**CHAPTER 11**

**Politics of the Market Revolution**

**Learning Outcomes**

* 1. Describe the changes that took place in American politics during the first decades of the 1800s, and explain the reasons for these changes.

**Objectives**

1. Explain how the Panic of 1819 contributed to the move to democratize elections, and tell how the election process began to change.
2. Describe the “disputed” election of 1824, and show how that “drove” Andrew Jackson in his 1828 quest for office.
3. Tell why this period was known as the era of the “common man.”
   1. Explain how Jackson’s approach to the “spoils system,” the nullification crisis, the National Bank, Indian removal, and the Panic of 1837 reflected his vision of federal power.

**Objectives**

1. Define nullification, and describe the nullification crisis that developed during Jackson’s presidency.
2. Explain the way the Second Bank of the United States operated; describe Jackson’s opposition to it; and discuss the crisis that developed over the rechartering of the Bank.
3. Relate the reasons for and methods used in the relocation of Indians to the West side of the Mississippi River, and include Jackson’s role in the process.
4. Explain the causes and results of the Panic of 1837.
   1. Explain the development of America’s second two-party political system between the Democrats and the Whigs.

**Objectives**

1. Describe the Democratic Party as it existed during the presidency of Andrew Jackson.
2. Explain the emergence of the Whigs party, and point out the main reason for the party’s existence.

**Chapter Summary**

The Market Revolution that swept America during the early years of the nineteenth century had a tremendous impact on the political system in what came to be known as the Age of Jackson. Economic turmoil gripped the nation. At the same time, more white men gained the right to vote. Although not a step forward for women or African Americans, this change ended property requirements for poor citizens. Participation in elections surged as a result. The outcome of the election of 1824, the alleged “Corrupt Bargain,” denied Jackson the presidency in favor of John Quincy Adams. He, like his father John Adams, was destined to serve only one term. The Senator from Tennessee stormed back and won the following election in 1828 as Jackson fever swept the nation.

A new style of politics had emerged, characterized by spectacular campaigns filled with rallies and entertainment that would entice the masses. Moreover, new techniques of mass mobilization, such as campaign leaflets, public speeches, and other kinds of political propaganda, became essential to running a successful campaign. The election of 1828 signaled the beginning of the kind of political culture that persists in America today. The expansion of the electorate for white men occurred as newly opening states excluded blacks from settling in their lands.

Jackson’s presidency was dominated by four issues, although the outcomes were not always heroic. He entered office ready to use patronage as no past president had done before. Soon he faced a problem that originated with his vice president, South Carolinian John C. Calhoun. As senator, Calhoun claimed that any individual state could nullify federal law, something Jackson saw as a direct threat to federal authority. A proposed act that would allow the army and the navy to put down an insurrection showed that the President would consider using force to put down internal revolts. Jackson also fought against the Second National Bank, an institution that his policies ended up crushing. Not having a central currency resulted in a major lack of faith in the new money issued from banks and counterfeiters. Jackson also played an infamous role in his westward expansion policies. He looked to remove, whether by treaty or by force, any Native Americans in the way. Most appallingly, he decided that the Cherokee, which was an acclimated Indian nation with a lifestyle mirroring southern plantation owners, mansions, slaves, schools, newspapers, and churches, must go. Along the Trail of Tears, thousands of Cherokees, young and old, perished along routes under the direction of the U.S. Army. The Seminoles, in contrast, battled against settlers and freed slaves when possible.

As with the Panic of 1819, currencies were the provocation. In an attempt to protect the settlers and to affirm his distrust of paper money, Jackson, in 1836, passed the Specie Circular, an executive order requiring that the government cease accepting paper money as credible currency, accepting instead only gold or silver for all items, including public land.

The Specie Circular caused an immediate drop in demand for western lands and drained most of the specie from New York banks. In May 1837, every bank in New York refused to accept paper money for specie. Paper money lost nearly all its value, and nearly a quarter of all banks in the United States closed. After the Bank War, there was no central bank to control the economic contraction, and the United States plummeted into an economic depression that lasted nearly a decade.

Jackson’s aggressive policies acted as an organizing factor for a new political party. While his supporters believed in a limited government, they still wanted expansion. The new opposition, soon to adapt the name—the Whigs, believed in an active federal government that should promote moral laws. The Whigs attracted the votes of merchants, farmers, anti-Irish, and those who wanted the federal government to finance internal improvement. The Democrats received votes from farmers, urban workers, and Irish immigrants. The two political parties generally balanced each other out, which helped to maintain political stability during the 1840s. Soon, this balance unraveled.

