

of any European power, we have not interfered, and shall not interfere."

Secretary Adams enunciated one other doctrine dealing with foreign affairs that is not as well known. He used the occasion of a Fourth of July oration in 1821 to announce it. He delivered his remarks from the rostrum of the House of Representatives and faced his audience dressed in the academic robe of a university professor. Staring pointedly at his audience, he declared that the United States would always be "the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all" nations but that it must not go "abroad in search of monsters to destroy" by enlisting under banners other "than our own." Such a departure by the United States from a rational foreign policy would unhappily inaugurate America's reach for "dominion and power" in the world and would ultimately result in the loss of its own "freedom and independence."

FOLLOWING THE WAR of 1812 the United States experienced not only a surge of nationalistic pride and the advent of an industrial revolution but a marked advance in the development of a democratic society. Universal white manhood suffrage was quickly achieved after 1815, prompted by the arrival of many new, western states that placed no property or religious restrictions on adult white males. This breakthrough in the qualifications for voting encouraged the older, eastern states to convene conventions that altered their constitutions and broadened suffrage. These actions were the first important steps in moving the country from a republican to a democratic government. Several more such moves remained—such as providing voting and citizenship rights to those of a different race and sex. But the country was headed in a new direction, although it would take time and even bloodshed to achieve a more perfect Union.

Another dynamic force impacting the growth of democracy in the United States was the rise of a self-conscious working class, resulting in large part from the growth of factories and the arrival of ever larger numbers of immigrants from Europe. They knew what they needed and did not hesitate to express their wishes, demanding social, economic, and even political legislation to satisfy their wants. For one thing, they demanded the abolition of imprisonment for debt; they

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demanded free public education for their children; and they demanded that employers pay the wages that were owed and not seek to escape their obligations when faced with economic difficulties. They even formed a Workingmen's Party in Philadelphia and put up candidates for public office who would advance the rights of the laboring classes. They organized strikes in support of higher wages and a ten-hour workday. In 1840 the federal government adopted the ten-hour workday for its employees, and two years later Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of the Massachusetts supreme court ruled in *Commonwealth v. Hunt* that it was legal for workers to form unions and go on strike to gain their economic goals.

Now that the people of the United States had achieved a new identity, which was not British, foreign, or European but distinctly American, changes became apparent in the presidential election of 1824. Where in the first election, back in 1789, George Washington took the oath of office wearing a powdered wig, knee breeches, silk stockings, and pumps with silver buckles, a ceremonial sword strapped around his waist, the candidates in 1824 wore trousers, shirts, and neckties. No wigs, no breeches, no swords. The sharp changes that had taken place in the country were revealed not only in the clothes the candidates wore but in the way they looked and behaved. Washington was an aristocrat to his fingertips and acted as such. Andrew Jackson, one of the candidates in 1824, played the role of an ordinary citizen, a democrat, even though he clearly belonged to the upper class in his home state, Tennessee.

In this presidential election, Monroe did not name a successor, and since only one party—the Republican Party—existed, the person chosen by the traditional congressional caucus would automatically be elected. For that reason, many objections were raised about continuing the traditional method. In effect it took the election away from the people and handed it over to a small group of politicians in Congress. Thus in 1824, a number of candidates were put forth by the state legislatures, insisting that “King Caucus,” as they called the traditional method, “was dead.”

Nevertheless, despite these objections, a caucus was held—although it was sharply reduced in number. It was called by Senator Martin Van Buren of New York, who believed that a party system was essential for

the furtherance of a republican society. The founders berated parties and described them as cabals of greedy men seeking their own private interests, not the interests of the people at large. But the realistic Van Buren understood that men holding particular principles should join together in order to advance those principles. It could not be done any other way. So he summoned the caucus to meet on February 14, 1824, in the House chamber, but only sixty-six members put in an appearance. To the "heavy groans in the Gallery," packed with friends and enemies of the caucus, William H. Crawford, the secretary of the treasury, was nominated as the Republican Party's presidential candidate. He received sixty-two votes, while two were given to John Quincy Adams, and one apiece to Andrew Jackson and Nathaniel Macon.

