


Chapter 98 -- Overview Of Jackson's Second Term

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Time: March 4, 1833

Jackson's Second Inaugural Address



Andrew Jackson (1767-1845)

Jackson is sworn in on March 4, 1833, by Chief Justice John Marshall, who administers the oath in the House chamber of the Capitol.

The occasion is marked by domestic tension dating from December 13, 1832, when the new Governor of South Carolina, Robert Hayne, vows in his inaugural that his state will “nullify” the Federal Tariff law by refusing to collect the mandated duties on cargo coming into its ports. Jackson’s response is two-fold: first, he drives a “Force Bill” through congress, giving him authority to send US troops to South Carolina if need be; second, he works to arrive at a Compromise Tariff to defuse the issue.

While this dual strategy will pay off, the friction between South Carolina and Washington – over the tariff and the future of slavery – is on the President’s mind as he addresses his audience. As usual, the ex-General is a man of relatively few, but always precise, words.

He begins by expressing his gratitude for the honor of serving again.

Fellow-Citizens: The will of the American people...calls me before you to...take upon myself the duties of President of the United States for another term. For their approbation of my public conduct through a period which has not been without its difficulties...I am at a loss for terms adequate to the expression of my gratitude. It shall be displayed to the extent of my humble

abilities in continued efforts so to administer the Government as to preserve their liberty and promote their happiness.

In regard to foreign policy, he says the nation is at peace and facing “few causes of controversy.”

The foreign policy adopted by our Government...has been crowned with almost complete success, and has elevated our character among the nations of the earth. To do justice to all and to submit to wrong from none has been during my Administration its governing maxim, and so happy have been its results that we are not only at peace with all the world, but have few causes of controversy, and those of minor importance, remaining unadjusted.

His focus shifts to the home front, reaffirming his commitment to preserving both the states’ rights and the integrity of the Union.

In the domestic policy of this Government there are two objects which especially deserve the attention of the people and their representatives, and which have been and will continue to be the subjects of my increasing solicitude. They are the preservation of the rights of the several States and the integrity of the Union.

A first principle in balancing the two lies in the willingness of the states to obey all laws passed by the federal government. (“Nullification” is not an option.)

These great objects are necessarily connected, and can only be attained by an enlightened exercise of the powers of each within its appropriate sphere in conformity with the public will constitutionally expressed. To this end it becomes the duty of all to yield a ready and patriotic submission to the laws constitutionally enacted and thereby promote and strengthen a proper confidence in those institutions of the several States and of the United States which the people themselves have ordained for their own government.

At the same time, it is important that the federal government not encroach upon the rights of the states.

My experience...confirm(s)...that the destruction of our State governments or the annihilation of their control over the local concerns of the people would lead directly to revolution and anarchy, and finally to despotism and military domination....therefore...my countrymen will ever find me...arresting measures which may directly or indirectly encroach upon the rights of the States or tend to consolidate all political power in the General Government.

But what is of “incalculable importance” is insuring the sacred Union, without which liberty would never have been achieved or could not be maintained.

But of incalculable, importance is the union of these States, and the sacred duty of all to contribute to its preservation by a liberal support of the General Government in the exercise of its just powers. You have been wisely admonished to...indignantly frown upon the first dawning of any attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts." Without union our independence and liberty would never have been achieved; without union they never can be maintained.

He turns to his growing concern about “dissolution,” arguing that it would lead to the loss of freedom, and the end of good government, peace, plenty and happiness.

Divided into twenty-four, or even a smaller number, of separate communities, we shall see our internal trade burdened with numberless restraints and exactions; communication between distant points and sections obstructed or cut off; our sons made soldiers to deluge with blood the fields they now till in peace; the mass of our people borne down and impoverished by taxes to support armies and navies, and military leaders at the head of their victorious legions becoming our lawgivers and judges. The loss of liberty, of all good government, of peace, plenty, and happiness, must inevitably follow a dissolution of the Union.

He says that the eyes of the world are on America's "existing crisis" – the threat of "nullification" – which must be resolved through a proper mix of "forbearance and firmness" to escape the current dangers.

The time at which I stand before you is full of interest. The eyes of all nations are fixed on our Republic. The event of the existing crisis will be decisive in the opinion of mankind of the practicability of our federal system of government. ...Let us exercise forbearance and firmness. Let us extricate our country from the dangers which surround it and learn wisdom from the lessons they inculcate.

