

# 3

## Struggles Over States' Rights

### Explore These Questions

- How did John C. Calhoun and Daniel Webster disagree on states' rights?
- How did Jackson deal with the Nullification Crisis?
- Why did Native Americans of the Southeast have to leave their lands?

### Define

- nullification
- states' rights
- secede

### Identify

- Tariff of Abominations
- Nullification Crisis
- Sequoyah
- Indian Removal Act
- Trail of Tears
- Osceola
- Seminole War

### As You Read

### SETTING the Scene

As President, Andrew Jackson had to deal with a tariff crisis that threatened to split the nation. He also played a major role in deciding the future of many Native Americans. At the heart of both cases was a question that challenged the nation. Did states or the federal government have greater authority?

### A Crisis Over Tariffs

In 1828, Congress passed the highest tariff in the nation's history. Southerners called it the **Tariff of Abominations**. An abomination is something that is hated.

Just like earlier tariffs, the new law protected manufacturers from foreign competition. Most manufacturers lived in the North. Southern planters, however, were hurt by the tariff. They sold their cotton in Europe and bought European goods in return. The high tariff meant that southerners had to pay more for these imports.

### Calhoun vs. Webster

A leader in the South's fight against the tariff was Vice President John C. Calhoun. He used an argument that Thomas Jefferson had made in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions. (See page 260.) Like Jefferson, Calhoun claimed that a state

had the right to nullify, or cancel, a federal law that it considered to be unconstitutional. This idea is called **nullification**.

Calhoun supported **states' rights**, the right of states to limit the power of the federal government. He argued that the states had final authority because the states had created the national government.

Daniel Webster disagreed. In 1830, he made a speech in the Senate attacking the idea of nullification. The Constitution, he said, united the American people, not just the states. If states had the right to nullify federal laws, the nation would fall apart. Webster ended his speech with stirring words: "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

### Calhoun resigns

Southerners and westerners strongly supported states' rights. They expected Jackson, who had been born in the South and lived in the West, to support their view.

The President's position soon became clear. Jackson and Calhoun attended a political dinner in 1830. Several guests made toasts in favor of states' rights. Finally, Jackson rose. The room fell silent. Old Hickory



A tariff collector used this stencil to mark goods.

# Skills FOR LIFE

Critical  
Thinking

Managing  
Information

Communication

Maps, Charts,  
and Graphs

## Reaching a Compromise

### How Will I Use This Skill?

When individuals or groups disagree, they can solve the problem and avoid conflict by reaching a compromise. In a compromise, the opposing sides give up some of their demands in order to forge an agreement that both can accept. Knowing how to reach a compromise will help you settle disagreements, solve problems, and get along with others.

### LEARN the Skill

You can reach a compromise by following these four steps:

- 1 Understand the positions of the opposing sides.
- 2 Recognize the probable effects of not reaching compromise.
- 3 Determine what each side might give up or concede in order to reach an agreement.
- 4 Negotiate a deal by discussing the conflicting issues and offering possible concessions. Compromise is reached when an agreement is acceptable to both sides.

### PRACTICE the Skill

Using the steps above, review the compromise concerning the Tariff of Abominations and the Nullification Crisis in this section.

- 1 Explain the positions of northern manufacturers and southern planters on the two issues.
- 2 What did each side threaten to do if a compromise was not reached?



*A compromise is often sealed by a handshake.*

- 3 What did each side give up in order to reach an agreement?
- 4 With a partner, reenact a negotiation as it might have occurred between representatives of the North and South.

### APPLY the Skill

Working with a partner, role-play a dispute that might occur today between an employer and an employee. Identify various issues that they might disagree on. Then, apply what you have learned in order to reach a compromise.

raised his glass, looked straight at the Vice President, and proclaimed, "Our Federal Union—it must be preserved!"

The drama continued. Calhoun raised his glass and answered the President's challenge: "The Union—next to our liberty, most dear." To him, the liberty of a state was more important than the Union.

Because Calhoun strongly disagreed with Jackson, he resigned from the office of Vice President. He was then elected senator from South Carolina. The debate over states' rights would rage for years.

