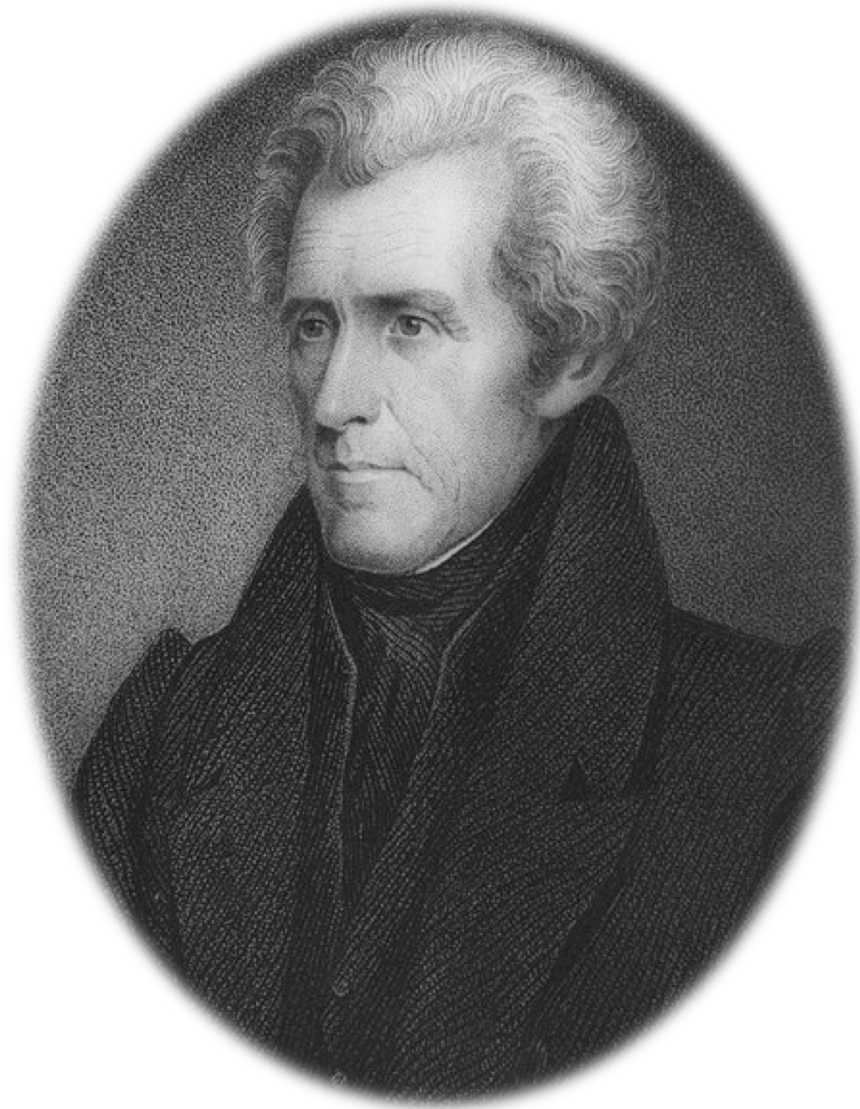


Andrew Jackson: Does he deserve to be on the \$20 bill?



*“I was born for a storm,
and a calm does not suit me.”*

Andrew Jackson

Primary Source

Jackson on Indian Removal

Like Thomas Jefferson before him, Andrew Jackson regarded the proliferation of independent, white farmers as the key to the continued prosperity of the United States. Americans, to be really free and self-reliant, needed to own their own land. But with population rising, this required each new generation to move farther west, onto lands that in many cases were already occupied by Native Americans. In Jackson's eyes, because Whites grew crops and built settlements, while Indians mostly hunted, there was no doubt about who would make better use of the lands. Indians, Jackson predicted, would inevitably suffer from contact with these land-hungry Whites, making it in their own best interest to move West of the Mississippi River. The following excerpt is taken from Jackson's second annual message to Congress, months after the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. The pecuniary advantages which it promises to the Government are the least of its recommendations. It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters. By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of the whites it will incalculably strengthen the southwestern frontier and render the adjacent States strong enough to repel future invasions without remote aid. It will relieve the whole State of Mississippi and the western part of Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.

Source: James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1896), vol. 2, pp. 519-520

The Nullification Crisis and Compromise of 1833

As Van Buren rose and Calhoun fell, the tariff controversy mounted to a crisis. In 1832 Congress passed a new tariff that reduced some rates but continued the protectionist principle. Some Southerners claimed this as a sign of progress, but South Carolinians saw it as reason to abandon hope from Washington. In November, a state convention declared the tariff unconstitutional and hence null and void. South Carolina's legislature followed up with measures to block the collection of federal custom revenues at the state's ports and to defend the state with arms against federal incursion.

Jackson responded on two fronts. He urged Congress to reduce the tariff further, but he also asked for strengthened authority to enforce the revenue laws. Privately, and perhaps for calculated political effect, he talked about marching an army into South Carolina and hanging Calhoun. In December he issued a ringing official proclamation against nullification. Drafted largely by Secretary of State Edward Livingston, the document questioned Carolinians' obsession with the tariff, reminded them of their patriotic heritage, eviscerated the constitutional theory behind nullification, and warned against taking this fatal step: "Be not deceived by names. Disunion by armed force is treason. Are you really ready to incur its guilt?"

