

CHAPTER 3

THE GROWTH OF NATIONALISM

This chapter will look at the national debate surrounding the re-chartering of the National Bank, the development and implementation of various internal improvement projects, and the creation of protective tariffs. A brief introduction summarizes the position of members of Congress on these issues in 1816, directly following the War of 1812, when nationalism apparently burst onto the political scene in the United States. Next, each issue will be discussed individually, beginning with the National Bank, followed by internal improvement projects, and finishing with protective tariffs. The evolution of the electoral and legislative debate surrounding each of these issues will be the emphasis of these sections. A concluding section will summarize the progression of each issue, as well as present an overall picture of the United States on nationalism by the 1830s. In all, the chapter will provide a better understanding of the context in which Calhoun's shift from a nationalist to a more states' rights position took place.

The New Nationalist Spirit

The War of 1812, during which the United States won its economic freedom from Great Britain, marked a turning point in American history. Prior to the War, the United States was a distinctly non-militaristic country, attempting to remain neutral among its European neighbors during the Napoleonic Wars. However, because of the hostile British seizure of American ships and the savage battles waged on the American frontier, members of Congress and the president alike soon felt the disadvantages of its weak military stance, and realized that economic independence could not be sacrificed in the name of neutrality. As President James Madison noted (referring to the hostile actions of Great Britain) in his War Message on June 12, 1812:

... Under pretended blockades, without the presence of an adequate force and sometimes without the practicality of

applying one, our commerce has been plundered in the every sea, the great staples of our country have been cut off from their legitimate markets, and a destructive blow aimed at our agricultural and maritime interests.¹

The War of 1812 was ultimately a triumph for the United States with Jackson's victory at New Orleans and the resulting Treaty of Ghent. However, the United States would not soon forget the lessons that it learned from the War. First, the national currency was weak, varying in value from region to region, and contributing to the bankruptcy of the Treasury in 1814. Second, the lack of roads and canals led to the inability of troops and supplies to move throughout the country. Third, while the United States was at war with Great Britain, an embargo had protected American commerce; with the Treaty of Ghent and the lifting of the embargo, the United States would be forced to trade in an unprotected environment.

The American people realized that they must be united in their actions to resolve the weaknesses made apparent from the War, and to amplify the economic and military strength of the nation. Hence, a new spirit of nationalism was born in the United States.² Highlighting this new nationalistic spirit, and supporting the nation's commitment to military and economic independence and strength, members of Congress took action to resolve the shortcomings made apparent during the War. The re-chartering of the National Bank, provision for internal improvements in the form of roads and canals, and the creation of a protective tariff were all national efforts aimed at strengthening the economic and military position of the United States. President Madison's seventh annual address, written after the War, amplified the apparent need for these nationalistic measures,

... It is essential to every modification of the finances that the benefits of a uniform national currency should be restored to

¹ James Madison, War Message delivered on June 1, 1812. Commanger, Henry, ed. Documents of American History. New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts, p.207

the community... In adjusting the duties of imports to the object of revenue the influence of the tariff on manufacturers will necessarily present itself for consideration... Among the means of advancing the public interest the occasion is a proper one for recalling the attention of Congress to the great importance of establishing throughout the country the roads and canals which can best be examined under national authority...

The National Bank

However, while nationalist zeal was evident in the United States, the effort to establish federal measures, such as the re-chartering of the National Bank, internal improvements and a protective tariff were not without debate among the nation's legislators. The debate over re-chartering the Bank was not as fervent as the debate surrounding the incorporation of the first National Bank in 1791; however, many of the same issues were raised in 1816. Primary among these was the constitutionality of the bank. Initially, upon the chartering of the first National Bank, Thomas Jefferson challenged its constitutionality on the grounds that the powers granted to the federal government under the bank bill were not among the enumerated powers in the Constitution; nor were they encompassed under the implied powers of the Constitution (specifically, the tenth amendment and the Necessary and Proper Clause).³ As Jefferson argued regarding the constitutionality of the National Bank,

... I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on the ground that all powers not delegated to the United States, by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, or to the people (10th amendment). To take a single

² Nationalism, as generally used in the thesis, refers to the United States viewing itself as more than just states, but committing to a national identity, realizing that decisions and events can and do impact not only sectional interests but the nation as a whole, as highlighted by the War of 1812.