## The Nullification Crisis

Anger against the tariff increased in the South. In 1832, Congress passed a new tariff that lowered the rate slightly. South Carolina was not satisfied. It passed the Nullification Act, declaring the new tariff illegal. It also threatened to **secede**, or withdraw, from the Union if challenged.

Jackson was furious. He knew that nullification could lead to civil war. In private, he raged:

“If one drop of blood be shed there in defiance of the laws of the United States, I will hang the first man of them I can get my hands on to the first tree I can find.”

Publicly the President supported a lower compromise tariff proposed by Henry Clay. Jackson also asked Congress to pass the Force Bill. It allowed him to use the army, if necessary, to enforce the tariff.

Faced with Jackson's firm stand, no other state chose to support South Carolina. Calhoun supported the compromise tariff that Clay had proposed. South Carolina repealed the Nullification Act and the **Nullification Crisis** passed. However, sectional tensions between the North and South would increase in the years ahead.

## Tragedy for Native Americans

Jackson took a firm stand on another key issue. It affected the fate of Native Americans. Since the early colonial era, white settlers had forced Native Americans off their



## Biography Sequoyah

Sequoyah adapted Greek, Hebrew, and English letters to create the 86 symbols of his Cherokee alphabet. The Cherokees used Sequoyah's alphabet to write a constitution. ★ Why would the lack of a written language be a disadvantage to a society?

land. Indian leaders like Pontiac and Tecumseh had failed to stop the invasion of white settlers.

