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Corrupt Politics and the Emergence of the Modern
Political Campaign

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I

Prelude to the Election of 1824:
Sectional Strife, Democratization, and One-Party Politics
At no period of our political existence had we so much cause to felicitate ourselves at prosperous and happy condition of our country. The abundant fruit of the earth have filled it with plenty....Our free Government, founded on the interest and affections of the people, has gained and is daily gaining strength. Local jealousies are rapidly yielding to more generous, enlarged, and enlightened views of national policy.

---President James Monroe, December 2, 1817

Having been elected with the electoral votes of all the states except the Federalist strongholds of Connecticut, Delaware, and Massachusetts, President Monroe took office in 1817 in the midst of a Republican dominance largely the result of the successful war effort against Great Britain. Monroe's first annual address to Congress reflected both the feeling that the nation was united behind the Republican party and the need for the federal government to act broadly to insure the country's future preparedness in times of crisis with a foreign nation. Thus, Monroe endorsed Henry Clay's "American System."

The tariff of 1816 Monroe defended on the grounds of national self-sufficiency and the need to nurture the country's infant industries. While at the time of its introduction it

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met with quiet assent in the South and divided support in a New England in transition from a commercial to a manufacturing base, the tariff, once the prosperity of the postwar years passed, became more heatedly debated and opposed. However, in 1816, the tariff received broad and nonpartisan support, reflecting its mild nature and its patriotic intent. Internal improvements held the potential for creating a more unified and prosperous Union, able both in defense and economy, although the right of Congress to enact such a system "is not contained in any of the specified powers granted to Congress, nor...incidental to or a necessary means, viewed on the most liberal scale, for carrying into effect any of the powers which are specifically granted." Monroe’s adherence to James Madison’s proposed constitutional amendment to allow for internal improvements threatened to stifle growth in the already money-poor west. That a resolution in the House proclaiming the Constitution’s prescription for internal improvements of national importance failed to get a majority ample enough to assure a future overriding of a presidential veto meant that Congress could only continue to debate the issue, in the hope of reconciling the sectional dissent of New England and the southern seaboard.\(^1\) The second Bank of the United States,

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 154.

given a twenty-year charter in 1816, was to provide a fiscal climate conducive to growth and fiscal uniformity by restraining states and local banks. Proper execution of its duties was contained in its provision for a uniform currency; its role as transactor of federal government revenues, stocks, and appropriations payments; and its establishment of a credit system. It is one of the great ironies of this first quarter of the nineteenth century that this nationalistic system, intended to maximize the growth and prosperity of the entire nation and unite the interests of the various regions in a singular and cohesive economy for the purpose of providing for a future which would fortify the federal government's sovereignty over the states from foreign powers, should have facilitated the emergence of sectional strife. Furthermore, it tended to exaggerate the effect that the condition of the European economy would have on postwar America, as will be shown.

Sectional strife may have not yet arrived in 1817, but Monroe, in forming his Cabinet on a basis seeking to allay sectional jealousies of the Virginia dynasty of which he was the last link, appointed John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts to be his Secretary of State. Although at the time the decision seemed best both for national balance and for Republican unity, Monroe's administrations would be marred by the disappointed

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*IIsrael, State of the Union Messages*, p. 154.
ambitions of Henry Clay, then Speaker of the House, and of William Harris Crawford, whom Monroe appointed Secretary of the Treasury. Both had considerable political followings that gravely resembled a two-pronged and organized opposition. That their ambitions should ultimately become aligned with a course for the presidency in 1824 depended not a little on the deterioration of the Republican party as a controlling force.

No sign of the demise of postwar euphoria, however, was yet noticeable in President Monroe's second annual message to Congress on November 16, 1818. Monroe not only reported that "the fruits of the earth have been unusually abundant, commerce has flourished, the revenue has exceeded the most favorable anticipation, and peace and amity are preserved with foreign nations," but also reasserted his full support of General Andrew Jackson in his Florida campaign that resulted in the occupation of Pensacola and the execution of British subjects Artbuthnot and Ambrister. That campaign, prompted by the raids of Seminole Indians living in the Spanish Floridas on American citizens and property, was intended at least officially to restore order among the Seminoles and to redress the misconduct of the Spanish officers in executing their duties. It in fact led to the ultimate cession of the Floridas to the

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United States in the Transcontinental (Adams-Onis) Treaty, signed on February 22, 1819. Denunciations of General Jackson for his disregard of international law during his operations in Florida, especially by Clay and Crawford, stood in glaring contrast to the mood of the day. Or so it seemed. For, as the United States entered the year 1819, although Spain had conceded to American diplomacy and Great Britain had chosen not to act on Jackson’s flagrancy, the United States’ favorable and respected position in relation to the nations of Europe was easily to be submerged in the sea of domestic problems in the following two years.