**Chapter Outline**

I. Politics in the Age of Jackson

* 1. A New Kind of Politics

1. The Panic of 1819
2. Expansion of the Franchise
3. The Election of 1824
4. A New Culture of Politics
   1. Andrew Jackson and the Politics of the “Common Man”
5. The Election of 1828
6. White Male Democracy
7. Racism in the North

II. Jackson as President

* 1. Patronage
  2. The Nullification Crisis

1. The Context of Nullification
2. Tariffs
3. What was Nullification?
4. Jackson’s Response
   1. The Bank War
5. The Bank
6. Jackson’s Opposition
7. Crushing the Bank
8. Wildcat Banking

D. Westward Expansion and Indian Removal

1. Indian Resistance
2. Indian Removal Act of 1830
3. The Cherokee Nation versus Georgia
4. Was Jackson Anti-Indian?
5. The Seminole Revolt

E. The Panic of 1837

1. The Specie Circular
2. The Panic of 1837

III. The Development of the Second Two-Party System

1. Jackson’s Democrats
2. The Whigs
3. Constituencies
4. Political Stability

IV. Looking Ahead…

**Suggested Lecture Topics**

1. The Panic of 1819: America’s First Depression but Certainly Not Its Last
2. Andrew Jackson’s Presidential Runs
3. Jackson’s Major Issues as President: Patronage, The Bank, Indian Removal, and Nullification
4. “Walking on a Muddy Road”: The Trail of Tears
5. Jackson and the “Era of the Common Man”
6. The Rise of the Whigs and the Second Two-Party Political System

(11-2d). There were four reasons why the Cherokee were pushed off their lands in Georgia:

1. White land lust
2. Racism
3. Federal policy
4. Andrew Jackson’s ire

Instructors can pass out one or two primary documents to students. Have students either discuss their impressions of the Trail of Tears or have 1–2 students describe the experiences of specific participants. The documents for this assignment can be found here: <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/voices/voices_content.cfm?vid=4>.

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**The Reasons Why**

**Research Topics—Projects and Papers**

Students might choose to complete a project to be presented in class or to write a more traditional research paper. Or the instructor could decide which task they would prefer to have them do. Below are a few topics that are relevant to this chapter. The instructor may, of course, choose to develop his/her own topics.

1. Andrew Jackson in Cartoons. Jackson was the first president to have his entire administration depicted in political cartoons. Search the Internet for copies of cartoons and prepare an exhibit in notebook form of cartoons that deal with major aspects of his presidency as well as those meant to show Jackson’s personality.
2. Jackson entered the presidency as a recent widower. Research the story of Jackson and his wife Rachel, and prepare two versions of their love story. First, tell the story in a way that is sympathetic to the pair, and second, tell the story as some of his opponents might have written about it. Realize that both versions were quite public as Jackson was running for president.
3. Ask students to write a two-page paper in which they address the topic of Nullification. Also, ask them to provide their own opinion as to whether nullification should be legal or not.
4. The Seminole Revolt. Using the Internet, research primary documents about the Seminole Revolt. Discuss the event from the perspective of the participants.
5. The Whig Party: Andrew Jackson as Catalyst for the Second Two-party Political System.

**Additional www Resources**

The Election of 1824. NARA. A collection of documents accompanied by classroom or Internet exercises covering the election of 1824.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/electoral-tally/>

“The Trail of Tears,” About North Georgia.

<http://ngeorgia.com/history/nghisttt.html>

**Primary Source Discussions**

**Assignment Name: Andrew Jackson, First Annual Message (1829)**

*Introduction:* Jackson’s First Annual Message (1829) to the Congress, nine months after his inauguration to the presidency. In addition to serving as a state of the union address, this message outlines Jackson’s policies on a number of important issues. He expresses his desire to keep government in the hands of the people with his proposal to amend the Constitution to allow for more popular election of the president and the vice-president. He also favors keeping the majority of legislative power in the hands of the states. Jackson further outlines his policy for Indian removal and states his opposition to renewing the charter of the National Bank.

*Visit URL:* *http://college.cengage.com/history/shared/unprotected/ps/jacksonaddress.html*

[Andrew Jackson, First Annual Message (1829)](http://college.cengage.com/history/shared/unprotected/ps/jacksonaddress.html)

*Instructions:* After reading the introduction and the primary source provided, answer the questions below.

* 1. How does Jackson characterize the United States’ relations with Great Britain?
  2. What reasons does Jackson give for his opposition to a national bank?
  3. In what ways does Jackson seek to make the country more democratic?
  4. What is Jackson’s policy toward the Indians?
  5. In what ways does this speech presage Jackson’s presidency?

**Assignment Name: South Carolina’s Ordinance of Nullification**

*Introduction:* “Null, void, and no law, nor binding upon this State, its officers or citizens.” With this phrase, the South Carolina legislature set itself against the federal government in 1832. Although a compromise was reached that kept the state from carrying through with its threat to leave the Union at that time, the stakes between the North and the South had just been raised.

*Visit URL:* *http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\_century/ordnull.asp*

[Read South Carolina’s Ordinance of Nullification](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/ordnull.asp) and then take a brief quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions:*

1. What was South Carolina’s main argument against the protective tariffs of 1828 and 1832? How valid do you think their argument was?
2. The question of whether states could “absolve” themselves from their “political connection” with other states of the Union was effectively answered when the South lost the Civil War. However, even today the theory has many supporters. Are they right or wrong?
3. Do you think the southern states were justified in resenting the industrialized urban areas of the North and the Northeast? Why or why not?