

# Jacksonian democrats dbq essay sample

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Scene the formation of the United States Constitution there have been many political groups that have claimed to be guardians of the constitution and the common man. No group has done better in doing this then the Jacksonian Democrats. Even though the Jacksonian Democrats did occasionally violate the United States Constitution and the ideals of political democracy, equality of economic opportunity, and individual liberty they did so in order to protect the interests of the common man. First of all, Jackson protected the rights of the common man from the rich by denying the renewal of the charter of the national bank. Secondly, the rights of the citizens of the United States were protected by Jackson removing the Indians from the state of Georgia. Thirdly, Jackson helped to keep the constitution strong by taking care of the nullification crisis in South Carolina. Finally, the common man was given a feeling of equality in regards to economic opportunities due to the actions of the Jacksonian Democrats. Through all of the actions of the Jacksonian Democrats the common man was given a voice with which they could speak out against the rich and be heard.

Jackson began his fight against the rich, for the good of the common man, with his war on the national bank. He felt that the common man would be harmed with the institution like the bank placing a “ concentration of power in the hands of a few men irresponsible to the people” as he voiced in his veto of the bank charter (Document B). It was because of this philosophy that Jackson took such a firm stand on the issue of the renewal of the bank charter to Nicholas Biddle. Jackson, just like many other westerners, blamed the panic of 1819 on the national bank. They believed that Biddle foreclosed on mortgages, following the War of 1812, to purposely cause a panic in the

economy from which he would profit. By destroying the national bank Jackson felt that he was destroying a monopoly that had no concern for the well-being of the common man. His views on the national bank caused Jackson to get some harsh criticism. In Daniel Webster's reply to Jackson's veto message he said that he believed that Jackson was trying to "inflamm the poor against the rich" (Document C). This statement furthermore proves that Jackson was working for the good of the common man. He was working to "inflamm" them with the feeling of power to protect their rights from anyone who would try to violate their rights.

Jackson was so unwavering in his goal to protect the rights and interests of the common man that he sometimes violated the constitution in order to defend them. This is well shown in the way Jackson's policies towards the Indians. The majority of the citizens in the United States were opposed to the Indian occupation of land because it posed a threat to westward expansion. In order to take care of this threat to the citizens of his country Jackson signed the "Indian Removal Act" into law. The long awaited bill that had been hung up in congress for four months was now law. This act called for the removal of Indians from their land. This legislation finally gave the government the power to follow through on their compact, from 1802, with Georgia which traded all of Georgia's western claims to the government in return for the government extinguishing all Indian titles to land within the state. With the government's new legislation in place the Cherokee Indians which lived in Georgia saw their ownership of the land, which they had held for generations, in jeopardy.

The Cherokee took their case to the US Supreme Court in 1832 in the case of *Worcester vs. Georgia*. The court concluded that the Cherokee did have the right to the land on which they had laid claim. However, Jackson went against the findings of the court and proceeded to forcibly move the Cherokee for Georgia to an area west of the Mississippi along what is known as the trail of tears which is well portrayed in the painting in the Wolaroc Museum in Bartlesville, Oklahoma (Document G). Jackson was helping to produce a country like the one witnessed by Harriet Martineau where everyone was a land owner (Document D). The land that was taken away from the Cherokee would be more land that could be inhabited by white settlers where they could build their farms and own land.

Sometimes force needed to be added to situations in order to protect the constitution. This is evident in Jackson's dealings with the nullification crisis in South Carolina. South Carolina states in the "Acts and Resolutions of South Carolina" (Document F) that if the national government doesn't take measures to prevent the postal service from delivering Abolitionist papers, "timely measures may be taken to prevent [such mail] from traversing our territory". South Carolina was afraid that the papers might incite the slaves to rebel. The "Acts and Resolutions of South Carolina" suggests that South Carolina will nullify the national government's actions if they violate the interests of the state. Nullification was also the issue of the conflict in South Carolina when they issued the "South Carolina Exposition and Protest". This said that South Carolina would not collect certain tariffs because they were unconstitutional. These tariffs were put in place to prevent the "monopoly of foreign and domestic exchange" (Document B) which Jackson was so much

against as it was shown in his veto of the national bank charter. This monopoly, if it was allowed to happen, would hurt the equality of economic opportunity that Jackson was trying to protect. In order to put an end to the crisis in South Carolina Jackson moved troops to the border of the state and threatened to invade if South Carolina did not start to collect the tariffs. This force was needed to keep these tariffs working to prevent the monopolies that could come from trade.

It was the importance of a community's interests above the interests of private citizens that was in the atmosphere created by the Jacksonian Democrats. This was shown in the Supreme Court case of Charles River Bridge vs. Warren Bridge (Document H). The issue of the case was over the property rights of the Charles River Bridge, which held a monopoly on the passage over the Charles River between Boston and Charlestown, and the Warren Bridge which had been granted a charter by the state of Massachusetts to build a bridge across the Charles River. The Building of the Warren Bridge would be a great help to the community as a whole. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Warren Bridge which emphasized the importance of the common man's interests over private interests under the Jacksonian Democrats. It was the actions of the Jacksonian Democrats that a common man was also given the opportunity to be, as Harriet Martineau described, " an independent citizen" (Document D).

The common man no longer had to depend on the rich to survive, but that they were equally important in the government as all other citizens. These common citizens were given a sense of power and a right to economic opportunity by the Jacksonian Democrats. The working class now felt that <https://assignbuster.com/jacksonian-democrats-dbq-essay-sample/>

they had a voice to speak out against all who would abuse their rights. This was stated in “ The Working Men’s Declaration of Independence” by George Henry Evans (Document A). However, the tension in the working class which was revealed in this document was not the cause of the inequality riots in Philadelphia described in Document E by Philip Hone. Hone, a Whig who was ready to shift the blame of any problem on his opponents the Jacksonian Democrats, even describes the cause of the riots as “ insignificant” and the riots were not even just between separate classes but different ethnic groups. The Jacksonian Democrats had a very profound impact on the way the common men viewed themselves.

There have been numerous different political groups that have claimed to be guardians of the constitution and protectors of the rights of the common man, but one of these groups stands above the rest. The Jacksonian Democrats had a profound impact on the way that the common citizens of the United States viewed themselves. They gave those common men the voice and the will to stand up for their rights and to confront those who would wish to take their rights away. While protecting the rights of the common man the Jacksonian Democrats also managed to protect the constitution through tough trials like the nullification crisis in South Carolina. Through it all the Jacksonian Democrats stayed strong and left a legacy that has lasted through the years that help us as the common man to learn to defend ourselves when our rights are being violated, and to confront those who are violating them.