The postwar economy from 1815 through 1818 did indeed deserve the hearty praise of President Monroe as well it should have of Americans in every sector of the economy. Monroe, in his inaugural address on March 4, 1817, observed,

Discord does not belong to our system. Union is recommended as well by the free and benign principles of our Government extending its blessings to every individual, as by the other eminent advantages attending to it. The American people have encountered together great dangers and sustained severe trials with success. They constitute one great family with a common interest."

The modern historian, or perhaps more aptly the modern economist, can look back at this era and with the confidence of hindsight recognize that the source of this harmony was an economic prosperity that could not in its essence last long.

The government's attempts to institutionalize this prosperity (that is, the American System) were in their specific applications only to make more damaging to the Union the inevitable readjustment of the European economy.

With the end of the Napoleonic wars in Europe, normal trade between the United States and Great Britain was restored. However, with the productive facilities of European manufacturing and agriculture in ruin, American goods fared very well both abroad and at home behind the moderate tariff of 1816. Crop failures in Europe in 1816 and 1817 meant that Western farmland was increasing in value, since its potential product was in demand throughout Europe. Naturally, speculators, favored by the Land Act of 1800 which permitted buying land on credit, and by Bank of the United States policy, which encouraged land speculation in order to augment federal revenues for the repayment of war debts, purchased vast tracts of land in the New West, driving up the price of land to levels exceeding its real value. In addition to the land boom, many farmers, who were invigorated with much of the expansionist nature of postwar nationalism, bought into technology which enabled a transformation from subsistence agriculture to commercial farming, at least in part. Therefore, when prices on American exports began to fall, especially on raw cotton, borrowers and speculators in particular experienced a money crunch which prevented repayment of loans. This drop in prices can be
explained in two equally valid ways, which, though complex, shed light on the inherent difficulties of a national government attempting to overlay a preconceived economic and financial plan on a complex national economy. First, the drop was part of a worldwide deflation due to the shortage of gold and silver bullion. The western trade with the Far East represented a drainage of bullion since the traders there demanded only gold or silver for goods. Also, the mines of South America were neglected in favor of more pressing wartime considerations. Furthermore, there was competition for bullion among the European governments seeking to pay Napoleonic war indemnities. But a more fundamental cause for the deflation of prices on American goods and one that points to the shortsightedness of the Bank of the United States' management was the fundamental readjustment to peacetime that the countries which had been accepting American goods made in the years after 1815. Recovery was inevitable, and a levelling of American export prices due to shifts in demand was bound to happen.

At a time when indebtedness was, as ever, high on the frontier among planters, speculators, and small farmers, the national bank, because of its careless contributions to the speculative boom, was on the verge of failure in mid-1818. The bank forced the state banks to redeem their bank notes in bullion only; in so doing, many borrowers, especially on the frontier, went bankrupt, and so did many banks. And as the
collapse began in the west, it spread to the east and to the newly industrialized cities. Unemployment rose as did indebtedness, and the grounds for a political backlash were well-laid. The people demanded relief from state governments, which in response legislated "stay" laws (liberalizing debt repayment) and new land laws (requiring cash payment for land purchases). The new state constitutions of Indiana (1816) and Illinois (1818) attempted to prevent non-state-chartered banks from existing within their boundaries; and from 1817 to 1819, six southern and western states taxed the Bank of the United States, most notably Maryland, which ultimately had its law removed by McCulloch v. Maryland. Presidents of the Bank, William James and later Langdon Cheves, have been accused by historians of curtailing credit at a time when the nation needed just the opposite to overcome the slump in trade. Thus, the Bank of the U.S. is accused of saving the Bank but ruining the people.'

Indeed, the "Monster," as Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri called it, came to be the object of hatred, especially on the western frontier. And, indeed, the argument has been made that the management of the Bank catered to its east coast ownership and their own region's interests. The Treasury department used the land revenues of the west, boosted in volume by the

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'Dangerfield, Awakening of American Nationalism, p. 84.'
extension of easy credit, to repay its war debts with the eastern manufacturers and investors. However, some of the blame for the panic must also be placed on the state banks, which made unsound loans and issued bank notes without caution. Failure of the Bank would have delayed repayment of war debts and a depression of the manufacturing sector of the economy. The people, especially after the panic of 1819 and especially of the west where indebtedness was most common, thus felt harmed and cheated by the privilege that allowed certain interests to gain expression unequally in the federal government. Although the Treasury department may have acted on strictly national interests in promoting a plan that assured manufacturing interests a purported advantage, this consolidation of interests by an authority that seemingly had no recourse to the people was attacked by people who felt the government should act more in response to the will of the people. Government according to preconceived notions of national well-being limited the control that the people had over their government. By 1824, these sentiments would merge with a desire to see that all corruption and self-interestedness be rooted out of the federal authority and to see a return of the government to the people.