While Jackson thundered, Congress scrambled for a solution that would avoid civil war. Henry Clay, leader of the congressional opposition to Jackson and stalwart of the American System, joined in odd alliance with John C. Calhoun, who had resigned his lame-duck vice-presidency for a seat in the Senate. They fashioned a bill to reduce the tariff in a series of stages over nine years. Early in 1833 Congress passed this Compromise Tariff and also a "force bill" to enforce the revenue laws. Though the Clay-Calhoun forces sought to deny Jackson credit for the settlement, he was fully satisfied with the result. South Carolina, claiming victory, rescinded its nullification of the tariff but nullified the force bill in a final gesture of principled defiance. The Compromise of 1833 brought an end to tariff agitation until the 1840s. First with internal improvements, then with the tariff, the American System had been essentially stymied.

<http://www.pbs.org/kcet/andrewjackson/edu/domesticpolicy.html>

Bank Veto

The congressional Clay-Calhoun alliance foreshadowed a convergence of all Jackson's enemies into a new opposition party. The issue that sealed this coalition, solidified Jackson's own following, and dominated his second term as president was the Second Bank of the United States.

The Bank of the United States was a quasi-public corporation chartered by Congress to manage the federal government's finances and provide a sound national currency. Headquartered in Philadelphia with branches throughout the states, it was the country's only truly national financial institution. The federal government owned one-fifth of the stock and the President of the United States appointed one-fifth of the directors. Like other banks chartered by state legislatures, the Bank lent for profit and issued paper currency backed by specie reserves. Its notes were federal legal tender. By law, it was also the federal government's own banker, arranging its loans and storing, transferring, and disbursing its funds. The Bank's national reach and official status gave it enormous leverage over the state banks and over the country's supply of money and credit.

The original Bank of the United States was chartered in 1791 at the urging of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton. Opposition to it was one of the founding tenets of the Jeffersonian Democratic-Republican party. That party, then in power, allowed the Bank to expire when its twenty-year charter ran out in 1811. But the government's financial misadventures in the War of 1812 forced a reconsideration. In 1816 Congress chartered the Second Bank, again for twenty years.

Imprudent lending and corrupt management brought the Second Bank into deep disrepute during the speculative boom-and-bust cycle that culminated in the Panic of 1819. Calls arose for revocation of the charter. But the astute stewardship of new Bank president Nicholas Biddle did much to repair its reputation in the 1820s. By 1828, when Jackson was first elected, the Bank had ceased to be controversial. Indeed, most informed observers deemed it indispensable.

Startling his own supporters, Jackson attacked the Bank in his very first message to Congress in 1829. Biddle attempted to conciliate him, but Jackson's opposition to renewing the charter seemed immovable. He was convinced that the Bank was not only unconstitutional--as Jefferson and his followers had long maintained--but that its concentrated financial power represented a dire threat to popular liberty.

Under the advice of Senators Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, Biddle sought a congressional recharter in 1832. They calculated that Jackson would not dare a veto on the eve of the election; if he did, they would make an issue of it in the campaign. The recharter bill duly passed Congress, and on July 10 Jackson vetoed it.

The veto message was one of the defining documents of Jackson's presidency. Clearly intended for the public eye, parts of it read more like a political manifesto than a communication to Congress. Jackson recited his constitutional objections and introduced some dubious economic arguments, chiefly aimed at foreign ownership of Bank stock. But the crux of the message was its attack on the special privilege enjoyed by private stockholders in a government-chartered corporation. Jackson laid out an essentially laissez-faire vision of government as a neutral arbiter, phrased in a resonant populism:

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society--the farmers, mechanics, and laborers--who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government. There are no necessary evils in government. Its evils exist only in its abuses. If it would confine itself to equal protection, and, as Heaven does its rains, shower its favors alike on the high and the low, the rich and the poor, it would be an unqualified blessing.

Though some original Jackson men were flabbergasted and outraged at his turn against the Bank, the veto held up in Congress. It became the prime issue in the ensuing presidential campaign, with both sides distributing copies of Jackson's message. Jackson read his re-election as a mandate to pursue his attack on the Bank further.

BORN TO COMMAND.

OF VETO MEMORY.



HAD I BEEN CONSULTED.

KING ANDREW THE FIRST.

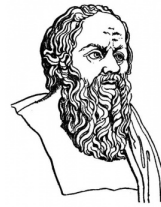
Andrew Jackson: Tyrant or Saint?

Directions: Read each document and record your responses in preparation for the Socratic Seminar on Jackson. Bring this completed to class tomorrow.

<p>Source 1: Jackson on Indian Removal</p> <p>Pros:</p> <p>Cons:</p>	<p>Source 2: The Nullification Crisis...</p> <p>Pros:</p> <p>Cons:</p>
<p>Source 3: Jackson Veto Message</p> <p>Pros:</p> <p>Cons:</p>	<p>Source 4: Political Cartoon "King Andrew"</p> <p>How does this image depict Jackson?</p>
<p>Source 5: Video, Historians discuss Jackson's Presidency.</p> <p>Pros:</p> <p>Cons:</p>	

Seminar Essential Question: Based on your analysis on these five sources, do you think that Jackson was a good president, worthy of gracing the \$20 bill? Why or why not.

Name _____ Block _____ Date _____



Socratic Seminar

Topic: Andrew Jackson's Presidency

Essential Question: Based on your analysis on these five sources, do you think that Jackson was a good president, worthy of gracing the \$20 bill? Why or why not.

Directions: Complete this form during the seminar. Make sure to hand it in at the end of class. Enjoy!

1. During the discussion, write at least **one thing** you either agree or disagree with and tell me who said it. (ex. "I agree with John when he said blah blah blah...")

2. Explain why you agree or disagree with this. (ex. "I agree with John **because**...")

Text

Exit Slip: After studying the recent election, what do you think President Obama could stand to learn from Jackson's use of executive power? Use the MEL-Con Paragraph Structure to construct your response.