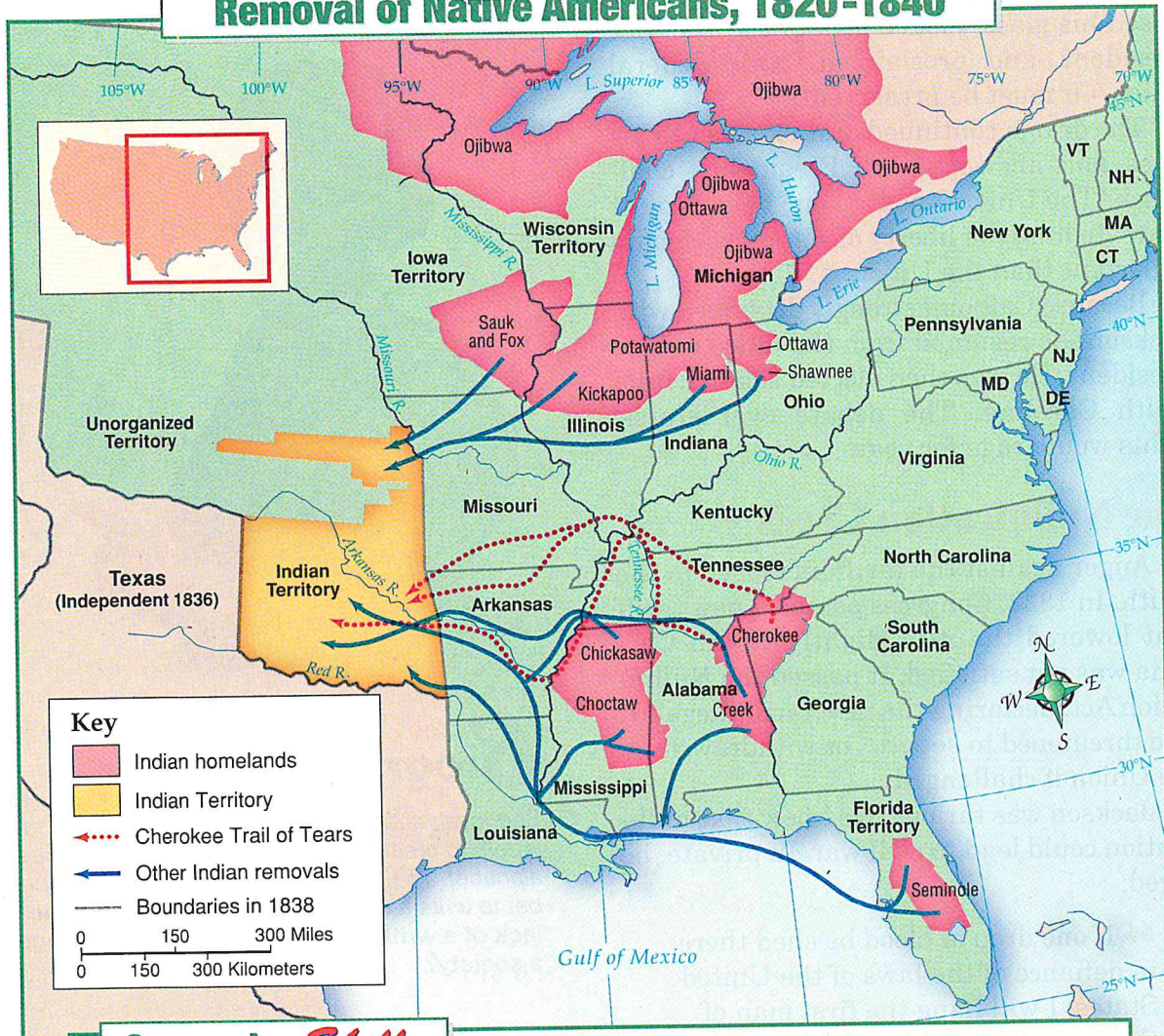
## Indian nations in the Southeast

The Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole nations lived in the Southeast. Many hoped to live in peace with their white neighbors. Their fertile land, however, was ideal for growing cotton. Settlers wanted the land for themselves.

Like earlier Presidents, Jackson sided with the white settlers. At his urging, the government set aside lands beyond the Mississippi River and then persuaded or forced Indians to move there. Jackson believed that this policy would provide land for white settlers as well as protect Native Americans from destruction.

Few Indians wanted to move. Some, like the Cherokee nation, had adopted customs of

## Removal of Native Americans, 1820-1840



### Geography Skills

In the 1830s, the United States government forced thousands of Native Americans to leave their homelands and to resettle in western lands.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate: (a) Georgia, (b) Cherokee homeland, (c) Indian Territory, (d) Seminole homeland.
- 2. Movement** What five southeastern nations moved to Indian Territory?
- 3. Critical Thinking** Why were many Americans willing to give Native Americans lands west of the Mississippi?

white settlers. The Cherokees lived in farming villages. They had a constitution that set up a republican form of government.

In 1821, **Sequoyah** (suh KWoi uh) created a written alphabet for his people. Using Sequoyah's letters, Cherokee children learned to read and write. The Cherokees also published a newspaper.

### A legal battle

In 1828, Georgia claimed the right to make laws for the Cherokee nation. The

Cherokees went to court to defend their rights. They pointed to treaties with the federal government that protected their rights and property. The Cherokee case reached the Supreme Court. In the 1832 case of *Worcester v. Georgia*, Chief Justice John Marshall ruled in favor of the Cherokees. The Court declared Georgia's action unconstitutional and stated that Native Americans were protected by the United States Constitution.

However, President Jackson refused to enforce the Court's decision. In the Nullifica-

tion Crisis, Jackson defended the power of the federal government. In the Cherokee case, he backed states' rights. He said that the federal government could not stop Georgia from extending its authority over Cherokee lands. "John Marshall has made his decision," Jackson reportedly said. "Now let him enforce it."

## Forced to Leave

In 1830, Jackson supporters in Congress pushed through the **Indian Removal Act**. It forced many Native Americans to move west of the Mississippi. Whites did not mind turning this land over to Indians because they thought the region was a vast desert. During the 1830s, thousands of southeastern Indians were driven from their homes and forced to march to Indian Territory, west of the Mississippi.

### A tragic march

In 1838, the United States Army drove more than 15,000 Cherokees westward to a land they had never seen. The Cherokees trekked hundreds of miles over a period of several months. They had little food or shelter. Thousands perished during the march,

mostly children and the elderly. In all, about one fourth of the Indians died.