It is a common assertion that the election of 1824 represented the first expression of the movement towards a democratization of American government. One cannot question that manifest changes did occur in this era that did much to establish a framework for popular expression. By 1824, only six states--New York, Delaware, South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, and Louisiana--elected its presidential electors by the state legislature. The rest of the states chose electors popularly either in districts or on a general ticket, with conversion to a popular election since 1816 in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Indiana, Alabama, and Missouri. New state constitutions and new suffrage acts in the states also extended the vote to more citizens than ever, the general rule being universal white manhood suffrage. Constitutional changes in Connecticut (1818), Massachusetts (1820), and New York (1821) in various ways limited the power of elitist groups in the state governments.

The sources of these changes have been attributed to numerous aspects of American life before the election of 1824. One historian wrote:

...it [discussion of democracy] was generally within the context of rights that were assumed to have existed in the past, privileges must be maintained as the past became the present and the present became the future. The main stress was on continuity. There was comparatively little talk of popular
liberties that must be enlarged, popular sovereignty that must be extended.  

This study is based on letters written to southern newspapers in the years 1823-1824; although the author draws no conclusions about who wrote these letters, one might speculate that the men who had the time and the education to write in this vein were the type who sought not reforms but rather endorsed the status quo. On the other hand, Frederick Jackson Turner contends that, while democracy may have been an inherent principle behind the nation's formulation, there was a distinct "formation of self-conscious American democracy" in the years of the dual crises and Monroe's administration, and particularly in the west. Given this disagreement, perhaps the resolution to the question of democracy and democratizing forces lies in a middle ground. One historian argues, convincingly, that the new western constitutions were not unique in their provision of universal white manhood suffrage (nor were they unanimous in this, for Ohio had a taxpaying qualification), for acting on the new west were eastern antecedents as well as the revolutionary past. But just as important as this were the forces of "common sense and hard experience." There was a "democratic urgency" in the 1820s borne out of the

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experience of the 1819 panic, a parallel reformism leftover from the revolution, and the need for internal improvements, which in their essence suggested a democracy that gave all men free and equal access to the polls and the markets. Urgency in the campaign years leading to 1824 introduced as a vital form of democratic expression the concept of the nominating convention, organized not necessarily by state party politicians and intended to voice popular opinion where other established mechanisms failed to mirror the people. The issue of the validity of the congressional caucus, which will be taken up later, was discussed throughout the union in 1823-1824; and its diminishing status in comparison to "people's conventions" and public meetings testified to the presence of discontent and the need to democratize the electoral process. However, equally important to the decline of the caucus was the political advantage reaped by the candidates who opposed it. Thus, this democratization, often identified with the west, occurred as much in the east as the west and was derived as much from the unique American experience as from the problems of the late teens and early twenties. But one should note the difference between democratization as a legal movement and democratization as a feeling within the populace. Legal changes in democratic societies have their root, disregarding

judicial whim, in the masses. And the individual citizen in
the 1820s could request but one thing, with due regard for the
revolutionary past and the concept of Union and democracy:
that his local interest be duly and fairly represented, and
advanced where not causing an obvious and reciprocal harm to
the whole. Democratization, therefore, was real and did
express a discontentment among the people, or at least an
expression of desire, that the affairs of government ought to
be placed increasingly in the control of the people.

This feeling that the people had lost control of local
affairs was especially acute in the slaveholding south and in
some respects the west. The tendency toward consolidation in
the general government, particularly as embodied in the
American System, attacked both the south’s Jeffersonian ideal
of local sovereignty and, by virtue of John Taylor of Caro-
lina’s argument, the people themselves as represented by the
states. Although the slave-holding south in the early postwar
years had acquiesced in the Congress’ establishment of the Bank
of the United States and the enactment of the moderate tariff
of 1816, the panic of 1819 had transformed opinions, and self-
interest overshadowed the patriotism that inspired their
initial acceptance. Now that the south could no longer afford
to engage in a nationalism of sorts, it had to retrench and
defend its own interests. Therefore, when the issue of a
tariff arose in 1820, the south opposed it not for constitu-
tional reasons but for economic reasons. The House vote on April 29, 1820, showed that the south now opposed the tariff proposed 50 to 5. The west was less ardent in its opposition because it was as yet not distinct in its interests as a section.