³ "Jefferson's Opinion on the Constitutionality of a National Bank, February 15, 1791," Thomas Jefferson: Writings,. Merril D. Peterson (Notes and Selection of Contents), p. 416.

*step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of the boundless field of power, no longer susceptible to any definition.*⁴

However, with the re-chartering of the National Bank in 1816, the constitutional debate, while still evident, was not as intense as in 1791. The Jeffersonians were clearly not in the political majority, and their opposition to the Bank was purely formal. In addition, the creation of the National Bank seemed to remedy the economic shortcomings of the United States and to represent a symbol of financial solidarity and nationalist order in the shadow of the War of 1812.⁵ For a short time, the Bank would remain a symbol of national unity and economic strength, at least until its constitutionality was once again challenged in the Supreme Court case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*.

Following its re-chartering in 1816, the National Bank soon developed into an aggressive financial institution successful in attracting much of the business of its state bank competitors. To seek relief, many local banks turned to their state legislatures, which, in turn, began to tax the National Bank. Among the states taxing the National Bank was Maryland, which required banks not chartered by the state legislature to issue notes only on special, stamped paper that the state would provide at an annual fee of \$15,000, plus an added fee for each note. James McCulloch, cashier of the Baltimore branch of the National Bank refused to pay the tax; in turn, Maryland obtained judgement for the taxes from the Baltimore county court, after which the state Court of Appeals sustained the judgement. James McCulloch then sought a writ of error from the U.S. Supreme Court.⁶

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), the United States Supreme Court maintained the constitutionality of the National Bank. In his majority opinion, Chief Justice John Marshall wrote:

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Dangerfield, George. *The Awakening of American Nationalism*. Harper & Row: New York, 1965, p. 11.

⁶ Murphy, Walter F, *American Constitutional Interpretation*, Foundation Press: New York, 1995, p. 530.

... We think the sound construction of the constitution must allow to the national legislature that discretion, with respect to the means by which the powers it confers are to be carried into execution, which enable that body to perform the high duties assigned to it, in the manner most beneficial to the people... It being the opinion of the court that the act incorporating the bank is constitutional and that the power of establishing a branch in the state of Maryland might be properly exercised by the bank itself...⁷

However, even through the U.S. Supreme Court deemed the National Bank constitutional in 1819, the controversy over the Bank would continue into the 1830s. On July 4, 1832, Congress passed a bill to continue the National Bank. President Andrew Jackson promptly vetoed the legislation on July 10, 1832, calling it unwise, unconstitutional and unfair.⁸

Internal Improvements

As noted earlier, the War of 1812 revealed the poor condition of roads and canals in the United States. Only 100 miles of canals had been built by the end of the War in 1816, none of which were particularly profitable or useful. The majority of roads in the U.S. were country roads, paths barely providing a sense of direction from Georgia to Maine. Of the existing roads, the turnpikes of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania were in the best condition; however, they were difficult to finance and not particularly useful for the transportation of goods. Moreover, the further west one traveled, the worse the condition of the roads became; they faded from a system of country roads to a few indistinguishable trails.⁹ This poor state of internal infrastructure led to the inability of both troops and supplies to move throughout the United States during the War of 1812. With the conclusion

⁷ See *McCulloch v. Maryland*, 17 US 316.

⁸ "Jackson's Veto of the Bank Bill, July 10, 1832," Commanger, Henry, ed.. *Documents of American History*. New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts, p.270.

⁹ Dangerfield, p. 17.

of the War, members of Congress were determined to improve upon the condition of roads and canals to ensure that the United States would not again be in such a compromising situation.

