynamic man could not be happy as Vice-President for there was nothing to do in that job. Teddy's gloomy expectations for the Vice-Presidency were all fulfilled. He was bored beyond words by the idleness of his office. He even talked of returning to the study of law, or of becoming a university professor.

But all that idleness and gloom were soon to be dispelled by the mad fanatic who shot and killed McKinley after he had served only six months of his second term.

His Greatest Contribution

What was Teddy's greatest contribution as President?

America had been fortunate in having a great man like Washington to lead the country during the first national crisis. Then, during America's most severe crisis, the terrible Civil War, Abraham Lincoln appeared on the scene. Under his strong leadership, the Union was preserved.

During the latter half of the 19th century, another crisis had been building up in America. During this vital period of dynamic American industrial expansion, a number of big trusts developed. They became so big that they developed into absolute monopolies. Such a situation in American industry meant that effective competition was now almost dead. These big corporations were so big and powerful they could set their own prices, and could dictate labor relations. Seemingly, no one had the power to curb the ever-growing abuses of the giant trusts.

America needed someone with a strong hand to take the helm of government at this time of critical development in her history. Someone had to put the bit in the mouth of the American big business. Most U.S. Presidents had been too weak and timid to try to do anything about this growing problem.

But Teddy Roosevelt was a man of bulldog tenacity, and as courageous as a lion. He feared no one and no organization.

Busting the Trusts

America had tried to grapple with this problem of gigantic trusts by passing the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890. The aim of this legislation was to curb the power and influence of the growing industrial and financial monopolies. But big business, led by the almost-omnipotent captains of industry, virtually ignored the Sherman Anti-Trust act.

When Roosevelt took the helm of America's ship of state, he saw trouble up ahead. He, and many Americans were worried about the growing octopus-like power of these giant trusts. These large business monopolies were partially responsible for America's rising standard of living; nonetheless, it was clear that they were abusing their power.

President Roosevelt sounded the alarm in his first message to congress, in December, 1901. He declared that the "Captains of industry . . . have on the whole done great good to our people." But Teddy Roosevelt also pointed to "real and grave evils." He recommended that "combination and concentration should be not prohibited, but supervised and, within reasonable limits, controlled."

President Roosevelt made it clear that he was not against big

business — but was just against *abuses* in big business. In 1902, Roosevelt decided to move vigorously against the growing business monopolies. He reinvigorated the Sherman Anti-Trust act of 1890, and launched a vigorous campaign to restore competition in the business and financial world.

Roosevelt instructed his attorney-general, Philander C. Knox, to bring suit against the giant railroad complex — the Northern Securities Company.

This giant holding company had been put together by some of America's most powerful men: J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Edward H. Harriman and James Hill. When the U.S. government moved to break up this giant trust, it was attacking the very citadel of U.S. capitalism and corporate business.

The U.S. government won the first round in its battle to put the bit into the mouths of big businesses. On March 14, 1904, the Supreme Court reaffirmed a decree of a federal circuit court ordering the *dissolution* of this giant company.

During the next seven years, the Roosevelt administration vigorously used the Sherman Anti-Trust Act against some of the nation's most powerful industrial organizations: the U.S. Steel Corporation, Standard Oil Company, and James B. Dukes's tobacco trust.

Teddy Roosevelt's administration filed suits against over 40 big corporations. The President constantly reaffirmed his desire to regulate, not "bust," the big trusts. Nonetheless, Roosevelt's vigorous campaign against the giant trusts gained for him the lasting epithet of "Trust Buster."

Teddy Roosevelt believed that trusts which served the public interest were good. He just wanted to see the federal government *regulate* the giant corporations. He was the first President who envisioned the Federal Government as an *umpire* — upholding the public interest against abuses among big business and big labor.

Conserving America's Resources

Though Roosevelt's greatest achievements as President appear to have been in the field of his "trust busting," thereby making big business accountable to the Federal Government regulations, some think his work in the field of conservation was even more important.

President Roosevelt told Congress that "the forest and water problems are perhaps the most vital internal problems of the United States."

In order to prevent further waste of America's resources, Teddy Roosevelt set aside about 150,000,000 acres of unsold timberland, as well as water-power sites, and land containing coal and other minerals.

During Roosevelt's administration Congress passed the Reclama-

tion Act of 1902, providing for the reclamation and irrigation of dry western lands. Teddy Roosevelt also started 25 irrigation or reclamation projects — including the Theodore Roosevelt Dam in Arizona.