The other great offense to local sovereignty and the people was the decision of Chief Justice John Marshall in *McCulloch v. Maryland*. The decision essentially established that the constitution holds that the laws of the Congress were superior to those of the states. Therefore, if Congress could incorporate the Bank of the United States (as the decision implicitly held), and if states cannot control its exercises within their boundaries, then the possibility existed that Congress, if so inclined, could constitutionally legislate the prohibition of slavery. But more immediately threatening was legislation against the extension of slavery into the territory of the Louisiana purchase. The western frontier was for people both of the north and the south a place into which their labors could expand and prosperity abound. Due regard for individual liberty required that people of all areas ought to have free and equal access to these lands. Yet as far as westward expansion made the slavery contest a sectional struggle for power, that contest was deemed, at least by proponents of

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slavery's free development, a matter of local concern. Beyond this Jeffersonian argument for local sovereignty, one can identify the south's concern for the tenuous free-slave balance in Congress. The north's topography and climate allowed an expansion in urban centers, while the south had a population of more than ten percent less in 1820. Along with the three-fifths clause, this meant that the south as a section was a minority interest in the House of Representatives. Thus, slavery's supporters had to defend local sovereignty and tediously guard the balance in the Senate in order to quell any attacks in Congress on slavery. When the Missouri application for statehood entered the House, the debates immediately became not only political but sectional as well.

While many of the constitutional particulars debated in Congress over Missouri's admission lose significance when looking toward the 1824 election, two points of interest do demand attention. First, although the Missouri controversy involved a distinct cleavage between the interests of the north and the south, the status of the northwest was far from obvious. The northwest and the south did enjoy an economic relation in the trade of subsistence goods from the northwest for the slaveholding south, yet the northwest was not at all committed to slavery nor was slavery's moral aspect very valid in a region which in its essence stressed democratic values. On the other hand, the northwest was likewise not the distinct
ally of the north due to a limited economic link with the east (the incomplete Erie Canal had not yet permitted improved east-west interaction) and due to disagreement with New England over internal improvements. However, by the sixteenth Congress, the western vote tended to support the north, an alliance which would play an important role in the House election in 1825. The second point of interest was that the Republican party, being the party of the majority of politicians from both sections, was necessarily at odds with itself. And when Henry Clay wrote on January 22, 1820, "the words civil war and disunion are uttered almost without emotion," this fearful assessment may easily have been applied also to the Republican party. James Monroe confided similar concern in a letter to Thomas Jefferson, on February 19, 1820:

I have never known a question so menacing to the tranquility and even the continuance of the Union as the present one...As however there is a vast portion of intelligence and virtue in the body of the people, and the bond of Union has heretofore prov'd sufficiently strong to triumph over all attempts against it, I have great confidence that this effort will not be less unavailing.4

After considerable debate over the Thomas amendment to the Missouri bill (an amendment which provided for the 36° 30' line and the admission of Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a


tree state), it was the forces of party, not "the people," that intervened finally to accept the compromise amendment. For, the threat of a Federalist revival through an alliance with the Clintonian faction of New York state, assured that a compromise would be reached.

The remainder of the Missouri episode was almost singularly the efforts of Henry Clay to insure that Congress acted quickly to admit Missouri and Maine and accept their constitutions in order to insure party unity. Interestingly, the public, while well aware of the debates in Congress and especially of the role Henry Clay played, were apparently more interested in the recovery of the economy after the panic. Assuming the accuracy of this, one can make a convenient delineation: the sources for party disintegration that would mark the 1824 election are found predominantly in the Missouri crisis and the sources for the democratic surge that accompanied this disintegration came primarily from the Panic of 1819 and its related symptoms.

Although the election of 1820 may not have clearly demonstrated either the demise of the Republican party or the threatening spectre of disunion, that election did stand at a crossroads both in terms of the American democratic process and in terms of the more finite consideration of Republican party

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control after the War of 1812. A nominating caucus had been attempted but low attendance dictated against such a nomination. However, since the Republican party stood fully behind Monroe, though perhaps not happily, he was the only candidate offered for election. Low voter turnout in the midst of unanimous support for Monroe attested to a recognition by the people that the Republicans still dominated. This dominance faltered, however, by 1824, inaugurating an era of renewed two-party politics and the pre-dawn of the modern American campaign. As this paper will show, the consolidation of the postwar Republicans yielded to intense sectional and local sentiment, which caused a polarization of and therefore a disruption within Republican ranks. Politics, from Jackson's grassroots campaign onward, were shifted to a consideration of local sentiment and the popular balloting.

