

Jeffersonian era – dbq

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Rinya Kamber AP US 3rd 10/10/11 Jeffersonian Era - DBQ The period between 1815 and 1825 was inaccurately dubbed the "Era of Good Feelings." Despite the relatively low political opposition and boom of westward expansion and economy, bigger problems such as the economic bust as well as the differing beliefs of northern and southern states threatened the strength and unity of the nation during this time. After the war of 1812, the surge of nationalistic feelings took place, but, simultaneously, there were underlying forces of sectionalism.

Economic and demographic expansion led to a positive, nationalistic view of the "Era of Good Feelings," but also had its setbacks. As John C. Calhoun- a US representative who suggested the idea of federal funding for internal improvements- stated in 1817, "We are great, and rapidly- I was about to say fearfully- growing. This is our price and danger, our weakness and our strength." One cause of this rapid growth was high foreign demands for American farm goods in 1819 due to the agricultural disruption Napoleon's excursions were causing in Europe.

While this sudden demand increase led to territorial expansion, it also dropped crop prices significantly and caused the US Bank to give out less loans, credit, and mortgages, causing an economic bust. Another nationalistic contributor to the "Era of Good Feelings" was the growth of white settlement and trade in the west. Depicted by John Krimmel, American citizens' festivities during the Fourth of July ceremony in 1819 clearly show that strong nationalistic awareness of the time.

If one observes the density of population in 1820, it is clear that there is a surge of westward expansion into the Old Northwest and Old Southwest- especially after Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase in 1803. With Jackson's victory in the Seminole War and the Adams-Onis Treaty in 1819, Florida was now a US territory. All of these economic and demographic expansions added to the 'good feelings' during this particular time period. Not much political turmoil occurred initially, but there were many deeply-rooted issues that needed confrontation such as disputes between northern and southern states' beliefs on government and slavery.

Republican Monroe had little difficulty during the presidential election of 1820. With the decline of the Federalist Party, he faced no serious opposition. Then, with the election of 1824, support was dispersed and Jackson technically won both the Popular Vote as well as the Electoral Vote, as seen in the visual and informational comparative maps of the two elections. Yet, Adams took the Presidency anyway. Jacksonians resented this and therefore haunted Adams' term in office, which led to the sectionalism occurring in the so-called "Era of Good Feelings." Differences between northern and southern states also led to divisions.

In the north, people favored a strong centralized government with an industrial economy whereas in the south, an agrarian society that gave more local power to the individual states was favored. These differences are clearly pointed out by John Randolph (a southerner) in 1816: "...favoring the manufacturers...while agriculturists bear the whole brunt of the war and taxation, and remain poor, while the others run in the ring of pleasure, and fatten upon them." Another issue dividing the states was the question of <https://assignbuster.com/jeffersonian-era-dbq/>

slavery. Jefferson described the “ momentous question” as a “ fireball in the night...a new irritation that will mark deeper and deeper. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 allowed the new state to enter the Union under two circumstances: that Maine would also enter the union as a free state, keeping the balance, and that under the Tallmadge Agreement, restrictions on slavery would be put into play. Political disagreements, differences in northern and southern states’ beliefs, and issues that were aroused with the creation of new states all contributed to the growing sectionalism and are reason to believe that the “ Era of Good Feelings” was not such a good era after all.