The Cherokees' long, sorrowful journey west became known as the **Trail of Tears**. An eyewitness described the suffering:

“ The Cherokees are nearly all prisoners. They had been dragged from their homes and encamped at the forts and military places, all over the nation. In Georgia especially, multitudes were allowed no time to take anything with them except the clothes they had on. ”

### The Seminoles resist

In Florida, the Seminole Indians resisted removal. Led by Chief **Osceola** (ahs ee OH luh), they fought the United States Army. The **Seminole War** lasted from 1835 to 1842. It was the costliest war waged by the government to gain Indian lands. More than 1,500 soldiers died in the war and about 20 million dollars were spent in the war effort.

In the end, the Seminoles were defeated. The government forced the Seminole leaders and most of their people to leave Florida. By 1844, only a few thousand Native Americans remained east of the Mississippi River. |

## ★ Section 3 Review ★

### Recall

1. **Locate** (a) South Carolina, (b) Georgia, (c) Cherokee homeland, (d) Indian Territory, (e) Seminole homeland.
2. **Identify** (a) Tariff of Abominations, (b) Nullification Crisis, (c) Sequoyah, (d) Indian Removal Act, (e) Trail of Tears, (f) Osceola, (g) Seminole War.
3. **Define** (a) nullification, (b) states' rights, (c) secede.

### Comprehension

4. Why did northerners and southerners disagree on the tariff issue?

5. How did Andrew Jackson respond to South Carolina's Nullification Act?
6. Why did Jackson support the policy of using force to move Native Americans beyond the Mississippi River?

### Critical Thinking and Writing

7. **Forecasting** What do you think might have happened if other southern states supported South Carolina in the Nullification Crisis?
8. **Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think Andrew Jackson supported states' rights in the Cherokee case but not in the Nullification Crisis?



**Activity Writing a Protest Letter** You are a Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. Write a protest letter to President Jackson explaining why you consider his policy of Indian removal to be unjust.



# The Presidency After Jackson



## Explore These Questions

- What economic problems did Martin Van Buren face?
- How did Whigs and Democrats compete for the Presidency in 1840?
- Why did John Tyler have little success as President?

## Define

- speculator
- depression
- laissez faire
- mudslinging

## Identify

- Martin Van Buren
- Panic of 1837
- William Henry Harrison
- John Tyler

## SETTING the Scene

Andrew Jackson retired from office after two terms. Americans then elected **Martin Van Buren** to the Presidency. Van Buren had served as Vice President during Jackson's second term.

As Van Buren took the oath of office in March 1837, Jackson stood at his side. Onlookers watched the outgoing President, not Van Buren. As Old Hickory left the platform, a rousing cheer rose from the crowd. In that moment, the people expressed their loyalty and respect for Andrew Jackson, the "Hero of New Orleans."

## Van Buren and Hard Times

Martin Van Buren was very different from Andrew Jackson. He was a politician, not a war hero. Davy Crockett, a Congressman from Tennessee, once described Van Buren as "an artful, cunning, intriguing, selfish, speculating lawyer." As President, however, Van Buren needed more than sharp political instincts.

### The Panic of 1837

Two months after taking office, Van Buren faced the worst economic crisis the nation had known. It was called the **Panic of 1837**. The panic had several causes. During the 1830s, the government sold millions of acres of public land in the West. Farmers

bought some land, but **speculators** bought even more, hoping that their risky investment would earn them huge profits. To pay for the land, speculators borrowed money from state banks. After the Bank of the United States closed, the state banks could lend money without limit.

To meet the demand for loans, state banks printed more and more paper money. Often, the paper money was not backed by gold or silver. Paper money had value only if people trusted the banks that issued it.

Before leaving office, Jackson had grown alarmed at the wild speculation in land. To slow it down, he ordered that anyone buying public land had to pay for it with gold or silver. Speculators and others rushed to state banks to exchange their paper money for gold and silver. Many banks did not have enough gold and silver and had to close.

### Economic depression

The panic worsened when cotton prices went down because of an oversupply. Cotton planters often borrowed money, which they repaid when they sold their crop. Low cotton prices meant that planters could not repay their loans. As a result, more banks failed.

The nation plunged into a deep economic **depression**, a period when business declines and many people lose their jobs. The depression lasted three years. In the worst days, 90 percent of the nation's factories were