Upon inspection of Monroe's first term, one might argue that the people voted in 1820 not so much for Monroe but merely acquiesced in the Republicans' domination. For, as president, Monroe acted passively in affairs and seldom sought to assert any philosophy that lacked congressional sympathy. For example, Monroe's great legacy to American foreign policy, his Doctrine, is claimed both by historians and by John Q. Adams in his diary to be the work mostly of the Secretary of State and in other particulars the result of collaboration with the
Cabinet. Even his veto of the National Road bill was a carry-over from Madison's insistence on constitutional amendment for internal improvements. Indeed, the status of the entire Republican party was accurately portrayed by the party's leading politician, James Monroe: passivity with a non-committal element that lent itself to its own self-perpetuation. The question that one asks then in 1820 is whether this non-committal element was to break down into a state of self-deception and stagnation or was it to cause a disintegration of what falsely upheld it, promulgating a devolution into its smaller, pristine components. The first possibility—self-deception and stagnation—afflicted James Monroe, or at least his political rhetoric:

Having no pretensions to the high and commanding claims of my predecessors...I consider myself rather as the instrument than the cause of the union which has prevailed in the late election. In surmounting, in favor of my humble pretensions, the difficulties which so often produce division in like occurrences, it is obvious that other powerful causes, indicating the great strength and stability of our Union, have essentially contributed to draw you together. That these powerful causes exist, and that they are permanent, is my fixed opinion; that they may produce a like accord in all questions touching, however remotely, the liberty, prosperity, and happiness of our country will always be the object of my most fervent prayers to the Supreme Author of All Good.1


Monroe seemingly misinterpreted the profound national malaise for a nationwide reconciliation of the sections. At the time of this second inaugural address, the Republican party, however, did not look back at the sources of its fleeting and transparent unity in 1820. Rather, many already had their eyes on the election of 1824.

Thus, by 1821, serious strains on the Republican party and on the nation itself existed that would translate into a multiplicity of candidates in 1824. The candidates, once apparent, moved the party towards a factiousness that would forever disperse the Republican party as it had been known under Jefferson and under the War Hawks. The campaigns of the five major candidates were imbued with the need both to present the candidate in a pure republican light as well as to illuminate, where advantageous, manifestations of sectional sentiment. Four of the candidates—William H. Crawford, John Q. Adams, John C. Calhoun, and Henry Clay—served in a national capacity in the years of the dual crises, each taking part in the nation’s policymaking. As we will see, this fact worked against their candidacies, in many ways limiting their appeal to various groups within the national electorate. One candidate, General Andrew Jackson, was engaged in affairs not political but military and, indeed, as his partisans would have it, patriotic. Excepting his brief term in the United States Senate (1823–24), Jackson managed to remain safely aloof from
the sectional disputes of the late teens and early twenties. The implications of Jackson's popularity, thus, are highly informative of the meaning of the election and the state of mind of the electorate, as we will see later. Meanwhile, the people--debt-ridden and ennervated with expansionism--stressed the party with a myriad of local concerns. While the forces of party and of the people must be seen as distinct, it is not coincidence that the demise of Republican unity, the rise of the movement for democratization in its various forms, and the dual crises of the 1819 panic and the Missouri controversy all occurred in the years immediately preceding the most hard-fought presidential election to that time. To call this strife "sectional" is accurate in as much as the sections (that is, New England, the middle states, the old south, and the Mississippi valley west) diverged on the aforementioned issues. The politics of the election of 1824, as we shall see, attempted to identify sentiments in common on the "issues" and to exploit those for elective advantage. Sectionalism thrived only so far as the issues were able to overshadow political alignments. And since political alignments strongly regarded the favor they would meet with the increasingly democratized masses, politics in the election of 1824 reflected more local sentiment than sectional sentiment.
II

The Candidates
That it is the legitimate and exclusive right of the people of the United States to elect a President and Vice-President without the aid or influence of caucus nominations, and that any attempt to assume or exercise this invaluable privilege, either by Congress or State Legislatures, is travelling beyond the sphere of Legislative authority, and ought to be regarded by a free and enlightened people as anti-republican...  

—Amendment to a Resolution before the House of Representatives, Dec. 21, 1823

The question of the congressional caucus was argued at the time of every election since its inception before the election of 1800. The politicians who failed in receiving its nomination typically attacked the caucus for its undemocratic and unconstitutional nature. While the exact arguments over its constitutionality and ethics are not important here, what is important is that the nature of the protests against its use changed between the early opposition and the attacks on it in the years before the election of 1824. Before 1824, opposition to the caucus were often mere attempts to discredit the validity of the nomination. The opposition was intraparty and was conspicuous in its attack on the process. The object was to convince the electorate to overlook its result. For example, the Tertium Quids of the Republican party in 1808