The Speaker of the House, Henry Clay, had long proved his talents as an elected official, so Kentucky put forward his name in nomination; this was the first of Clay's many attempts to be elected President. Since the office of secretary of state had been considered a stepping-stone to the presidency for the past twenty-four years, Massachusetts advanced the name of John Quincy Adams. Another cabinet officer, Secretary of War John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, decided to run but soon found his northern supporters more inclined toward Andrew Jackson, so he withdrew as a presidential candidate and accepted a nomination as Vice President. Of all the candidates in this election Andrew Jackson was the least qualified in terms of public service in administrative positions. But his successful military career made him the most popular among the electorate, and with so many more Americans exercising the vote in 1824 he had no trouble in winning the largest number of popular and electoral votes. Jackson garnered 152,901 popular and ninety-nine electoral votes; Adams came second with 114,023 popular and eighty-four electoral votes. Even though Crawford had suffered a debilitating stroke during the campaign, he won 46,979 popular and forty-one electoral votes. Still, his electoral votes were more than what Clay accrued; thirty-seven. Nonetheless Clay's popular vote was higher than Crawford's: it reached 47,217. Since no one had a majority of electoral votes, as the Constitution required, it was up to the House to choose the next President. Unfortunately for Clay the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution stated that only the top three candidates with the highest electoral votes could be considered

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by the House of Representatives in making its decision, and these included Jackson, Adams, and Crawford.

As Speaker and as a man popular among his colleagues, Clay would most certainly have won the contest. Now he was in a position to decide who would be named the chief executive. He let out a sigh. "I only wish I could have been spared such a painful duty," he declared in a letter to a friend. But it proved easier than he let on. First, he dismissed Jackson as a possible choice because he, Jackson, was a "military chieftain" who defied any law that he disliked and gave promise of developing into an American Napoleon. Besides, Clay's attack on Jackson's invasion of Florida had created an unbridgeable chasm between the two men. The Speaker also dismissed Crawford, who was physically incapacitated and could not assume the duties of the President. So that left Adams, and although he and the secretary had clashed previously—especially in Ghent, where they both served as commissioners in arranging the treaty that ended the War of 1812—they were ardent nationalists, and Adams would certainly endorse Clay's American System.

On Sunday, January 8, 1825, Clay visited Adams at his home and following a three-hour conversation he made it clear that he would support the secretary for President. Their meeting became known, and the rumor spread that they had entered a bargain in which Adams would be chosen chief executive and would in return appoint Clay secretary of state. It was supposedly a *quid pro quo* agreement.

The election took place on February 9 during a heavy snowstorm. The two houses of Congress met, counted the electoral ballots, and announced that no candidate had a majority. Whereupon the Senate withdrew from the chamber and the House proceeded to choose the next President. Each state had one vote, determined by its delegation.

The gallery of the House was packed with spectators as the balloting began. And the choice was decided on the very first ballot. Adams received the votes of thirteen states, Jackson seven, and Crawford four.

The result infuriated Jackson. The people had obviously preferred him among the several candidates, but their will had been turned aside by what was called a "corrupt bargain" between Clay and Adams. Then when Adams chose Clay as his secretary of state that action provided

supposedly irrefutable proof that the election had been rigged by two scheming, power-hungry "poltroons." "So you see," raged Jackson, "the Judas of the West"—Clay was frequently referred to as "Harry of the West"—"has closed the contract and will receive the thirty pieces of silver. . . . Was there ever witnessed such a bare faced corruption in any country before?"

The Adams-Clay team shrugged off the accusations and set to work to enact a program that they hoped would advance the welfare of the American people, a program based to a large extent on Clay's American System. But they never had a chance of getting it through Congress. The opposition, who were mainly Jacksonians, regarded the pair as having unlawfully connived their way to power. Thus when Adams, in his first annual message to Congress in December 1825, requested the building of a system of roads and canals, the founding of a national university and a naval academy similar to West Point, and the "erection of an astronomical observatory" to observe the "phenomenon of the heavens," Congress laughed at him. In a burst of nationalistic enthusiasm, Adams declared that the "great object of the institution of civil government is the improvement of the condition of those who are parties of the social contract." He asked the members not to be "palsied by the will of their constituents."