Other domestic problems were brought under government scrutiny and control during his administration. The Elkins Act of 1903 prohibited railroads from making *rebates* (the returning of sums of money to favored shippers). Then in 1906, the Hepburn Railway Rate Act was passed which helped to further curb abuses of the railroads.

After reading Upton Sinclair's novel, *The Jungle*, in 1906, Roosevelt ordered an investigation into the meat-packing industry, and received what he called a "sickening report." Under his influence, Congress passed the Meat Inspection Act and the Food and Drugs Act in 1906.

Foreign Policy Under T.R.

America has never had a President as dynamic and forceful as Teddy Roosevelt. His energy, drive, enthusiasm and forcefulness were evident in American foreign policy during his administration.

Roosevelt believed only the strong and virile nations survived — while the weak and placid were either conquered, or disintegrated. And Teddy Roosevelt lived during a time when the relatively peaceful Victorian era was giving way to a period of naked force. Those nations who had real power, backed up by military muscle, would become the principal international arbiters.

During his administration, he continually sought to strengthen the U.S. army and navy. By the end of his second term, the U.S. navy was one of the major sea powers of the world.

The world struggle for power indicated to Roosevelt that Germany constituted the chief menace to the U.S. He thought Germany was the *only* nation whose international ambitions and military power constituted a major threat.

"Speak softly and carry a big stick" well summed up Teddy Roosevelt's foreign policy. He did not lead America into any wars, but he did make a number of *threats* in order to discourage aggressive nations from following through with their aims. During Roosevelt's presidency, the U.S. twice faced the threat of German intervention in Venezuela — because that country had not paid Germany her debts. In 1902, Germany, Britain, and Italy sent warships to blockade Venezuelan ports because of non-payment of debts. Those countries did not, however, try to take any territory. But Teddy Roosevelt didn't know but what they might try to seize part of Venezuela. To forestall any such attempt, he issued the *Roosevelt Corollary* to the famous Monroe Doctrine.

The U.S. realized that in other parts of the world where an occupying army planted its boot in order to collect debts, it often became a

permanent guest of the country. So in 1904, Roosevelt and his secretary of War, Elihu Root, issued a policy statement which denied to any non-American country the right to intervene in Latin-American affairs. This policy statement also assured world creditors that the U.S. would police the area and become responsible for assuring that these governments of Latin America would abide by their international obligations.

The President declared there would be no interference with Latin-American nations that maintained peace and honored their international obligations. But, said the President, "brutal wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may finally require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the western Hemisphere the U.S. cannot ignore this duty"

In plain language, this Roosevelt Corollary denied to other nations the right to intervene in Latin America. At the same time, it sanctioned any such intervention by the U.S. in the role of an international policeman. In 1905, President Roosevelt showed what he meant. He quickly applied this Roosevelt Corollary by forcing the Dominican Republic to accept the appointment of an economic adviser who would be responsible to the U.S. Department of State.

The Panama Canal

It was during Teddy Roosevelt's presidency that the U.S. acquired perpetual use of the Panama Canal zone, and during his administration, the U.S. began building the Panama Canal.

Teddy Roosevelt played a decisive role in America's acquisition of the right to build and control a canal in Panama.

Roosevelt became impatient with the long, drawn-out negotiations with Colombia over the purchase of the Panama Canal zone. He, therefore, gave comfort and indirect encouragement to a revolutionary junta in New York which was led by two representatives of the old French Panama Company, who plotted a Panamanian revolution.

Teddy Roosevelt even wrote a message to Congress (but never sent it) in which he advised the taking of Panama "without any further parley with Colombia."

On November 3, 1903, the Panamanian revolution broke out. It just so happened (or was it planned?) that a U.S. warship had put into Colon the preceding evening. This U.S. warship prevented Colombian troops from interfering once the Panamanians revolted against Colombia.

Within hours, the U.S. recognized the new government of Panama, and in a matter of days, a treaty ceding the Canal zone was negotiated with a representative of Panama.

No time was lost. Construction promptly began on the canal, and it

was first used in 1914 — just in time to be of value to America during World War I.

An Ancient Dream

Men had dreamed of building a canal across Central America ever since Vasco Nunez de Balboa (the first European to reach the Pacific) conceived the possibility of constructing a canal between the Atlantic and Pacific in 1517.