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opposed the caucus because it limited the chances of John Randolph's branch of the party in an election marked by weak Federalist contention. In an open letter they acknowledged the caucus' validity in mounting a unified Republican campaign to a strong Federalist candidate. Thus, the question of caucus was one grounded in the issue of party regularity more than it was in any assessment of democratic principles. Furthermore, because the caucus was primarily a party issue and one of personal ambition within the party, the issue tended to fade from view as the election in the states approached. This situation, however, altered, as the Republican party began to disintegrate after the dual crises and to lose coherence in some legislative agendas. While it is still valid to assert that attacks on the caucus were the products largely of disgruntled politicians, opposition during the campaign of 1824 engendered an attack upon the very principles of the nominee and his faction. As we shall see, this assertion conformed quite well to the overall mood of the election: conflict between the people and the power of privilege or consolidation. Yet for the immediate purpose of this study, we will look at how the power of party and privilege and the contrary influence of the people affected the emergence of the various candida-

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cies. In doing so, it is useful to look at the candidates first as politicians and statesmen before the onset of the 1824 contest. The caucus is a useful starting point in such an analysis since it was considered, at least until 1820, the essential instrument of presidential ambitions.

WILLIAM HARRIS CRAWFORD

The man who was considered the foremost candidate to succeed Monroe in 1824 was Secretary of the Treasury William H. Crawford. Although he received the nomination of the congres-sional caucus in February, 1824, Crawford was attacked through-out his career as Cabinet member for being corrupt and undemocratic in his aspirations and in his methods. In weighing the claims that Crawford was a "parasite" and a "dead weight" on the nation during his years in Washington, one must tread the line between two views: first, that presented by the writings of his political non-brethren, especially John Quincy Adams, who dealt harshly with him in his Memoirs; John C. Calhoun, whose campaign after 1823 was directed primarily at defeating him; and Andrew Jackson, who berated him as the embodiment of corruption and aristocracy in government.¹ On the other hand,

one must deal with the fact that Crawford's record in government was indeed productive. Furthermore, one must question how real his supposed opposition to the Monroe administrations was when he served as its Secretary of the Treasury. After all, Monroe asked him back to serve a second term in 1820; and, furthermore, he defended Crawford throughout his presidency, always considering him a friend.

Crawford began his national political career as a U.S. senator from Georgia in 1807. As a senator, he advocated the National Bank, and while being an ardent defender of states' rights, emerged as a leading nationalist and expansionist. He further distinguished himself as a critic of governmental inefficiency and sternly rejected the constraints of party discipline. Meanwhile, he showed no sort of presidential ambition. Indeed, after his return from two years of service as minister to France, he entertained few thoughts of continuing in public service. Not that his mission to France was deemed a failure, though there were partisan accusations made that his appointment was political and that his performance reflected his inexperience. Rather, he felt personal needs called more strongly in 1815.

However, by the end of 1815, a professed desire to advance the strength of republican government and secure harmony in

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'Mooney, Chase C., William Harris Crawford, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1974, p. 51.'
Madison's Cabinet led Crawford to accept the War Department. Perhaps his most notable achievement as War Secretary was a report on the Indian situation within the American borders. In the report, Crawford humanely advocated a government monopoly on dealings with the Indians so that they could be treated with as much respect as possible during a gradual process of civilization. Private enterprise, the report said, would lead only to exploitation and unrest. Despite the apparent worth of his assessments, Crawford was criticized for the views, and distorted passages were used against him as evidence of "bigotry" towards Indians and certain European ethnic groups in the campaign of 1816. In that campaign Crawford yielded to Monroe at the Republican caucus, running just behind him in votes for nomination.

Crawford served the final five months of Madison's presidency as Secretary of the Treasury. In 1817, the new President, James Monroe, sought to form a Cabinet that would achieve geographical balance. As a result, Crawford had to be continued in the Treasury department (though he preferred the State department or at least the War post), so that Monroe could offer the War department to Henry Clay, though Clay rejected the post for reasons later to be discussed. That Crawford was willing to yield in his desires would seem to be

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"Ibid., p. 222."
evidence of a desire to see a healthy administration. However, he conditioned his acceptance of the Treasury post on two things: first, Monroe could not appoint Clay to the State department for fairness' sake, since the reasons not to appoint Crawford were even more valid when applied to Clay. Second, the Cabinet had to agree to a compensatory procedure in accordance with the nature of the 1802 agreement between Georgia and the federal government, in which Georgia ceded western lands to the federal government.

As Monroe's Secretary of the Treasury, Crawford served in a way entirely true to the spirit of the administration. In terms of constructive action at the Treasury, Crawford's leadership of the nation through the panic of 1819 and the subsequent period of recovery was as good as could have been expected given the short-sighted policy of the Bank of the United States and the speculatory Land Act of 1800. However, many of the practices he initiated for debt repayment after the War of 1812 put a strain on the west that led to the bank panic. He also introduced updated methods to the department that promoted strict accountability. Although he later tended towards an anti-protectionist stance, he qualified as an economic nationalist in a general support of a moderate tariff for promoting growth in industry. He did not advocate internal improvements funded by the federal government, but neither did he oppose the use of federal money for necessary development of
the interior; he felt that a system of internal improvements had to be worked into the national agenda gradually. Thus, Crawford conformed to the Monroe "philosophy" in his cautious yet distinctly nationalist outlook and his pragmatic response to the panic.