Palsied by the will of their constituents! Forget the will of their constituents is what Adams seemed to be saying, just as he and Clay had done in cheating Old Hickory out of the presidency. Furthermore, Jacksonians thought Adams was mad to offer such proposals. Not only did they declare them unconstitutional but financially preposterous. Only a corrupt administration spawned by a "monstrous union" between what John Randolph called "the puritan and the black-leg" would propose such outlandish nonsense. Clay took offense at Randolph's remark and challenged him to a duel. Neither man was injured in the ensuing exchange of fire, although Clay's bullet tore through Randolph's trousers.

Dueling in the United States, said Alexis de Tocqueville, the French author of *Democracy in America*, had become a deadly practice. In Europe participants intended a duel to be no more than a show of honor, which could be achieved without inflicting mortal wounds. Not so in America. In the United States, Tocqueville said, the participants meant

to kill each other. For some southerners, such as William Yancey of Alabama, "a duel was only a pleasant morning recreation."

Over the next several years the differences widened between the nationalistic administration and the Jacksonians. The era of rule by a single party ended. New parties formed and the two-party system re-emerged. Under the direction of Senator Martin Van Buren of New York, with the help of Vice President John C. Calhoun, the opponents of the administration aligned themselves in support of the candidacy of Jackson for President in the upcoming election of 1828. They soon took the name Democratic-Republicans, or Democrats, and emphasized states' rights and fiscal conservatism. The friends of Adams and Clay advocated a more active role for the government in addressing domestic issues and were known as National Republicans. Thus the ill-termed "Era of Good Feelings" passed into history.

One object of the Adams administration was the imposition of high tariffs in order to advance the manufacturing segment of the country. The tariff had been increased in 1824 but it did not satisfy its proponents. So the House Committee on Manufactures, chaired by Rollin C. Mallory of Vermont, a strong protectionist, set about concocting a new set of duties. But Mallory and his allies were outnumbered and outmaneuvered in the committee by Jacksonians, headed by Silas Wright Jr. of New York, a close associate of Van Buren.

The new tariff recommendations, as finally put forward by this committee, startled and then outraged the friends of the administration. Here was not a bill to encourage manufactures, but rather, as John Randolph rightly described it, a measure to "manufacture a President." The committee, explained Wright to his political friends in New York, jacked up the rates on all products from those states Jackson needed to win election in 1828. At the same time it limited protection on items produced by industries from states supporting Adams, particularly New England. Consequently woolen goods, produced mainly in Massachusetts, failed to get the rates necessary to contend against British competition. How had this happened? Well, explained Wright, the committee raised the rates upon "all kinds of woolen cloths" as "high as *our own friends* in Pennsylvania, Kentucky & Ohio would vote them." Then he jumped the rates on molasses, flax, hemp, and lead to attract votes from western states where these products were produced. And

the high duty on iron, he explained, was "the *Sine qua non* with Pennsylvania." Thus raw materials would be favored by this tariff whereas New England's manufactures would not.

But these duties would hurt southerners, who were among Jackson's strongest and most loyal supporters. They wrongly believed that the tariff had caused the decline in the price of cotton on the world market. Furthermore, they argued, tariffs favored the industrial interests of the north, which meant that southerners had to buy their manufactured goods on a closed market while selling their tobacco and cotton on an open market, and this was unfair. Obviously, the framers of this bill felt that they did not have to worry about southern support for Jackson—it was inconceivable that southerners would vote for Adams in the next election—and therefore these framers had no need to gratify their demands to win their allegiance. In self-defense southerners worked out a scheme to kill the measure. They agreed among themselves that if they voted *in favor* of the provisions advanced by the committee, the New Englanders and their supporters would coalesce to defeat the bill on the final vote.

A series of amendments were offered to make the measure less odious by raising rates on manufactured goods and lowering those on raw materials. But they went down to defeat, thanks to the scheme hatched by southerners. They had no intention of making the bill more acceptable to northerners. When the amendments failed, many of the southerners burst out with loud cheers of jubilation, convinced that the bill was now lost. But by their shouts they foolishly revealed their plot to all the other members of the House. It was obvious, said one, that they had "voted for molasses, & some other articles with a view of making the Bill odious" to all protectionists, especially New Englanders. Such overt expressions of victory were stupid. "We have not only disclosed our plan," groaned Augustine H. Shepperd of North Carolina, "but defeated its success."