The first extensive national effort toward internal improvements was the Bonus Bill of 1817, sponsored by John C. Calhoun, which called for setting aside a separate fund for internal improvements to be paid from the \$1,500,000 bonus and net annual dividends of the National Bank. However, despite the growing sense of nationalism in the United States, the adoption of the Bonus Bill was not without debate. Like other debates occurring in the United States during this time, the dispute over internal improvements often fluctuated between a debate between nationalists and sectionalists and an argument over the Constitution.¹⁰ The New England states opposed the bill, primarily because the roads in New England were good, and because the members of Congress from New England feared that the development of new roads and canals would promote the western migration of New Englanders and the development of commerce in New York and Philadelphia. The southern states also largely opposed the bill, mostly because they believed that they would not benefit from the bill as much as some other states. In addition, many of the southern states had already initiated local and state internal improvement projects. The western states and territories were undecided as to the usefulness of the bill. However, New York and Pennsylvania unanimously supported the bill, both because they hoped for federal funding in support of canal projects.¹¹

With support for the Bonus Bill clearly divided, the legislation ultimately struggled through the House and Senate, and was passed by Congress on March 3, 1817. However, the bill was then vetoed by President Madison on March 3, 1817, based on his belief that the powers Congress proposed to exercise were not among either the enumerated or implied powers of the Constitution; specifically, the 8th section of Article 1, and the scope of power implied under the Necessary and Proper Clause, the regulation of Commerce or the provision of common defense or general welfare. A distinctly Jeffersonian coloring could be

¹⁰ Freehling, William. Prelude to Civil War. Harper & Row: New York, 1965, p. 99.

¹¹ Dangerfield, p. 19.

seen in Madison's veto message: he advocated that the executive branch act within the letter of the Constitution and not overstep the legislative power of the people or of the states. However, although Madison vetoed the Bonus Bill on Constitutional grounds, he urged his successor to include an internal improvements amendment among his recommendations to Congress. To Madison, the only legitimate way to grant Congress the power to oversee an internal improvements fund was to do so by amending the Constitution so that it was among Congress's enumerated powers. To do so otherwise would not be constitutionally sound, since "the permanent success of the Constitution depends on a definite partition of powers between General and State governments."¹²

The Cumberland Road Bill of 1822 again highlighted the debate surrounding internal improvements. Once again, the debate was based on Constitutional issues, and support for the bill was divided along state lines. The Cumberland Road, which was built with federal funding during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, linked the Ohio Valley with the Atlantic seaboard.¹³ The Cumberland Road Bill of 1822 stated that Congress had the right to establish turnpikes on the Road, with gates and tolls, and to enforce the collection of those tolls with penalties for evasion. The majority of representatives from the West supported the Cumberland Road bill, as did those from districts along the line of the Potomac and Ohio rivers, or tributary to the Road in Pennsylvania and western Virginia. Representatives from New York and Pittsburgh generally opposed the Cumberland Road bill. When President James Monroe vetoed the legislation, he accompanied the veto with an extensive paper entitled, "*View of the President of the United States on the subject of Internal Improvements,*" in which he admitted that Congress had the unlimited right to raise money under the Constitution. However, he argued that in its appropriation of funds, Congress's discretionary powers were limited by "... the duty to appropriate it to the purposes of common defense and of general, not local, national, not State benefit."¹⁴

¹²Ibid.

¹³ Malone, Laurence J. *Opening the West: Federal Internal Improvements before 1860*. Greenwood Press: London, 1998, p. 4.

In 1824, yet another internal improvements bill made its way through Congress; the General Survey Bill was to enable a national appropriations programs for internal improvements, and to purchase the stock of companies engaged in national improvement efforts. Although the General Survey Bill was ultimately passed by Congress and signed by President Monroe, it too was accompanied by much debate. The Western and Southwestern states and territories, as well as Pennsylvania, were unified in support for the bill; however, New England, New York, and the Old South (for example, South Carolina) were beginning to form a formidable opposition towards internal improvement projects.¹⁵

At this time “nationalism” in the form of support for internal improvements was beginning to lose its appeal throughout the country for a variety of reasons. In the old South, and South Carolina in particular, support for internal improvements had been based on the view that poor roads could slow down military transportation; therefore, internal improvement programs could be seen as a preventative measure. In general, however, the South did not benefit from many of the proposed national internal improvement programs. Specifically, South Carolina had very little financial interest in the nationalist economic program. In the State, there were already existing intrastate road projects that required no federal aid. Overall, a system of national roads would not likely pass through South Carolina at all; internal improvement projects would benefit the economy of other states.¹⁶

The two major Southern and South Carolinian proponents of this qualified nationalism, generally, and internal improvements, specifically, following the War of 1812 were John C. Calhoun and William Lowndes.¹⁷ Again, the nationalist platform supported by Calhoun, Lowndes and their followers was based on the belief that nationalism in the way of a National Bank, internal improvements and a protective tariff would bolster the military position of the United States, thus making them beneficial to the entire country,

¹⁴ Monroe, James, “Views of the President of the United States on the subject of Internal Improvements,” Richardson, ed. *Messages and Papers*, II, 144-183. (See Dangerfield, p. 199).