During the greater part of the 1800s, Nicaragua was considered the most likely country through which to build a canal.

In fact, both America and Britain had considered building a canal across Nicaragua. This resulted in serious disputes between the U.S. and Britain during the 1840s over control of the proposed canal. In 1850, the U.S. and Britain agreed to joint control of a canal to be built somewhere across the Isthmus of Central America.

Colombia agreed to permit a group of New York City businessmen to build a railroad across the Isthmus in 1850. This railroad, linking Colon on the Atlantic with Panama on the Pacific, was completed in 1855 at a cost of \$8,000,000.

Then in 1878, Colombia granted a French adventurer Lucien Napoleon Bonaparte Wyse a franchise giving him the right to build a canal across Panama. Wyse sold his franchise to a French company headed by Ferdinand Marie de Lesseps — the man who had directed the construction of the Suez Canal. The French also bought control of the Panama Railroad for \$20,000,000.

The French met many difficulties which hampered their completion of the canal. They wasted great quantities of material and effort. Dishonest politicians who had backed De Lesseps stole money from the canal company. The French engineers lacked the proper tools and machinery to complete such a huge task. But worst of all, they were discouraged by epidemics of tropical diseases which plagued the workmen.

In 1889 — after digging about 76,000,000 cubic yards of earth — De Lesseps' company went bankrupt! A new French firm (the New Panama Canal Company) took over the franchise and property of the bankrupt company in 1894. The new French company, however, only made half-hearted efforts to continue digging. It was primarily concerned with keeping the franchise until a buyer would purchase the company. The French had tried to interest the U.S. government in the project — all to no avail.

It was the Spanish-American War of 1898 which caused America to see the potential value of such a canal. During that war, the U.S. Navy sent the battleship *Oregon* from San Francisco to Cuba to reinforce her Atlantic Fleet. This U.S. battleship had to sail nearly 13,000 miles

around South America. Yet, the trip would have only been 4,600 miles long through a canal. America now became convinced that a canal across Central America was necessary for *defense*!

The following year, in 1899, Congress authorized a commission to survey possible canal routes across Central America. In 1903, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Hay, signed a canal treaty with Colombian representative, Tomas Herran, but the Colombian legislature balked at signing the treaty — saying the U.S. was not paying Colombia enough for the proposed lease of the canal zone.

Officials of the French company, worried about losing the sale of their property to the U.S., with encouragement from certain Panamanians and Americans, instigated a revolt against Colombia on November 3, 1903, and declared their independence.

In 1846, the U.S. had signed a treaty with Colombia. This treaty gave America the excuse (if not the right) to send ships to Panama to protect the Panama Railroad which Americans had built and owned. When the Panamanians revolted, American Marines landed in Colon and prevented Colombian troops from marching against the city of Panama — the actual center of the revolution.

The U.S. recognized the Republic of Panama on November 6, 1903. And less than two weeks later, the U.S. and Panama signed the canal treaty which gave America permanent, exclusive use and control of a ten-mile-wide canal zone.

What was America to give as the price for this? The U.S. would guarantee the independence of Panama, and was to make an initial payment of \$10,000,000, plus \$250,000 a year — beginning in 1913. America actually took over the French property in May, 1904.

The greatest obstacle to the completion of the canal had been diseases — especially malaria and yellow fever. The U.S. soon brought these under control, and before long, construction of the canal was energetically carried out.

Opening of Panama Canal

The Panama Canal was first opened to traffic August 15, 1914. But there were other aspects of construction that took several more years to complete. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the *official* opening of the Canal on July 12, 1920.

Under the terms of the 1903 treaty, the Republic of Panama granted to America *perpetual sovereignty* over the Canal Zone “to the entire exclusion of the exercise by the Republic of Panama of any such sovereign rights, power, or authority.”

Subsequently, the U.S. and Panama have signed several new treaties. In 1955, the U.S. agreed to increase her annual payment to

\$1,930,000, and she also agreed to turn over to Panama \$28,000,00 worth of buildings and real estate which America no longer needed. Furthermore, America agreed to guarantee *equality of pay* and opportunity to Panamanians for their work in the Canal Zone. The U.S. made these concessions after a series of bloody riots in 1964 in which 21 Panamanians and 3 U.S. soldiers were killed.