The other way in which Crawford was consistent with the spirit of the Monroe administrations was that he had a definite regard for his own self-perpetuation. While Monroe sought this end as much for his party as himself and achieved it through a non-committal stance on many vital issues, leaving decisive action to Congress, Crawford sought to accomplish this by using his office and his influence to create a political following both in Congress and in the populace. The Washington City Gazette, under publisher Jonathan Elliot, received the Treasury department's printing contracts while Crawford was Secretary of the Treasury. Consequently, the Gazette supported Crawford during elections. Perhaps not as obvious but definitely destructive, historians generally contend that Crawford created a following in Congress based on a systematic opposition to the administration. This "opposition" was an alternative means to attaining the presidency in 1824. By arousing discord among Republicans in Congress and in the Cabinet, Crawford could develop a faction strong enough to gain the nomination of the congressional caucus for the 1824 election. That faction, known as the Radicals, emphasized frugality in government drew
its support largely from the southern states and from New York. As John Quincy Adams wrote in 1819,

The only possible chance for a head of Department to attain the Presidency is by ingratiating himself personally with the members of Congress; and, as many of them have objects of their own to obtain, the temptation is immense to corrupt coalitions.'

The uncertainty arises when one tries to attach the hostilities of Crawford's recognized partisans in Congress with the long-term motives of Crawford himself. Congress, not known for its amiability, surely was not a friendly place in the years of the dual crises. Furthermore, the 1824 campaign, extraordinarily hostile and hardfought, found much expression in Congress. It is likely that Crawfordites were closer to the norm than the impression one gets from the writings of Adams, Jackson, and Calhoun.

Crawford's actions within the Cabinet on several occasions produced considerable disharmony. In April of 1819, Adams wrote that Crawford conspired to discredit the administration in matters of foreign policy and State department dealings; more specifically, Adams wrote on June 21, 1822,

...[Crawford] has wormed out of us a Convention which will give great dissatisfaction here...Crawford has all along hung like a dead weight upon the negotiation. A bad convention was precisely the thing suited to his interest. A good

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one would have been highly creditable to the Department of State."

Crawford's denunciation of Andrew Jackson's Florida expedition ran counter to the President's and Adams' support for the General. Jackson, responding to the criticism, "despised" Crawford for his "hypocrisy and baseness." Even so, Monroe still pledged confidence in Crawford.

As the election of 1824 neared, attacks on Crawford grew more direct and violent. In 1820, Crawford was accused of producing a spoils system in the form of the Tenure of Office Act, which conferred fixed terms on certain offices appointed by the Treasury department. It was naturally charged that he wrote the act with a view towards strengthening his political machine. One historian investigating the accusations, however, finds no evidence either that he "consciously" wrote the act or that he made appointments any more overtly political than did other secretaries. Furthermore, he finds that the act produced actual administrative efficiencies in the department, indeed consistent with Crawford's senate years in which he championed calls for administrative efficiency.10 Another attack on Crawford in these years, the infamous "A.B. plot," which will

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9Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 27.

9Jackson to William B. Lewis (January 30, 1819), qtd. in Mooney, Crawford, p. 179.

be dealt with in a later chapter, asserted essentially that he mismanaged government funds in his dealings with certain western banks. While guilt was never proven or disproven, and although congressional hearings cleared him and his department, the charges highlighted the fact that his candidacy was marred by attempts to depict him as the enemy of the people and the agent of corruption in the federal government. Indeed, in reviewing what has been said here about Crawford as public servant, one can deduce what his campaign would be based on: he was the candidate of the Republican party and its first caucus, the candidate of the aristocratic south, the candidate who had the support of an active portion of Congress, and as it were the candidate one had to defeat (as of the early 1820s) to become president in 1824. Perhaps Crawford has drawn as much criticism as he has because of the fact that his campaign essentially originated with his 1816 bid for the presidency, before democracy appeared to be at issue. As a result, his 1824 candidacy tended to develop along older lines, less in tune with the nascent popular campaigning of Jackson and Calhoun.

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN

The political career of John Caldwell Calhoun began in 1808 when he was elected to the State Legislature of South Carolina, as a Republican and an advocate of a stronger
reaction to the British offenses that ultimately led to war in
1812. Elected to the Twelth U.S. Congress in 1810 as a
Representative by "disgusted patriots," he distinguished
himself from his Carolinian rivals Langdon Cheves and William
Lowndes for criticism of Jefferson's restrictive system of
economic warfare (that is, the embargo).  As one of the War
Hawks in Congress, Calhoun advocated war for the stated purpose
of establishing the United States among the powerful nations of
Europe; yet as the War Hawks had more specific objects like
making the frontier safe for western expansion, he favored a
war with Great Britain to justify forcible dealings with the
Indian threat, a threat made worse by the Confederation of
tribes under Tecumseh.