¹⁵ Dangerfield, p. 19.

¹⁶ Freehling, p. 93.

¹⁷ William Lowndes was a Congressman from South Carolina, who along with John C. Calhoun, became a leader of post-war nationalism in 1816.

even if their impact was not equally dispersed among the states. After all, both Calhoun and Lowndes were two of the leading “War Hawks” during the War of 1812. So, although national internal improvement measures did not generally benefit the Old South or South Carolina, as long as they were “truly national” in scope, Southern nationalists like Calhoun and Lowndes were usually ardent supporters of federal internal improvement projects.¹⁸

However, Southern nationalists did not intend for the internal improvement projects moving through Congress to take on the piecemeal approach that they were beginning to develop by the 1820s. Under the national system of internal improvements envisioned by Calhoun, there would be a few “great” projects. However, other nationalists, particularly those not in the South, believed that local schemes were deserving of bountiful federal aid. So, as early as 1825, Calhoun and his supporters vigorously opposed “local, piecemeal internal improvement schemes.”¹⁹

In addition, there was a growing movement against national measures like internal improvement and protective tariffs in South Carolina led by William Smith.²⁰ Smith linked internal improvement projects with protective tariffs; that is, in his view, national road projects would perpetuate burdensome tariffs. Specifically, South Carolina had no pending internal improvement projects that required federal aid; therefore, other, richer states would benefit from South Carolina dollars invested in internal improvement projects. In addition, because internal improvement projects ate up the majority of federal funds, the national debt would remain unpaid despite ever rising tariffs. So, the end result would be the continuous passage of ever-rising tariffs to support internal improvement projects.²¹ Although this argument was not widespread either in the South generally or in South Carolina, specifically, it did represent the views of those opposing the nationalist measures supported by “War Hawks” such as Calhoun and Lowndes. In addition, Smith’s arguments would be amplified in the 1820s as the controversy over protective tariffs came to the forefront of national debate.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Smith was elected a South Carolina judge in 1808. In 1816, he was elected to the U.S. Senate representing South Carolina.

Protective Tariffs

As noted earlier, with the end of the War of 1812 and the British embargo, the United States was exposed to the mercies of the world market. However, even though the U.S. position in the world market was changing, there was a bright side to this shift in economic position, at least for American planters and farmers. The devastation of the Napoleonic Wars on the European landscape, coupled with poor harvests, enhanced the demand for American staples. In addition, U.S. planters benefited from the fact that there was a European tendency to gamble in tobacco and cotton.²² However, American manufacturers, still in their infancy, were susceptible to being engulfed by the world markets, particularly to being smothered by British industry.

Based on the position of the United States following the War of 1812, President Madison called for a protective tariff, one that recognized the difficulties of shifting from a state of war to a state of peace, but he did not intend for the adjustment to be a lengthy one. In addition, Madison believed that, eventually, a state of equilibrium would be achieved between American and British manufacturers, further amplifying the temporary aspect of the proposed tariff.²³ Therefore, congressional debates surrounding the passage of the Tariff of 1816 were quarrelsome, but not divisive, especially because the proposed tariff responded to a wide variety of interests; the appeal of the proposed tariff extended from the cotton manufacturers in New England to the mills of the Carolinas. Essentially, the only truly protective feature in the tariff bill was the principle of minimum valuation on coarse cottons.²⁴

Within Congress, support for the tariff was not divided along either partisan or sectional lines. Ironically, the New England states, which would benefit from the proposed tariff and would support various protective tariffs in later years, generally opposed the

²¹ Freehling, p. 99.

²² Dangerfield, p. 13.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ All cotton goods whose value was less than 25 cents per square yard, would be considered as having that cost (See Dangerfield, p. 14).