In February, 1974, American and Panamanian representatives agreed on principles for negotiating a new treaty which would set a date for giving Panama complete jurisdiction over the Canal Zone, but would give the U.S. the right to operate and protect the Canal for a certain period — until a firm date would be set for its final transfer to Panama.

The Vital Panama Canal

What is the importance of the Panama Canal to America today?

Each year, approximately 14,600 ocean-going ships travel through the Panama Canal — averaging over 40 ships a day. These ships carry about 121,839,000 tons of cargo through the canal locks annually. During World War II, the Korean War and the War in Vietnam, the Panama Canal formed a vital link in America's sea defenses — as millions of tons of war materials and thousands of servicemen passed through that important waterway.

Even though the construction of the Panama Canal only cost the U.S. about \$380 million, yet the *strategic* importance of this vital sea link cannot be measured in dollars!

U.S. Dominance in the Pacific

Another area of vital interest to America during Roosevelt's administration was the Pacific. During the latter part of the 19th century, America had acquired a sizable empire in the Pacific: Samoa, Hawaii, Guam, Midway and the Philippines.

What kind of a role should the U.S. play in the Pacific? America's position in the Pacific, said Roosevelt in 1902, "is such as to insure our peaceful domination of its waters."

Teddy Roosevelt was fortunate to be President during a time of peace and prosperity. He was mindful of those blessings, and issued several thanksgiving proclamations — requesting that the American people "thank Him who holds all nations in the hollow of his hand."

Roosevelt told the American nation that they owed "humble and heartfelt thanks to the Author of all blessings," and confessed that "our strength is as nothing unless we are helped from above."

The actual wording of Roosevelt's Thanksgiving Day proclamation of 1904 is worth noting:

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

It has pleased Almighty God to bring the American people in safety and honor through another year, and, in accordance with the long unbroken custom handed down to us by our forefathers, the time has come when a special day shall be set apart in which to thank Him who holds all nations in the hollow of His hand for the mercies thus vouchsafed to us.

During the century and a quarter of our national life we as a people have been blessed beyond all others, and for this we owe humble and heartfelt thanks to the Author of all blessings. The year that has closed has been one of peace within our own borders as well as between us and all other nations. The harvests have been abundant, and those who work, whether with hand or brain, are prospering greatly. Reward has waited upon honest effort. We have been enabled to do our duty to ourselves and to others.

Never has there been a time when religious and charitable effort has been more evident. *Much has been given to us and much will be expected from us.* We speak of what has been done by this nation in no spirit of boastfulness or vainglory, but with full and reverent realization that our strength is as nothing unless we are helped from above.

Hitherto we have been given the heart and the strength to do the tasks allotted to us as they severally arose. We are thankful for all that has been done for us in the past, and we pray that in the future we may be strengthened in the unending struggle to do our duty fearlessly and honestly, with charity and goodwill, with respect for ourselves and with love toward our fellow-men.

In this great republic the effort to combine national strength with personal freedom is being tried on a scale more gigantic than ever before in the world's history. Our success will mean much not only for ourselves, but for the future of all mankind; and every man and woman in our land should feel the grave responsibility resting upon him or her, for in the last analysis this success must depend upon the high average of our individual citizenship, upon the way in which each of us does his duty by himself and his neighbor.

Now, therefore, I, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart Thursday, the twenty-fourth of this November, to be observed as a day of festival and thanksgiving by all the people of the United States at home or abroad, and do recommend that on that day they cease from their ordinary occupations and gather in their several places of worship or in their homes, devoutly to give thanks unto Almighty God for the benefits He has conferred upon us as individuals and as a nation, and to beseech Him that in the future His Divine favor may be continued to us.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington this 1st day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and four and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-ninth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Peacemaker

Trouble erupted in the Pacific between Japan and Russia during Roosevelt's administration. In 1905, President Roosevelt helped end the Russo-Japanese War. He brought their representatives together in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and kept them there until they agreed to settle their differences.

Teddy Roosevelt served as mediator in those peace talks, and was later awarded the Nobel peace prize for his peace efforts — thereby becoming the first American ever to win that honor.

During Roosevelt's presidency, friction between the U.S. and Japan arose. Many Americans feared too many Japanese immigrants were flooding into California. In 1906, the San Francisco school board decided to segregate Japanese children from the others.

Relations between the two countries became very strained. Roosevelt even feared a Japanese attack on the Philippine Islands. After Roosevelt first persuaded the school board to end its segregation policy, the President reached a gentleman's agreement with Japan by which she agreed not to issue passports to her citizens who wanted to go to America.

