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From *Life on the Mississippi*



Lesson 3

Unity and Sectionalism

ESSENTIAL QUESTION Why does conflict develop?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Although national pride was evident throughout the country, each region—North, South, and West—wanted to further its own economic and political interests.

National Unity

GUIDING QUESTION How did the country change after the War of 1812?

With the end of the War of 1812, the **intense** divisions that once split the nation seemed gone. In their place was a feeling of unity. In the 1816 presidential election, James Monroe, the Republican candidate, faced no serious opposition. The Federalists, weakened by doubts about their loyalty during the war, barely survived as a national party. Monroe won the election by an overwhelming margin.

A Boston newspaper called this time the Era of Good Feelings. The new president was a living, breathing symbol of this mood. Monroe had been involved in national politics since the American Revolution. He wore breeches, or knee-length pants, and powdered wigs—styles no longer in fashion. Yet with his sense of dignity, Monroe represented a united country, free of political strife.

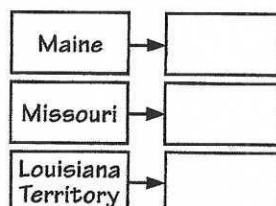
Outgoing President James Madison's last message to Congress in 1817 expressed a growing nationalism, or strong loyalty to the nation. The War of 1812 had made clear that Jefferson's ideal of a limited central government could not meet the needs of a nation in times of crisis. Sounding more like a Federalist than a Republican,

New York Academic Standards
7.5d, 7.6a, 7.8b

Reading **HELPDESK** **CCSS**

Taking Notes: Determining Cause and Effect

Use a diagram like this one to show how the Missouri Compromise affected different parts of the country.



Content Vocabulary

- **sectionalism** • **interstate commerce**
- **monopoly** • **cede**

Madison urged the federal government to guide the growth of trade and industry. The large Republican majority in Congress agreed. The Republicans, who had once strongly supported states rights, now promoted federal power.

Henry Clay's American System

Henry Clay, a Republican and speaker of the house, proposed a nationalist program to help the nation grow. Clay's American System aimed to help the economy in each section of the country and increase the power of the federal government. Clay called for higher tariffs, a new Bank of the United States, and **internal** improvements, including the building of roads, bridges, and canals.

Not all congressional leaders agreed with Clay, and they did not accept all of his ideas. Congress did not spend much money on internal improvements, but other parts of the American System did become law.

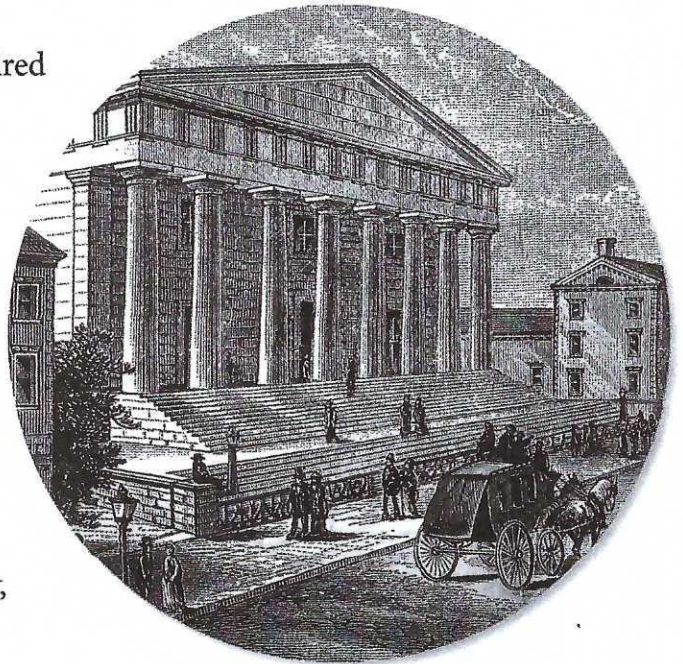
The Second Bank of the United States

The charter for the First Bank of the United States expired in 1811, and Congress let the bank die. In 1816 the Republican majority in Congress brought the national bank back to life. President Madison signed the bill creating the Second Bank of the United States.

After the First Bank closed, many state banks had acted unwisely. They made too many loans and allowed too much money into circulation. These actions led to inflation, a rise in the prices of goods. As prices rose, American families could buy less and less with each dollar. The absence of a national bank also meant the federal government had no safe place to keep its funds. The Second Bank of the United States restored order to the money supply, helping American businesses to grow.

Competition From Britain

Another challenge facing the economy was a flood of British goods following the War of 1812. British factories often had more advanced technology and methods than American factories. The British turned out goods of higher quality and at a lower price than goods made in the United States. Naturally, buyers preferred these goods. By flooding the United States with their goods, the British hoped to keep American businesses from competing.



Congress created the Second Bank of the United States to restore order to the United States money supply. Today, the Federal Reserve System serves that same function.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Making Connections Is the idea of having a central bank for the nation consistent with the idea of free enterprise? Explain.

