

Power Notes: 1828 to 1848

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Understand the increase in regionalism / sectionalism.

- 1) Called the "Era of Good Feelings" because of the lack of organized political opposition—the Federalist party disappeared because of its opposition to the War of 1812, and its opposition to programs that benefit the West and South.
- 2) Each section developed different, yet interdependent, economies. The Northeast developed a manufacturing base, the West's economy was based on small family farms, and the South developed a plantation/slave economy.
- 3) The Missouri Compromise (1820) illustrates the increase in regionalism. Missouri came into the Union as a slave state, Maine as a free state, preserving the balance of power in the Senate. Slavery was prohibited north of 36°30" in the Louisiana Purchase.

Importance: Regionalism or sectionalism is a major cause of the Civil War.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Understand the presidential elections of 1824 & 1828.

- 1) Four candidates ran, all from the Democratic Party--Andrew Jackson, 99 electoral votes; John Q. Adams, 84 electoral votes; William Crawford, 41 electoral votes; and, Henry Clay, 37 electoral votes. Since none receive a majority of the electoral vote, the election was decided among the three top vote getters in the House of Representatives. Clay, the Speaker of the House, insured the election of John Adams, but his election helped split the Democratic Party, because Jackson thought a "corrupt bargain" took place when Adams made Clay his Secretary of State.
- 2) In 1828 Jackson defeated Adams. Enemies of Jackson created the Whig party.

Importance: The elections of 1824 & 1828 reinstate the two-party system. Andrew Jackson is the strongest American president before the election of Abraham Lincoln. Jackson is the first president that was not from MA or VA. His election illustrates the growing political power of the West.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Understand the political issues of the "Jacksonian Era."

- 1) Contrary to the political propaganda of the time about this being "the age of the common man," economic inequality increased during the period.
- 2) Jackson initiated the "spoils system" of patronage to reward his followers. Corruption grew until corrected by the Pendleton Civil Service Act (1883) caused by the assassination of President Garfield in 1881.
- 3) The Indians of the Southwest were removed west of the Mississippi River to "Indian Territory" (Oklahoma) by Jackson on the "Trail of Tears" after the Supreme Court ruled that the Indian land could not be legally taken away from them. Jackson moved the Indians for political reasons and for their "protection."
- 4) The Tariff controversy of 1828-1833 pitted South Carolina against the national government. John C. Calhoun restated the theory of nullification in The South Carolina Exposition & Protest. SC was angry over high tariffs--50% ad valorem in 1828 (the "Tariff of Abominations"). A compromise tariff was passed in 1833 that ended the crisis, but with SC's nullification of the Force Act, the Constitutional issues were not resolved.
- 5) Andrew Jackson, and many of his political supporters, had been financially hurt by the Panic of 1819. They blamed the Second Bank of the United States when the Bank called in their loans. The war over the 2nd Bank of the U.S. helped create the Whig party led by Clay, Calhoun, Adams & Daniel Webster. Whigs tended to be the party of the elite and they supported the National Bank. After Jackson vetoed the re-charter of the bank in 1834, he put the government's money into state "pet banks."

6) The election of 1840 was the first "modern" election. The Whigs used the Panic of 1837 and modern election techniques to defeat Martin Van Buren and win with William H. Harrison--"Tippecanoe & Tyler too." Harrison died in 6 weeks and VP John Tyler became president.

7) Jackson's legacy is the re-emerging of the two-party system. This grew out of the differences over concept of "republicanism. Each of the emerging parties laid claim to different aspects of the republican government. Jacksonian Democrats (becomes the modern Democratic Party) gloried the liberty of the individual, fiercely guarded against the inroads of privilege into government, believed in state's rights, and federal restraint in social and economic affairs. The Whig party believed in the natural harmony of society, the value of the community and were willing to use government to realize their objectives. They also favored a national bank, protective tariffs, internal improvements, public schools, prohibition of liquor and eventually the abolition of slavery.

Importance: The political conflicts of the Jackson era deal with civil rights (e.g. Indian removal), and sectional conflicts. These conflicts, while important in their own rights, foreshadow the larger conflicts that lead to the Civil War and later reform movements.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Understand United States continental expansion.

