



▲ Andrew Jackson, known as the “People’s President”

## WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

### A “Mob” at the White House

Washington, D.C., March 4, 1829. Andrew Jackson, a popular war hero from the Tennessee frontier, had been sworn in as President. The aristocratic Margaret Bayard Smith was horrified to see the White House overrun by what she called “a rabble, a mob”:

“Cut glass and china to the amount of several thousand dollars had been broken in the struggle to get the refreshments. . . . Ladies fainted, men were seen with bloody noses and such a scene of confusion took place as is impossible to describe. . . . But it was the People’s day, and the People’s President and the People would rule.”

—Margaret Bayard Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society*

# Democracy, Nationalism, and Sectionalism

## Objectives

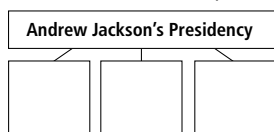
- Explain how the rise of Andrew Jackson was linked to expanding democratic rights.
- Trace the causes and effects of Indian removal.
- Analyze Jackson’s policies with regard to nullification and the national bank.

## Terms and People

Andrew Jackson	Trail of Tears
Jacksonian democracy	John C. Calhoun
spoils system	nullification
Indian Removal Act	Panic of 1837

## NoteTaking

**Reading Skill: Understand Effects** As you read, note the effects of Jackson’s presidency.



**Why It Matters** Before 1820, political power in America was concentrated among relatively few men. The 1820s saw a political shift, signaled by the rise of Andrew Jackson. While the nation expanded its concept of democracy, some policies of the Jackson era stirred long-term political strife. **Section Focus Question:** What changes did Andrew Jackson bring to American political life?

## The Rise of Andrew Jackson

During the 1820s, military hero **Andrew Jackson** became a symbol of expanding American democracy. Raised on the Tennessee frontier, he celebrated majority rule and the dignity of ordinary Americans. He presented himself as a down-to-earth common man, in contrast with aristocratic leaders of the past.

**Democracy Expands** Jackson rose at a time when national politics was becoming increasingly democratic, a trend many historians now call **Jacksonian democracy**. A growing number of states chose presidential electors by popular vote, rather than by state legislatures. Many states also rewrote their constitutions to abolish property requirements for voting, so that any tax-paying white man could vote. As a result, participation in elections grew from less than 30 percent of white men in the early 1800s to almost 80 percent in 1840.

Jacksonian democracy had serious limits. Most of the state constitutions took the vote away from free blacks, even those with property. Native Americans, who were not citizens, and women could not vote in any state.

**Adams Wins a Costly Victory** In the 1824 presidential election, Jackson was the clear winner of the popular vote. But in a four-way race, no candidate was able to win the majority of electoral votes. Therefore, under the Constitution, the election was decided by the House of Representatives. Fourth-place finisher Henry Clay threw his support to John Quincy Adams, who was declared the winner. When Adams appointed Clay as Secretary of State, Jackson accused them of making a “corrupt bargain” to rob him of the presidency. He and his supporters spent much of Adams’s term preparing for the next election.

Adams promoted a nationalist program of federal spending for internal improvements and scientific exploration. But his critics thwarted his program, arguing that Adams’s policies favored the wealthy over the common people.

**Jackson Triumphs** In 1828, Jackson was the candidate of a revamped Democratic Party. Democrats developed a disciplined system of local and state committees and conventions. Anyone who broke with party discipline was cast out. While becoming more democratic in style, with public rallies and carefully planned appeals to voters, elections became the business of professional politicians.

Aided by this strong party organization, Jackson triumphed over Adams, winning 56 percent of the popular vote and two thirds of the electoral vote. Once in office, Jackson replaced hundreds of government workers with Democratic activists. Jackson’s foes denounced the **spoils system**, the use of political jobs to reward party loyalty.

✓ **Checkpoint** How did Andrew Jackson benefit from the expansion of democracy?

## Indian Removal

Part of Jackson’s appeal to southern voters was the expectation that he would help remove the Indians living in the region. Jackson’s victory in the Creek War of 1814 had led to the acquisition of millions of acres in Georgia and Alabama, and his 1818 war with the Seminoles paved the way for American control of Florida.


**Americans Seek Indian Lands** Still, many Native Americans remained in the South, often adopting various aspects of white American culture. Nations such as the Cherokees and Creeks established American-style schools, owned private property, and formed constitutional, republican governments. When Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama moved to seize the valuable lands held by Native Americans, the Indians went to court to defend their rights.