That started the New Englanders wondering. "Can we go the *hemp*, iron, spirit and molasses," asked Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, "for the sake of any woolen bill?" After many discussions among themselves they decided that indeed they could, and on final passage in the House on April 22 the measure received a vote of 105 to 94. In the Senate the

rates were adjusted to increase the woolen rate to forty percent ad valorem with a five percent increase each year until it reached fifty percent. The Senate, then, on May 13, approved these changes, 26 to 21, and sent them back to the House, where, after a heated debate, they were sustained, 85 to 44. Adams signed it, and in their fury southerners called it a "Tariff of Abominations."

Vice President Calhoun returned home when Congress adjourned and set to work on a document that expressed not only his outrage but his argument that the states may nullify any federal law they believed violated their basic rights. This "Exposition and Protest" was submitted anonymously to the South Carolina legislature, where it was passed. The document advanced the doctrine of nullification, which Calhoun hoped would be the means by which states could protect their interests without resorting to secession.

Adams also announced in his first annual message that a congress of the newly independent states of Latin America had been called by Simon Bolivar, the great liberator of South America, and would be held in Panama to discuss matters of common concern and interest. He further announced that the United States had been invited to attend and that he had accepted the invitation. Democrats took sharp exception to the information, insisting that the conference departed from the established foreign policy of the United States. Furthermore, they planned to reject the nominations of the two ministers to the Panama Congress that the President had sent to the Senate for confirmation. In setting forth the advantages of participating in the conference, Adams underscored the importance of promoting "liberal commercial intercourse" with Latin American countries. Most particularly, he said, the mission would demonstrate to South American countries "the interest that we take in their welfare" and provide the foundation on which could be built "the most cordial feelings of fraternal friendship."

The Jacksonians would have none of it. Confirmation of the two ministers was delayed so long that the Panama Congress had adjourned before they arrived. One of the ministers died en route; the other had only reached Mexico City when the conference ended.

It was a lost opportunity, a chance that a long history of cooperation and interaction between the North and South American continents

could have been initiated. Politics, as would happen again and again over the years, canceled the makings of something that might have advanced the welfare of all the parties involved.

Because of politics, the Adams administration left a very thin record of achievements when placed against the things it had hoped to achieve at the outset. Tagged as corrupt, Adams and Clay could not silence or disprove these accusations to the satisfaction of most Americans. In running for reelection in 1828 Adams went down to defeat in one of the filthiest elections in American history. Jackson was accused of stealing another man's wife when he had married Rachel Donelson Robards, who thought she was divorced from her first husband, Lewis Robards, but was not. She was still married to Robards at the time she married Jackson and was therefore technically a bigamist. Also, Jackson's mother was accused of being a prostitute who had been brought to this country to service British soldiers. Adams, on the other hand, was called a pimp. Supposedly, he had procured an American girl for the czar when he served as U.S. minister to Russia.

It was all very ugly and ended when Jackson swept the South, West, and Northwest for a total of 178 electoral votes to Adams's 83 votes, almost all of which came from New England. Out of a population of approximately 13 million, 1,155,340 went to the polls, an increase of 800,000 voters over the last election. Of that number Jackson received 647,276 votes and Adams 508,064.

The country had changed. The Republic was evolving into a democracy, but the process would be long, difficult, and even bloody.

The Jacksonian Era

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE crowded into Washington on March 4, 1829, to witness the inauguration of President Andrew Jackson. It seemed "like the inundation of the northern barbarians into Rome, save that the tumultuous tide came in from a different point of the compass." Many could not understand what was happening. Daniel Webster was positively shocked. "I never saw such a crowd here before," he said. "Person have come five hundred miles to see General Jackson, *and they really seem to think that the country is rescued from some dreadful danger.*"

Actually they had come to celebrate the inauguration of their hero, a man like so many of them who had achieved success in America. Born in poverty, without an immediate family for the first part of his life, he had risen to the highest office in the country. To ordinary citizens, he represented what was exceptional and exciting about America. He was a "self-made man," a term invented at this time to describe those who had achieved fame and fortune through their own efforts without the assistance of family or wealth. Ambition and determination could guarantee success to anyone who made the effort.

