

“the reign of king andrew”

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“ The Reign of King Andrew" President Andrew Jackson might have lived a common man’s youth, but he eventually transformed his life of poverty into that of a king. As Jackson grew older he became a powerful ambitious man and was ready to assert his influence throughout his presidency. Jackson left a memorable legacy with his days in office that included forceful removal of Native Americans, setting off the Spoils System into the American Government, and turning the presidential veto into an executive weapon; making use of it more than any other president before him. One of the most controversial events that occurred during Jackson’s presidency was the “ Trail of Tears". Jackson, a strong oppose of Native American rights, issued the “ Indian Removal Act" which ordered for Indian relocation from their homeland to west of the Mississippi River; this relocation was meant to be voluntary, but it was not. In 1832, the Supreme Court mandated that the Cherokee had rights on their own land and did not need to abide by Georgia’s claims for their land. Jackson ignored the ruling and forced the Cherokee along with many other tribes to go relocate west of the Mississippi. Jackson’s decision to do this was considered extremely unconstitutional by many people outside of the Democratic- Republicans. President Jackson was heavily against the Bank of the United States. It had the most power out of any bank in America and Jackson did not agree with this monopolistic kind of banking. The National Bank controlled most of the country’s gold and silver. Jackson had a fierce rivalry with the president of the bank, Nicholas Biddle. The fighting between Jackson and Biddle began in 1832, when Henry Clay and Daniel Webster presented a bill requesting a re- charter of the National Bank to Congress. The bill was passed by Congress, but was grudgingly

vetoed by President Jackson. The veto did not only stop the bank bill, but enhanced the power of the President. Jackson claimed that the bank was unconstitutional, but really actually said that he personally thought it was harmful to the nation. Earlier, the Supreme Court approved the U. S. Bank and did believe it to be constitutional. Jackson developed a plan to slowly decrease the amount of money in the bank. He started using the money to pay for Government expenses. With this steady decline of money, the National Bank would surely die. Jackson’s distaste for using federal dollars was also revealed in the veto of the Maysville Road Bill. The Maysville Road Bill offered the federal government to buy out \$150, 000 in stock to pay for a 60-mile road reaching from the town of Maysville and Lexington, which would provide as an extension off of the Cumberland and National Roads. The House of Representatives voted 103 to 87 passing the bill through Congress. Jackson vetoed the bill, saying that using federal spending on a single U. S. state was unconstitutional. Jackson even admitted that was not against the road, but simply believed the state should fund the project and not the federal government. When Jackson refused to re-charter the U. S. Bank in 1832, he alternatively chose to deposit government funds in state banks. The state banks faced hardly any regulation so they freely gave out loans of paper money to basically anyone who requested it. This caused a combination of land speculation and inflation to damage the economy. Jackson issued his Species Circular to halt these dangerous trends. The order mandated that federal land could only be bought with gold and silver, and no longer with paper money. Jackson’s idea was that hard money was the only trustworthy currency. The Species Circular ended up doing more harm than

good and eventually contributed to the Panic of 1837. Jackson’s legacy can best be defined by his powerful personality and the strong emotions that others had for him, good or bad. He was involved in fierce hatreds, and the debate on whether his political positions were based off personal preference is still argued. Jackson alienated and ridiculed almost all who crossed him, including Nicholas Biddle and Henry Clay. Some historians praise his strength and direct nature, while others see him as nothing more than a self-obsessed and vengeful politician. To admirers he represents a symbol of American Democracy. To detractors he stands as an unjust tyrant, compared to that of an American Caesar.