Tariff of 1816, and Southern states, believing that protecting northern manufacturers would compensate for the shortcomings highlighted during the War of 1812, supported the tariff. As Dangerfield notes, “...The Tariff of 1816 was the symbol of consensus not conflict.”²⁵

Southern support for the tariff was based on the belief that repaying the national debt and financing the national army required higher taxes, and that such higher taxes were achieved through the proposed tariff. Additionally, the possibility of a war with a maritime power (such as Great Britain) would force the United States to manufacture supplies for itself; therefore, the protective tariff was necessary to nurture American industry. Moreover, as noted earlier, the only protective feature of the tariff was the 25 cent minimum valuation of coarse cotton goods; however, as Freehling notes, this rate was too low to protect. In essence, Southern support for the 1816 tariff was linked to the belief that the United States needed a strong military and a strong national currency to protect itself from repeating the course of actions taken during the War of 1812; that is, Southern support reflected post-war nationalism.

However, like internal improvement projects during this time period, the idea of high protective tariffs that were less national and more regional in nature led to Southern misgivings about the national benefit of protective tariffs more generally.²⁶ Such was the case of the Tariff of 1820. The proposed Baldwin Tariff of 1820, which the House passed but the Senate tabled, would have raised cotton and woolen duties to 33 and one third ad valorem. Southern and specifically South Carolina representatives unanimously opposed the bill. However, they did not believe that their opposition to higher tariffs contradicted their commitment to nationalism. High protective tariffs, like piecemeal internal improvement projects, did not seem “truly national.”²⁷ In South Carolina, Robert Hayne, along with John C. Calhoun, led the public protest against the Baldwin Tariff.²⁸ In an 1824

²⁵Ibid., p. 16.

²⁶Freehling, p. 96.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Hayne was elected to the South Carolina legislature in 1814. In 1818 he became Speaker of the House, and then chosen state attorney general.

speech in Charleston, Hayne highlighted his belief that the scope of the tariff must remain truly national in nature in order to promote the good of the entire country.

... Instead of promoting the general welfare, a high tariff would help some groups and hurt others, creating “jealousies” and “hostilities,” putting in jeopardy the peace and harmony of the whole Nation.²⁹

Pressure for the next tariff, the Tariff of 1824, came from industrialists who were concerned about the defeat of the Baldwin Tariff and overseas competition, and demanded further protection of their goods. Southern support for the tariff, however, was non-existent. Despite arguments from the South, protectionists pushed the tariff through Congress, ultimately raising the duties on cotton and wool from 25 percent to 33 1/3 percent.³⁰ The Tariff of 1824 marked the critical point in the progression of protective tariffs and of Southern nationalism. Regarding the development of protective tariffs after the War of 1812, Dangerfield notes:

... It is true that the deluge of British goods in 1816 and the panic and depression of 1819-1821 had threatened the American industry with ruin, and that the whole period up to 1830 was a difficult one. This might excuse and perhaps justify a call for protective tariffs. Yet it is extremely difficult today to show that protective tariffs, throughout the antebellum period, ever did anything for industries they were supposed to protect. It would be more plausible to argue that time, technology, and the competitive and inventive urge were all that was really needed.³¹

Basically, this argument was echoed in Southern opposition to the 1824 tariff. Southern (specifically, South Carolinian) representatives believed that if industries and

²⁹ Hayne, Robert. “Speech... Against the Tariff,” Charleston, 1824. See Freehling, p. 96.

³⁰ Freehling, p. 106.

³¹ Dangerfield, p. 203.

factories were unprofitable, federal government intervention could do little to salvage them. Additionally, by protecting inefficient industries, Southerners argued, the federal government stood in the way of capitalists seeking more fruitful investments, thus slowing the economic growth of the nation. Moreover, members of the South Carolina legislature believed that, because they only had a limited domestic market, protective tariffs would inevitably destroy any foreign demand for rice and cotton.³² As one newspaper noted:

*...The Tariff of 1824... then seemed for the first time, to create a lurking suspicion that, in her attachment to the general government that [South Carolina] had perhaps, not been sufficiently vigilant in the maintenance of her own rights...*³³