The crowd shook the ground with screams and applause as the hero appeared on the east portico of the Capitol and took the oath of office. And when the ceremony ended, the people pursued him as he made his way to the Executive Mansion. They poured into the building—men, women, and children "scrambling, fighting, romping." The "*Majesty of the People* had disappeared," wrote Mrs. Samuel H. Smith, wife of the

editor of a leading Washington newspaper, and in its place there appeared a rabble herd of the lowest society. "The President, after having been *literally* nearly pressed to death & almost suffocated & torn to pieces by the people in their eagerness to shake hands with Old Hickory, had retreated through the back way or south front & had escaped to his lodgings at Gadsby's."

Refreshments had been prepared for the reception, but each time the waiters attempted to enter a room to serve the guests, a mob rushed forward to seize the drinks. An orange punch, laced with hard liquor, was pitched to the floor moments after being brought through the pantry door. Cut glass and china were smashed in the melee. The general destruction had reached such a level that tubs of punch, wine, and ice cream were finally taken to the garden outside in the hope that they would draw the crowd out of the mansion. And it worked. Men dived through the windows in hot pursuit, and children wrestled and fought with each other in their effort to grab the ice cream and other refreshments. In their distress on witnessing such behavior, women fainted. "We had a regular Saturnalia," exclaimed one congressman. The mob was "one uninterrupted stream of mud and filth. . . . However notwithstanding the row Demos kicked up the whole matter went off very well thro the *wise neglect* of that great apostle 'of the fierce democracy,' the Chairman of the Central Committee, which body corporate so far from being defunct by the election of Old Hickory seems now to have gathered fresh vitality and has I believe even taken the old man under their parental guardianship."

The Central Committee. It was a new age, a democratic age. Many more people—that is, white males—had won the suffrage, and now politicians formed committees to guide and direct them to the polls so that large majorities could be built for favored candidates. Politics encouraged the use of parades and barbecues to attract public interest. Hickory poles were erected in town squares to salute and celebrate the accomplishments of the "Hero of New Orleans." Newspapers were not only a source of information about local, national, and world events and a means of defining party doctrine, be it Democratic or National Republican, but a way of assisting the formation of organizations to advance the parties' political goals. Hundreds of new journals had appeared during the election of 1828, so that about 600 newspapers

circulated in various parts of the United States: fifty of them dailies, 150 semiweeklies, and 400 weeklies. "I had a meeting of 12 to 15 friends . . . at my house last evening," bragged William L. Marcy, one of Van Buren's most trusted lieutenants in New York, "& arrangements were made to publish and distribute extensively some of the best things that have appeared against the [Adams] administration and in favor of Genl Jackson."

So efficient were these editors and writers that after Old Hickory's victory they descended on Washington like vultures, looking for their reward. Among them were Isaac Hill from New Hampshire, Nathaniel Greene from Massachusetts, Gideon Welles from Connecticut, Mordecai Noah from New York, and Amos Kendall from Kentucky. They became party spokesmen, and for their efforts they received political appointments or lucrative contracts for public printing, or both.

Everything about politics changed in this Jacksonian era. When the government first got under way in 1789 most, if not all, congressmen spent only one or two terms in public service, after which they returned to their regular professions back home. By and large, government was not a means of making money; nor was it regarded as a lifetime career. That changed after the War of 1812. Now congressmen served longer terms and fashioned their service into a profitable career. But this necessitated winning elections—every two years in the case of representatives in the House—which could best be achieved by creating strong political organizations within the states or districts and making certain that one's constituents were pleased with one's performance. Not surprisingly, these needs produced a number of unfortunate consequences: the pork barrel, conflicts of interest, and wholesale bribery. True, these practices probably occurred early in legislative history, but with the advent of democracy they developed rapidly over a long period of time. Lobbyists became more apparent and more insistent in representing their clients.

The type and character of the individuals who ran for office also changed—and not necessarily for the better. A wider-based electorate encouraged the candidacy of many men who really lacked the education and knowledge and background to serve in Congress. Alexis de Tocqueville, the author of *Democracy in America*, attended sessions of both the House and the Senate and was appalled by what he witnessed.