In 1832, the Supreme Court under John Marshall ruled that Georgia’s seizure of Indian lands was unconstitutional. The federal government had treaty obligations to protect the Indians, the Court held, and federal law was superior to state law. Jackson, however, refused to act on the Court’s ruling. “John Marshall has made his decision,” Jackson boldly declared. “Now let him enforce it.”

**Jackson Pushes Indian Removal** Even before this ruling, Jackson had urged Congress to pass the **Indian Removal Act** of 1830. This law sought to negotiate the peaceful exchange of Indian lands in the South for new lands in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma).

## The Growing Electorate

Before 1824, presidential election results did not even include a popular vote count. By 1840, the number of voters had skyrocketed. *Which Americans were not represented on the table below?*



Presidential Election	Total Popular Vote
1824	350,671
1828	1,155,350
1832	1,318,406
1836	1,500,802
1840	2,404,118

SOURCE: Encyclopedia Britannica

### Vocabulary Builder

**compel**—(kuhm PEHL) *v.* to force by means of superior strength or authority

Most Choctaws and Chickasaws did agree to accept lands in the West. But other groups resisted removal. In 1836, after several violent conflicts, the U.S. military forcibly removed the Creeks from their southern lands. In Florida, the Seminoles fought the Second Seminole War between 1835 and 1842. In the end, U.S. troops forced most Seminoles from Florida.

In 1838, federal troops **compelled** more than 15,000 Cherokees to travel from the Southeast to Oklahoma. At least 4,000 Cherokees died of disease, exposure, and hunger along what came to be called the **Trail of Tears**.

✔ **Checkpoint** Why did many white people want Indians removed from the Southeast?

## The Nullification Crisis

Protective tariffs—taxes on imported goods designed to protect American goods—had long been a source of discord. In general, the industrial North favored them, but the agrarian South opposed them. In 1828, Congress adopted an especially high tariff.

**Calhoun Champions Nullification** Jackson's Vice President, **John C. Calhoun** of South Carolina, violently opposed the new tariff, which southerners dubbed the Tariff of Abominations. Calhoun championed **nullification**, the concept that states could nullify, or void, any federal law they deemed unconstitutional.

Calhoun and his supporters hoped that Jackson would move to revoke the Tariff of Abominations. Instead, Jackson signed into law a new tariff. Though not as harsh as the 1828 tariff, it was still unacceptable to many southerners.

● **INFOGRAPHIC**  AUDIO

# THE TRAIL OF TEARS

In 1829, white settlers discovered gold on Cherokee lands in northwestern Georgia. It was only a matter of time before the government decided to relocate the Cherokees and other Native Americans living in the Southeast to other lands. In May 1838, soldiers forced more than 15,000 Cherokees into military stockades at bayonet point. Wahnenauhi, a Cherokee woman, wrote of the removal: "[P]erish or remove! It might be,—remove and perish! [A] long journey through the Wilderness,—could the little ones endure? [A]nd how about the sick? [T]he old people and infirm, could they possibl[y] endure the long tedious journey; Should they leave?"

But the Cherokees were not given a choice. The first leg of their journey began in October 1838. Their final destination lay 1,000 miles west in Indian Territory. The name of the route they followed is known as the "Trail of Tears," which comes from the Cherokee *nunna-da-ul-tsun-yi*, for the "trail where they cried."

◀ Cherokee bag, early nineteenth century





Calhoun resigned the vice presidency. More drastically, the South Carolina government voted to nullify the tariff law and threatened to secede from the Union if the federal government employed force to collect the tariff.

**Vocabulary Builder**  
drastic—(DRAS tihk) *adj.* extreme; severe

**Compromise Averts a Crisis** Jackson generally supported states' rights, but he drew the line at nullification and secession. He vowed to back up federal law with muscle. "The Union will be preserved," he vowed.

In 1833, Congress voted to give Jackson authority to use troops to enforce federal law in South Carolina. At the same time, at Jackson's urging, Congress reduced the tariff. The crisis passed, but the thorny question of nullification and secession had been postponed, not killed.

✔ **Checkpoint** How did Calhoun and Jackson differ on the issue of nullification?

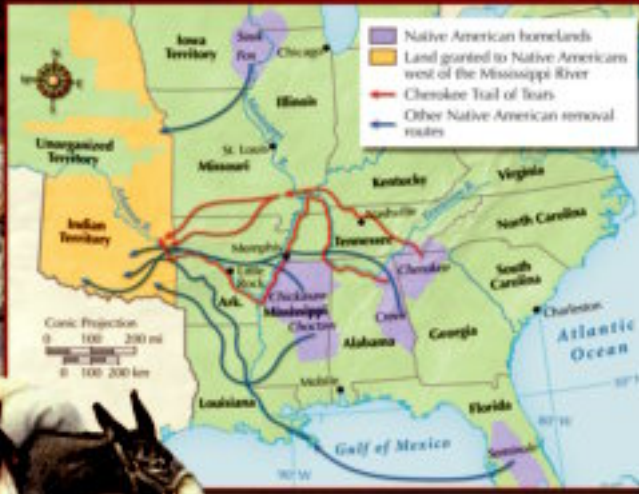
## Economic Woes

Despite his stand against nullification, the President sympathized with the agrarian South. Jacksonian Democrats suspected that the fast-growing industrial economy of the North encouraged corruption and greed. They howled when industry sought special advantages, such as protective tariffs.