However, although there was unified Southern opposition to the 1824 tariff, it was just a foreshadowing of what was to come in 1828. The Tariff of 1828, or the Tariff of Abominations (as many southerners would soon call it) conspicuously raised the duties on a variety of raw materials, making it the highest pre-Civil War American tariff enacted. While the South was struck hardest by the tariff, the bill was originally drafted so as to offend a variety of regions in the United States, including both New England and the South. Protected by the Tariff were the middle states, such as New York, and the Western states. As originally drafted 1828, the Tariff did the following:

- Placed a duty of \$45/ton on foreign hemp, an increase from the existing \$35 a ton, to be raised annually with a cap of \$60;
- Levied a large duty on sail duck, without the usual drawback on small amounts re-exported in vessels for their own use;
- Increased pig iron and rolled bar iron duties;
- Added double duty to imported molasses;
- Subjected imported raw wool to a mixture of specific and ad valorem duties; and

³² Freehling, p. 107.

³³ Columbia Telescope, November 27, 1829.

- Raised import duties from 33 ½ percent to 50 percent.³⁴

Iron, hemp, sail and molasses duties were aimed at the shipbuilders of New England. For example, domestic hemp was used in the manufacture of cotton bagging and common ropes and was already secure from foreign competition. Therefore, the increased duty on hemp was instituted for the sole purpose of making cordage and cables more expensive.³⁵ The treatment of wool and woolen products in the 1828 tariff bill was written so as to benefit the farmers of the middle and western states. In the South, the increase in import duties was seen as potentially destroying an already devastated Southern economy. As Freehling writes,

... Since the Tariff of 1828 was designed to protect industry, it intentionally reduced imports and thereby restricted the revenue which duties were supposed to raise. The Tariff of Abominations destroyed the commerce which Congress was charged with regulating.³⁶

However, while the Tariff passed through the House unscathed, by a final vote of 105 to 94, it was seriously amended in the Senate, primarily to the benefit of the New England states. Specifically, the Senate amended the duties on wool and woolen goods to ad valorem duties. However, Southern offenses were not addressed, leaving the Southern states universally opposed to the bill. However, with the amendments, the tariff bill gained the New England majority, ultimately helping it pass the Senate by a final vote of 26 to 21.

Essentially, the Tariff of 1828 was the “straw that broke the camel’s back” with regard to the Southern endorsement of nationalist efforts. By the 1820s, the southern economy was devastated. Cotton had sunk to an average of 12 cents in 1826 and 8.8 cents in 1827. The Tariff of 1828 raised the price on everything that the southern planter

³⁴ Dangerfield, p. 280.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Freehling, p. 138.

purchased, further threatening the Southern economy.³⁷ Moreover, compared to the nationalist measure that the Southern states had supported in earlier years, the 1828 tariff seemed haphazard and piecemeal in nature.³⁸ As Dangerfield notes, referring to the 1828 tariff and the resulting Southern opposition,

... Everyone wanted something. The essence of any political tariff may well be the whetting of appetites; so that the Tariff of 1828, although designed to favor the grower over the fabricator, became in the end an undisguised hunt for special advantages. As for the South, in so far as South Carolina could speak for the South, it now endeavored to find a decisive answer.³⁹

The South Carolina Exposition and Protest, written by John C. Calhoun (who did not admit his authorship until 1831), was the written account of Southern, indeed South Carolinian views of the 1828 tariff. The Exposition attacked the Tariff in three ways.⁴⁰ (1) It surveyed the devastating economic effects of the Tariff and outlined its unconstitutionality. As noted earlier, the Tariff of 1828 sought to significantly increase the cost of most manufactured goods that Southern planters would purchase. Southern states argued that Congress was limited to using powers explicitly granted in the Constitution, but could use these enumerated powers only with the intention of gaining objectives allowed within the text. The power of taxation was written into the text of the Constitution, with the purpose of raising revenue. However, the written document did not authorize Congress to encourage industrial enterprise. So, the Southern rationale went, by passing the Tariff of 1828 with the intent of aiding manufacturers instead of raising revenue, Congress had exceeded its Constitutional limitations.⁴¹ (2) The Exposition detailed South Carolina's Constitutional right to nullify the tariff, outlining the theory of concurrent majority. Calhoun argued that the South was responsible for two-thirds of the nation's

³⁷ Dangerfield, p. 284.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 282.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Capers, Gerald M. John C. Calhoun – Opportunist, University of Florida Press: Gainesville, 1960, p. 118.