He reiterates his ongoing commitment to financial integrity, controlling federal spending and limiting taxation.

At the same time, it will be my aim to inculcate...those powers only that are clearly delegated; to encourage simplicity and economy in the expenditures of the Government; to raise no more money from the people than may be requisite for these objects, and in a manner that will best promote the interests of all classes of the community and of all portions of the Union.

Sensing the growing regional discord, he wishes for compromise and reconciliation "with our brethren in all parts of the country" – with partial sacrifices made by each to preserve the greater good of the whole.

Constantly bearing in mind that in entering into society "individuals must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest," it will be my desire so to discharge my duties as to foster with our brethren in all parts of the country a spirit of liberal concession and compromise, and, by reconciling our fellow-citizens to those partial sacrifices which they must unavoidably make for the preservation of a greater good, to recommend our invaluable Government and Union to the confidence and affections of the American people.

He ends with a prayer to the Almighty Being on behalf of the nation's continued well-being.

Finally, it is my most fervent prayer to that Almighty Being before whom I now stand, and who has kept us in His hands from the infancy of our Republic to the present day, that He will so overrule all my intentions and actions and inspire the hearts of my fellow-citizens that we may be preserved from dangers of all kinds and continue forever a united and happy people.

Time: 1789 – 1861

Sidebar: Word Counts For The First Sixteen President’s Inaugural Addresses

President	Date	Words
George Washington	April 30, 1789	1431
	March 4, 1793	135
John Adams	March 4, 1797	2321
Thomas Jefferson	March 4, 1801	1730
	March 4, 1805	2166
James Madison	March 4, 1809	1177
	March 4, 1813	1211
James Monroe	March 4, 1817	3375
	March 4, 1821	4472
John Quincy Adams	March 4, 1825	2915
Andrew Jackson	March 4, 1829	1128
	March 4, 1833	1176
Martin van Buren	March 4, 1837	3843
William Henry Harrison	March 4, 1841	8460
John Tyler	<i>Succeeded following Harrison’s death</i>	
James K. Polk	March 4, 1845	4809
Zachary Taylor	March 5, 1849	1090
Millard Fillmore	<i>Succeeded following Taylor’s death</i>	
Franklin Pierce	March 4, 1853	3336
James Buchanan	March 4, 1857	2831
Abraham Lincoln	March 4, 1861	3637
	March 4, 1865	700

Time: March 4, 1833-March 3, 1837

Overview Of Jackson's Second Term

Jackson's second term is largely devoted to finishing up on the priorities he set for himself in the first.

He is particularly drawn to continued initiatives aimed at securing the financial well-being of the nation.

These include eliminating the national debt – and in 1835 he becomes the last President in U.S. history who will pay it off entirely.

But, like Jefferson, nothing troubles him more than the monetary and banking systems established by Alexander Hamilton, the perpetual arch villain of the anti-Federalists. Jackson intuitively fears that simple greed will lead state banks to print an oversupply of soft money, unbacked by gold/silver, to make speculative loans – and that this will result in ruinous inflation and collapse of the financial system.

He also believes that the Second Bank of the United States, a corporate entity, concentrates too much power in the hands of a few wealthy capitalists, who will prioritize their own interests over the good of the country.

During his second term, Jackson will act on both concerns, first shutting down the Second BUS, and then issuing his “Specie Circular” to reestablish the gold standard and the value of the American dollar. The short-run effect of these two moves will be a bank panic that begins in 1837..

The next four years will also see a sharp acceleration in the cession of Native American homelands and the relocation of the eastern tribes to new “reservations” west of the Mississippi.

The issue of US expansion into Mexican territory heats up when American settlers are killed in sieges at the Alamo and Goliad. After responding with a resounding military victory under Sam Houston at the Battle of San Jacinto, the Republic of Texas is founded in 1836. While Congress is eager to recognize and annex Texas, Jackson stalls for wont of starting a war.

Finally, the growth of the abolitionist movement produces social tensions and violent reactions across all regions of the country. By the end of his second term, the American Anti-Slavery Society will have opened over 500 chapters in the North, the South will attempt to “gag” the reformers, and Jackson's “sacred Union” will once again be in jeopardy.