Then, in 1908, the U.S. and Japan signed the Root-Takahira Agreement by which the two nations promised not to seek territorial gains in the Pacific, and they also agreed to honor the open-door policy in China.

America's Great White Fleet

The year before this agreement, in 1907, President Roosevelt sent America's Great White Fleet of 16 new battleships on a good-will tour of the world. These white ships were welcomed enthusiastically in Japan. The President had sent this Great White Fleet on tour in order to impress the world — Japan, in particular — with America's naval might.

When Teddy Roosevelt was elected in 1904, he said that "under no circumstances" would he run for President again. He later regretted his promise, but nonetheless, he kept it! After selecting his Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, to succeed him as the next President, Roosevelt sailed for Africa to hunt big game in 1909.

William H. Taft served as U.S. President from 1909-13. He was not a strong leader, and nothing dramatic was accomplished by his administration.

Teddy Roosevelt believed Taft would carry out his policies. But when he returned from his African safari in 1910, (where he and his party downed 296 big game), he was disturbed to discover that President Taft wasn't running things as Roosevelt thought they should be run.

Taft was accused of favoring big business and of supporting high tariff rates.

The progressives in the Republican party persuaded Teddy Roosevelt to again run for the presidency. Roosevelt tried to bring together the progressive and conservative wings of the Republican party but failed.

A split occurred between Taft and Roosevelt. Since President Taft controlled the party machinery, he was nominated as the Republican candidate. Roosevelt claimed the nomination had been "stolen." He and his progressive followers then split off and formed the Progressive party, later called the Bull Moose party — because Teddy Roosevelt had told a reporter: "I feel as strong as a bull moose."

Anarchist Shoots T.R.

Roosevelt threw himself energetically into campaigning for the presidency, and it was while he was campaigning that a saloonkeeper named John N. Schrank, on October 14, 1912, shot Roosevelt just before he was to have spoken in Milwaukee. Fortunately, a glasses case in Roosevelt's pocket caused the bullet to glance off, saving his life.

This stout-hearted man insisted on going ahead with his speech — even with the bullet lodged in his chest. He assured his audience that he wasn't to be stopped by an insane man's bullet: "It takes more than that to kill a bull moose," said Roosevelt.

But Roosevelt lost the election and concluded that his political career was finished. Woodrow Wilson was elected President.

When World War I erupted in 1914, Roosevelt called for American preparedness against a "strong, ruthless, ambitious, militaristic Germany." He developed an intense dislike for President Wilson — because he didn't immediately declare war on Germany and join the allied cause. He believed Wilson's attempt to keep America neutral was a sure sign of weakness.

After the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Roosevelt spoke of the "unforgivable treachery" of Germany. He looked upon pacifists and neutralists with imperious scorn. He even accused President Wilson in 1916 of "dishonorable conduct."

When America declared war on Germany in 1917, Teddy Roosevelt asked President Wilson for permission to raise a division of troops to fight in France. But, on the advice of General John J. Pershing, Wilson's administration refused to accept Roosevelt's offer. Once again, Roosevelt was bitterly disappointed! He did, however, look with pride upon the fact that he had *four* sons who served in the war. Tragically, his youngest son (Quintin) was killed when his plane was shot down over Germany.

Teddy Roosevelt was now despondent. He had failed to be re-elected as President, and when he had offered to serve his country by leading another regiment of volunteers (such as the Rough Riders) into battle, he was refused permission.

Death of the Old Warrior

His health was also declining. In 1913, Roosevelt had led an expedition into the Brazilian jungle, where he contracted jungle fever and almost died. He returned to America in 1914, weak and prematurely aged.

He underwent a number of operations in early 1918 in order to remove abscesses on his thigh and in his ears which had resulted from jungle fever. He lost the hearing in his left ear, and about this same time, Roosevelt made it known that he had been blind in his left eye ever since 1905 when, as President, he was boxing with a military aide in the White House.

After World War I, Roosevelt strongly opposed American membership in the League of Nations. Such membership, he believed, would limit the U.S. in her foreign relations.

America had never seen a President with such dynamism — with such tireless energy. But Teddy Roosevelt, who had taught America to speak softly, and carry a big stick, was himself growing weary.

On January 6, 1919, Teddy Roosevelt died peacefully in his sleep. His battles were now over. America had lost her most dynamic President.