“On entering the House of Representatives at Washington,” he reported, “one is struck by the vulgar demeanor of that great assembly. Often there is not a distinguished man in the whole number. Its members are almost all obscure individuals, whose names bring no associations to mind. They are mostly village lawyers, men in trade, or even persons belonging to the lower classes of society.” Indeed, the *New York Tribune* reported that Representative William Sawyer of Ohio was one such member of the lower class. He regularly left his seat in the House at one o’clock in the afternoon and went to a window with a recess, opened a bundle wrapped in newspaper, and pulled out a sausage for lunch. He would devour the sausage, then brush away the crumbs, dispose of the newspaper, and return to his seat. A man of rustic manners, declared the *Tribune*, from “some backwoods benighted region in Ohio”—this was the new type of legislator that now sat in Congress and framed the nation’s laws. Contrast Sawyer with such men as Madison, Ames, Sedgewick, and Mühlenberg et al. who sat in the House earlier and helped establish the government under the Constitution, and the marked change in the operation of the government becomes immediately apparent. Such a change in just a few years, marveled some. Contemporaries worried that the increase in the suffrage had lowered the standards for running for elective office.

The most obvious change was Jackson himself. He followed a distinguished line of public servants from Washington to Adams, all men of outstanding public service. And Jackson had a nickname: Old Hickory. None of his predecessors possessed such a nickname—but many of the Presidents who followed him did, such as Martin Van Buren, known as the “Little Magician”; or William Henry Harrison, dubbed “Tippecanoe”; James Knox Polk, called “Young Hickory”; and Zachary Taylor, known as “Old Rough and Ready.” To many commentators at the time, this use of a new kind of nomenclature surely marked a decline, in their minds, in the caliber of men who served as President of the United States. With the possible exception of Polk, none of them could be regarded as first-rate statesmen.

Still, Andrew Jackson proved to be one of the most outstanding chief executives in U.S. history. He had a reform program that he asked Congress to enact into law. In his first message he proposed a constitutional amendment to replace the electoral system with a popular vote,

so that the "fair expression of the will of the majority" would decide who serves as President. As a firm believer in democracy, he preached a simple definition of what that meant. "The people are the government," he said, "administering it by their agents; they are the Government, the sovereign power." In this message he reiterated his claim that "*the majority is to govern.*" Amending the Constitution to abolish the College of Electors would ensure that the disastrous election of 1824-1825 would never be repeated.

He also hoped to settle existing differences with foreign countries, in particular the money due to Americans for property depredations during the Napoleonic Wars. These obligations by Europe had been disregarded for decades and he had every intention of collecting what foreign nations owed American citizens. He also expected to root out the corruption that he believed had seeped into the government during the previous administration. To accomplish this he applied a reformed policy of appointment to office, a policy his opponents called a "spoils system." "Rotation in office," is what he called it. "There has been a great noise made about removals," he declared. Those who have been in office for a few years think they have a vested right to it. "In a country where offices are created solely for the benefit of the people no one man has any more intrinsic right to official station than another." It is by a periodic rotation of men in office that we can "best perpetuate our liberty."