Key Events: Andrew Jackson's First Term

1833	
March 2	Jackson signs the "Force Bill" and a "Compromise Tariff" To Resolve Nullification
March 4	Jackson and Van Buren are inaugurated
August 28	Great Britain abolishes slavery in her colonies
September 23	Jackson says government will no longer put federal deposits in the Second BUS
September 26	Roger Taney is named Treasury Secretary after predecessor opposes AJ on BUS
December 6	Abolitionists Lewis Tappan & Dwight Weld found The American Anti-Slavery Society
December 26	Clay introduces censure bills against Jackson and Taney for BUS actions
December	Lucretia Mott helps organize the Female Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia
Year	Supply of banknotes, unbacked by gold/silver, expands to support west land speculation
1834	
January 3	Stephen Austin arrested after presenting resolution in Mexico to annex Texas
March 28	The Senate supports Clay's bills of censure against Jackson and Taney
April 14	Henry Clay's new political party is christened "Whigs" after Britain's opposition group
April 15	Jackson protests censure bills and vows to defend himself
July 4	An Anti-Slavery meeting in NYC sets off an eight day anti-black rampage
October 28	Seminoles ordered to leave Florida as agreed in Treaty of Payne's Landing
November 1	Train from Philadelphia to Trenton starts up
1835	
January 30	Jackson unhurt after assassin's gun misfires as he leaves the House chamber
January	The Whig Party decides to run several regional candidates for president in 1836
May 20	The Democrats nominate Martin Van Buren for 1836
July 6	Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall dies; Roger Taney named to succeed him
July 6	Charleston mob burns abolitionist literature and urges a post office ban on it
August 10	An anti-black mob burns Noyes Academy in Canaan, NY, for admitting negroes
September 13	James Birney and Gerrit Smith strengthen their commitment to emancipation
October 21	Mob parades Lloyd Garrison with rope around his neck after Boston abolition meeting
October 29	A Democrat faction called "Loco Focos" lobbies for urban workingmen's issues
November	A Second Seminole War begins as the tribe refuses to abandon its lands
December 16	The new Anti-Mason Party nominates William Henry Harrison for 1836 President
December 29	Cherokees sign the Treaty of New Echota to move west in exchange for \$5 million

1836	
January 11	Abolitionists present petitions to Congress to end slavery in the District of Columbia
January 27	France finally makes reparation payments to the US for war damages
January	James Birney launches his anti-slavery newspaper the <i>Philanthropist</i>
February 23	The Alamo garrison is overwhelmed by Mexican forces led by Santa Anna (167 die)
March 17	Despite Mexican ban on slavery, American settlers announce their support for it
March 27	Santa Anna massacres another 300 Americans at their settlement at Goliad
April 20	Congress splits off the Wisconsin Territory from the old Michigan Territory
April 21	Sam Houston and his Texans defeat and capture Santa Anna at Battle of San Jacinto
May 25	JQ Adams delivers House speech opposing Texas annexation for fear of Mexican war
May 26	Southerners pass “Gag Order” to end reading of anti-slave petitions in the House
June 15	Arkansas joins the Union as the 25 th state
July 1	Congress votes to recognize the Republic of Texas, but Jackson delays fearing war
July 11	Jackson issue Specie Circular requiring gold/silver to buy federal land to slow inflation
July 12	Mob attacks James Birney’s <i>Philanthropist</i> office
October 22	Sam Houston sworn in as Texas Republic president
December 7	Martin Van Buren elected President; House election needed to choose RM Johnson as VP
Year	Anti-Slavery Society chapters spread rapidly across the North
1837	
January 26	Michigan is admitted as the 26 th state, restoring a 13:13 slave to free balance in Senate
February 12	Flour warehouse in NYC stormed by mob protesting high cost of housing and food
February 14	Supreme Court affirms community over corporate interest in <i>Charles River Bridge</i> case
March 1	Jackson pocket vetoes Congressional bill to repeal the Species Circular policy
March 3	Jackson finally recognizes the Republic of Texas on last day in power
March	Cotton prices collapse as concerns about the value of the dollar register globally

The US economy continues to grow nicely throughout Jackson’s time in office, including a sharp upswing in 1835 and 1836. But, underneath this boom period, lies rampant speculation and monetary inflation which is about to usher in a crippling bust cycle to plague his successor.

Key Economic Overview – Jackson’s Terms in Office

	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836
Total GDP (\$000)	930	1022	1052	1129	1158	1219	1340	1479
% Change	4%	10%	3%	7%	3%	5%	10%	10%
Per Capita GDP	74	79	79	83	82	84	90	96