exports, but politically represented only one-third of the United States. In essence, the Tariff was a clear case of “oppression by the majority.” Therefore Calhoun asserted, since the Constitution itself was a compact among the sovereign states, any state could peaceably prevent the execution of any federal law within its boundaries until a resolution (through the power of amendment) was made by three-fourths of the states.⁴² (3) The Exposition asserted that South Carolina would delay nullification, in hopes that the majority would grant South Carolina relief from the Tariff:

... Deeply impressed with these considerations, the representatives of the good people of this Commonwealth, anxiously desiring to live in peace with their fellow citizens, and to do all that in them lies to preserve and perpetuate the union of the states, and liberties of which it is the surest pledge, but feeling it to be their bounden duty to expose and resist all encroachments upon the true spirit of the Constitution, lest an apparent acquiescence in the system of protecting duties should be drawn into precedent – do, in the name of the Commonwealth of South Carolina, claim to enter upon the Journal of the Senate their protest against it as unconstitutional, oppressive and unjust.⁴³

While nullification was defeated by 1828, the nullification movement within the South Carolina legislature continued to gain momentum, concluding with a special convention of the South Carolina legislature to discuss the passage of a South Carolina Ordinance of Nullification in 1832. The Convention was called in response to the growing opposition to the Tariff of 1828 and the subsequent Tariff of 1832, and the increased voice of nullifiers across the State. The Convention passed the ordinance within two days, declaring the Tariffs of 1828 and 1832 unconstitutional and null and void in the state of

⁴¹ Freehling, p. 138.

⁴² Dangerfield, p. 285.

⁴³ “The South Carolina Protest Against the Tariff of 1828,” December 19, 1828. See Commanger, Henry, ed. Documents of American History, Volume I: to 1898. Appelton-Century-Crofts: New York, 1963, p.249.

South Carolina, in essence echoing the arguments vocalized in the 1828 South Carolina Exposition and Protest. However, the Ordinance was met with President Andrew Jackson's Nullification Proclamation, in which Jackson stated:

... I consider, then, the power to annul a law of the United States, assumed by one State, incompatible with the existence of the Union, contradicted expressly by the letter of the Constitution, unauthorized by its spirit, inconsistent with every principle on which it was founded, and destructive of the great object for which it was formed.⁴⁴

Conclusion

By the onset of the 1830s, then, many of the issues that had unified the United States in previous years had begun to divide the nation. The nationalism that followed the War of 1812 had dissolved into a piecemeal sort of nationalism, one that favored individual interests under the guise of nationalism. Commenting on the time period following the War of 1812, Dangerfield observes:

... The Panic of 1819 had produced a new kind of nationalist, to whom expansion had become unlimited opportunity, who spoke for the small entrepreneur, and who had no program at all... Thus the nation in 1828 was in a peculiarly introspective mood, wondering what kind of national existence would emerge from the agonized passing of the Jeffersonian world; and here the democratic nationalists, who were profoundly discontented with the status quo, were at once more hopeful and introspective than their opponents.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ "Jackson's Proclamation to the People of South Carolina," December 10, 1832. See Commanger, Henry, ed. Documents of American History, Volume I: to 1898. Appelton-Century-Crofts: New York, 1963, p. 268.

⁴⁵ Dangerfield, p. 300.

Critical issues such as internal improvements and protective tariffs that had initially united the nation in the years following the War of 1812 now served to separate the various regions of the country. Internal improvements, which were once encompassed under the umbrella of great national projects, were, by the 1820s, projects proposed for the benefit of individual state interests. While certain sections of the country still supported them, the true “national” characteristics of internal improvements could be called into question, particularly because the national value of many of these projects was not apparent. In addition, the issue of protective tariffs divided the country, and called into question the idea of nationalism. Highlighting the apparent change in the political currents by the 1830s, the 1828 tariff serves as an excellent illustration. Regardless of the side from which one observed the 1828 tariff debate, it was evident that the motivations behind proponents on either side of the argument were largely self-serving. Thus, the nationalism that had developed following the War of 1812 had changed significantly by the 1830s, with many of the issues that once unified partisan and sectional groups now acting to divide those very same groups.