**Jackson Opposes the Bank** Jackson especially disliked the second Bank of the United States, which Congress had chartered in 1816. Business leaders argued that the Bank fostered economic growth and confidence. But Jackson saw it as undemocratic, favoring a small number of rich investors.

▼ **Native American Removal, 1830–1840** The map below shows the relocation routes of Native Americans, including the Trail of Tears (in red).

▼ The journey west was a time of sadness and hardship. More than 4,000 Cherokees died of disease, cold, and starvation.



### Thinking Critically

- 1. Draw Inferences** Why do you think Americans were willing to give up new lands to the Indians?
- 2. Identify Alternatives** Why did Jackson forcibly relocate Native Americans? What other action might he have taken to handle the conflict between the southern states and Native Americans?



## Log Cabin Campaign

Banners like the one above were part of the Whig effort to present William Henry Harrison as a simple frontier farmer. In fact, Harrison was the well-educated son of a wealthy Virginia planter who had signed the Declaration of Independence. *Why did the Whigs want to present a misleading image of Harrison's background?*

In 1832, Congress voted to renew the Bank's charter. Jackson, however, vetoed the renewal. Critics denounced Jackson as a power-hungry tyrant trampling on the rights of Congress.

**The Whig Party Forms** Supporters of the Bank, led by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, formed the Whig Party in 1832. The Whigs were nationalists who wanted a strong federal government to manage the economy.


In the election of 1832, Jackson won a landslide victory over Whig candidate Clay. Emboldened by public support, Jackson stepped up his attack on the Bank by withdrawing federal funds and placing them in other banks. Weakening the Bank led to trouble in the economy. Relieved from federal regulation, state and private banks printed and flooded the nation with paper money of uncertain value.

**Politics After Jackson** In 1836, voters elected Martin Van Buren to succeed Jackson. Soon after Van Buren took office, the economy suffered the **Panic of 1837**, the nation's worst economic depression

to that time. The panic was partly the result of Jackson's decision, months earlier, to stop accepting paper money for the purchase of federal land. The effect was a sharp drop in land values and sales. As a result, hundreds of banks and businesses closed down. Many farmers lost their land, while urban workers faced unemployment or wage cuts.

Economic woes revived the Whigs. In 1840, they ran a shrewd campaign that was light on ideas but heavy on theatrics. Whig campaign managers portrayed their candidate, military hero William Henry Harrison, as a simple farmer who lived in a log cabin and drank hard cider instead of the champagne favored by Van Buren. This "Log Cabin Campaign" put Harrison in the White House.

The Whig triumph proved brief. A month after taking office, Harrison died of pneumonia. Vice President John Tyler became President. Rejecting Whig policies, Tyler vetoed congressional legislation to restore the Bank, which favored tariffs and internal improvements, and to enact Clay's American System.

 **Checkpoint** Why did Andrew Jackson oppose the Bank of the United States?

## SECTION

# 1 Assessment

## Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice  
Web Code: nda-0202

## Comprehension

- Terms and People** Write a sentence explaining how each of the following was connected with political developments of the 1820s and 1830s.
  - Andrew Jackson
  - Jacksonian democracy
  - spoils system
  - Indian Removal Act
  - Trail of Tears
  - John C. Calhoun
  - nullification
  - Panic of 1837

## 2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:

**Understand Effects** Use your flowchart to answer the Section Focus Question: What changes did Andrew Jackson bring to American political life?

## Writing About History

- Quick Write: Choose a Topic** A compare-and-contrast essay involves two people, things, or events that are neither identical nor completely different. Choose a topic from this section as the basis for a compare-and-contrast essay. Write a brief paragraph explaining your choice.

## Critical Thinking

- Draw Conclusions** Why do you think Jackson favored and benefited from the democratic expansion that took place in the 1820s and 1830s?
- Identify Point of View** What was Jackson's basic view of the Native Americans living in the American Southeast?
- Recognize Cause and Effect** How did actions taken during Jackson's time in office affect Van Buren?