Academic Vocabulary

intense very strong

internal within the country

Thinking Like a HISTORIAN

Understanding Cause and Effect

The varying views toward tariffs in different regions of the country were the result of each region's unique economy. The South, for example, not only purchased manufactured goods from foreign nations, its planters also sold crops overseas. In addition to raising costs for Southern consumers, a protective tariff threatened to hurt foreign consumers of Southern cotton—and so the Southern planters themselves. For more about understanding cause and effect, review *Thinking Like a Historian*.

New Tariffs

American manufacturers called for high tariffs to protect their growing industries. To address this problem, Congress passed the Tariff of 1816. Unlike earlier revenue tariffs, which were meant to provide income for the federal government, this tariff was designed to protect American manufacturers from foreign competition by placing high taxes on imports. Merchants who paid the tariff on imported goods simply added the cost of the tariff to their prices. This made imported items more expensive for consumers and encouraged them to buy cheaper, American-made goods.

When Congress passed protective tariffs in 1818 and 1824 that were even higher than the Tariff of 1816, some Americans protested. Southerners were especially angry. They felt that the tariff protected Northern manufacturers at their expense. The South had few factories, so people there saw little benefit from high tariffs. What the Southern states did see were higher prices for the goods they had to buy.

Growing Sectionalism

The tariff dispute illustrated a growing **sectionalism** (SEHK•shuh•nuh•lih•zuhm)—differences in the goals and interests of different parts of the country. Such differences had existed since colonial times. Now, it seemed, they were growing sharper. In fact, they soon brought an end to the Era of Good Feelings.

In the early 1800s, three distinct sections developed in the United States—the North, the South, and the West. The North included New England and the Mid-Atlantic states. The South covered what is now the Southeast. The West included the area between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. Geography, economics, and history all contributed to sectional differences and differing ways of life in the United States. As the differences grew deeper, however, people began to wonder whether sectionalism might divide the nation.

Each section of the country had a strong voice in Congress in the early 1800s. Henry Clay of Kentucky represented the West. John C. Calhoun of South Carolina spoke for Southern interests. Daniel Webster of Massachusetts protected the interests of New England. Each leader, although nationalist, remained concerned with protecting the interests of his own section of the country.

Reading HELPDESK



sectionalism rivalry based on the special interests of different areas

Nationalism and the Supreme Court

In three decisions in the early 1800s, the Supreme Court backed the powers of the national government over the states. During this time, Chief Justice John Marshall provided strong leadership.

In the case of *Fletcher v. Peck* in 1810, the Court ruled that courts could declare acts of a state government void if they violated provisions of the Constitution. Then, in 1819, the Court decided the case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*. It said that the state of Maryland could not tax the local office of the Bank of the United States because it was the property of the national government. Allowing such a tax, the Court said, would give states too much power over the national government.

The Court also ruled that the national bank was constitutional, even though the Constitution did not specifically give Congress the power to create a bank. Marshall observed that the Constitution specifically gave Congress power to issue money, borrow money, and collect taxes. Congress could also, he reasoned, do whatever was “necessary and proper” to carry out those powers.

In 1824 the Court again ruled in favor of federal government power in *Gibbons v. Ogden*. The state of New York had granted a **monopoly** (muh•NAH•puh•lee)—sole control of an industry—to a steamship operator running ships between New York and New Jersey. Under New York’s law, no other operator could run steamboats on the same route. The Supreme Court said that only Congress had the power to make laws governing **interstate commerce**, or trade between states.

Missouri Statehood

In 1819 the Missouri Territory asked Congress for admission as a state. Most Missouri settlers had come from Kentucky and Tennessee, which allowed slavery. They believed slavery ought to be legal in Missouri.

Representative James Tallmadge proposed that Missouri gradually abolish slavery in order to be admitted to the Union. The House passed this plan, but the Senate blocked it.

At the time, the population in the North was slightly larger than in the slave states of the South. Consequently, the North had 105 members in the House of Representatives compared to the South’s 81 members. Representation in the Senate was balanced, with 11 slave states and 11 free states. The addition of Missouri as a free state would put the South in the minority in both houses of Congress.

BIOGRAPHY



Henry Clay (1777–1852)

Henry Clay had a long career in Congress that began when he was elected to fill a Senate vacancy when he was just 29, a year shy of the Constitution’s age requirement. Clay’s ability to resolve arguments earned him the nickname “The Great Compromiser.” He believed strongly in the nation. In a speech on the Senate floor, he once said: “If the . . . sad event of the dissolution [breaking up] of this Union is to happen, . . . I shall not survive to behold the sad and heart-rending [upsetting] spectacle.”

► CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing Primary Sources How does Clay’s statement reflect nationalist views?

monopoly a market where there is only one provider
interstate commerce economic activity taking place between two or more states