- 1) In the Webster-Ashburton Treaty (1842) -- Daniel Webster, U.S. Secretary of State, and Ashburton, British ambassador to U.S., resolved conflicts over the Maine-Canadian border and improved Anglo-American relations.
- 2) Both Britain and the U.S. claimed the Oregon Territory. James K. Polk (Democrat) won the presidency in 1844 on an expansionist program ("54°40" or fight"). In 1846 Britain and the U.S. compromised over the territory. Both sides achieved their primary goal—a port on the Pacific (Seattle for the U.S., Vancouver for Britain).
- 3) Americans moved into Texas and declared their independence in 1835--Texans did not want to give up their slaves, religion, and language. Although the Mexican president, Santa Anna, killed all the defenders at the Alamo, he was defeated by the Texans at San Jacinto (April, 1836), and he recognized Texas independence. He later reneged on his recognition. Presidents Jackson and Van Buren refused to admit Texas into the Union because of the slavery issue and they did not want to antagonize Mexico. Texas admitted into the Union in 1845 by Polk & this action helped cause war with Mexico. Texas came into the Union for the following reasons: a) Texas cotton was competing with U.S. cotton; b) Texans had convinced the U.S. that it might be interested in becoming a British colony; c) Manifest Destiny (God & nature intended Americans to possess all of North America); and, d) free Oregon would be counterbalanced by slave Texas in the Senate.
- 4) The United States declared war on Mexico in 1846. The U.S. wanted California (especially for its harbors). The U.S. captured Mexico City and easily defeated Mexico in the war. Under the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) Mexico ceded the land north of the Rio Grande River to the U.S. for \$15 million.
- 5) The Wilmot Proviso, by attempting to ban slavery in the Mexican Cession, illustrates the controversy over slavery that the Mexican War caused. The Mexican War divided the nation. Northerners saw it as a plot to spread slavery. Southerners, who did most of the fighting, resented the Northern attempts to stop the spread of "the Southern way of life."
- 6) The Gadsden Purchase (1853). Last area of contiguous 48 states. Northern Senators turned down 9,000 square miles of Mexican territory to prevent the spread of slavery.

Importance: During this time period the U.S. became a continental and Pacific power. Continental expansion led to U.S. expansion overseas later in the 19th century, and poor relations with Mexico throughout the 19th and early 20th century. The acquisition of territory greatly strengthened the U.S..

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: *Understand ante-bellum reform.*

- 1) Ante-bellum reformers believed in the perfectibility of society. Transcendentalists like Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson believed that humans could transcend their weakness and achieve perfection through education. Using civil disobedience, in which people would follow a higher law, human awareness would be raised.
- 2) Reformers like Dorothea Dix tried to improve American society.
- 3) The Seneca Falls Declaration of 1848, under the leadership of Lucretia Mott and Cady Stanton was an attempt to increase the rights of women.
- 4) The abolitionist movement was formed to abolish slavery. William Lloyd Garrison, and Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave, were two famous abolitionists.
- 5) Prohibition was both a moral and anti-immigration and anti-Catholic movement. Immigration increased from 8,400 Europeans in 1820 to 370,000 in 1850. Because of the Irish potato famine, most of the new immigrants were Catholic. The increase in Irish-Catholic immigration led to the formation of the American (Know Nothing) party.
- 6) The Second Great Awakening was a religious revival that democratized American religion by preaching that everyone who repented, and not just the "Elect," could gain salvation.
- 7) The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints was founded by Joseph Smith of Vermont in 1830. Smith moved the Mormons to Nauvoo, Illinois where he was murdered in 1844. To escape persecution, Brigham Young moved the Mormons to Salt Lake City (then part of Mexico). After the abolition of polygamy, Utah became a state in 1896.

Importance: Ante-bellum reform raised many Americans' awareness about social injustices. Although many of the problems were not solved during this era, the philosophy of social reform became ingrained in America, and things like slavery, discrimination toward women, and ill-treatment of the insane were no longer accepted by many Americans as "natural."