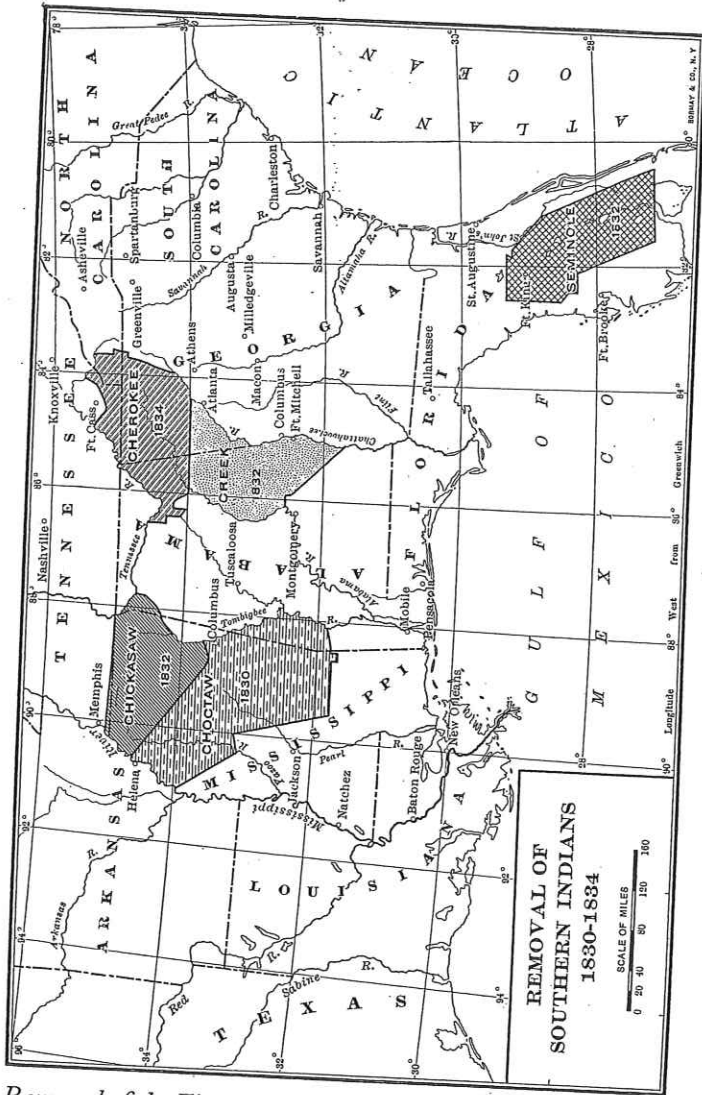
Furthermore, he thought the tariff should be readjusted to a more "middle and just" level so that all sections of the country might benefit. Obviously the Tariff of Abominations had created considerable controversy, especially in the South, and Jackson believed that appropriate "adjustments" could and should be undertaken. Most particularly he believed that the Indian tribes should be moved beyond the Mississippi River for their own safety—to escape probable annihilation—and more particularly for the safety of the nation. As far as he was concerned the presence of Indians in certain parts of the country, especially the Southeast, jeopardized the ability of the nation to defend itself. Finally, he wanted changes in the operation of the Second Bank of the United States inasmuch as it had failed, he said, to establish "a uniform and sound currency." Only with such changes would it be possible to "prevent our liberties" from being "crushed by the Bank & its influence."

After an unfortunate interlude in which a constitutional crisis resulted from the ostracizing of Peggy O'Neale Eaton, the wife of his secretary of war, John H. Eaton, because of her reputation as a "scandalous woman," the President shuffled his cabinet to gain the kind of support he needed to enact his reforms. He defended Peggy, as he had his wife, seeing her as a victim of malicious troublemakers within the administration who would use an innocent woman to gain whatever advantage they could to control the operation of government.

The first important bill to be enacted under Jackson's guidance was the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Because Native Americans were a threat to the safety and security of the nation—the Creek War during the War of 1812 was a prime example—they had to be relocated to an area where they could do no harm. He also believed that unless they were removed they would be exterminated by white settlers who wanted their land and were prepared to wage an exterminating war to obtain it. The disappearance during the past 100 years of such tribes as the Yamacsee, the Delaware, and the Mohicans and others convinced him that the same fate would befall the Creek, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Seminole, the so-called Five Civilized Nations, if they remained where they were.

The Removal Act provided funds to negotiate with these tribes and relocate them to the West. It called for the creation of an Indian Territory, which later became the state of Oklahoma, and within which each tribe would occupy a select area and govern itself without interference from the United States. The removal would involve the signing of treaties in which there was an exchange of equivalent amounts of land—eastern land where the tribes now resided for western land beyond the Mississippi River. The federal government would provide transport, food, and some tools to ease the transition of the Indians to their new homes. Some tribes submitted without a fight. But others did not—notably the Cherokee who were undoubtedly the most "civilized" of the Indians, boasting schools, a written language, a newspaper, and a constitution. So civilized were they that, like white men, they even held slaves. Ultimately they took their complaint to the U.S. Supreme Court, insisting that they were a sovereign, independent nation.

The case developed when the state of Georgia imposed its laws on



Removal of the Five Southern Indian Tribes, 1830-1834