With the urging of the War Hawks and especially of Calhoun
as chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Relations, war
was finally declared in 1812. The mood of the nation and the
demands made on the government evoked Calhoun's ability to
lead. Becoming the House majority leader in 1813, he had
earned the respect of many influential Washingtonians. As John
Quincy Adams later wrote in 1821, he was

\[\text{a man of fair and candid mind, of honorable princi-
\text{ples, of clear and quick understanding, of cool 
self-possession, of enlarged philosophical views, 
and of ardent patriotism. He is above all sectional} \]

\[\text{Ibid., p. 22.}\]
and factious prejudices more than any other statesman in this Union with whom I have ever acted.  

A defender of the wartime Administration, yet not afraid to openly criticize measures of the government that diverged from his opinions, Calhoun’s service was ideally patriotic and unselfish; the factious side of Calhoun that Adams commented on certainly had not emerged yet by 1815. His concern was fairness to all interests; to Calhoun, Union was the means and the end. For example, he opposed the Madison administration’s policy of non-importation, favoring instead free trade with high duties since the burden of non-importation would unevenly fall on New England. He also refused to sponsor the administration’s national bank proposal, since it gave wartime lenders advantages over those who had not lent to the government (especially New England); instead he proposed a recharter of the old Bank of the United States—the measure ultimately taken in 1816. He thus put the nation before considerations of party regularity.

With the end of the War of 1812 and the peace at Ghent, Calhoun and the new Republicans undertook to legislate a broad plan for national economic integration in order to make the nation self-sufficient in the event of future warfare. Calhoun argued that, while the United States could and indeed should maintain a strong army and navy, the recent war demonstrated

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that economic aggression like the embargo were just as destructive as physical warfare. Military effectiveness necessitated an integrated domestic economy with a system of internal transportation and commerce. Thus, in 1817, as chairman of a Special House Committee on Internal Improvements, Calhoun proposed the Bonus Bill, which granted the Treasury's surplus funds to projects of internal improvement. Although Monroe vetoed the bill for constitutional reasons, Calhoun remained ardent in his support of a strengthening of the federal government for the general welfare.

Late in 1817, Calhoun accepted the office of Secretary of War, after four others had already rejected the appointment. Historians unanimously recognize the administrative ability he demonstrated, as the War Department achieved high levels of efficiency. His 1818 report on the Indian problem on the frontier attempted to treat humanely the native Americans while protecting U.S. citizens from the dual threat of the Indians and an Anglo-Indian collaboration. His program of defense reflected his intense desire to protect the nation from the English threat, which he saw as quite real as long as the American example of democracy existed for British subjects. However, the program suffered both from strong opposition in Congress—a sign of his increasing political competitiveness—and from the gradual reduction in threats to American safety achieved through diplomacy. Most harmful to Calhoun's nation-
alistic program for the War Department was the pervasive Panic of 1819 and the Missouri controversy. Exposing deep sectional rifts which challenged the nation's very existence, the Missouri crises diminished the political practicality of nationalism as a political basis. Meanwhile, the Panic made military spending of the kind Calhoun proposed a fiscal impossibility.

While the dual crises hurt his administrative agenda, Crawford's Radical faction was a direct challenge to his political strategy of a unified, national program and in the course of the 1824 campaign Crawford would become the object of Calhoun's attacks on factiousness and the undemocratic power of party. Endorsing in Congress frugality and largely southern interests, the Crawfordites represented the end of unified Republican action and the beginning of the reappearance of sectional antagonisms. Thus, for a man whose political identity depended on "good feelings," he had to feel that his political viability was crumbling just as fast as was the Republican party and the remnants of postwar euphoria. Moreover, the likelihood that fellow South Carolinian William Lowndes, also a nationalist but even more popular, would be a candidate cast further doubt on Calhoun's prospects. Although Lowndes died in 1822, Calhoun still had to contend with Clay and Jackson, both nationalists with southern roots. As the election neared, his contemporaries felt that his ambitions
exceeded his remotest chance for election. Ultimately, he had to settle with being frontrunner for the vice-presidency.

HENRY CLAY

Henry Clay's political career began as a result of his great success as a criminal defense lawyer in Kentucky, and in 1806 he was propelled to national attention by his defense of Aaron Burr. Clay gained an opportunity in that same year to display his argumentative ability and his nationalistic disposition without having to submit his name for an election by the people: a vacancy was left in the United States Senate, and Clay was chosen by the Kentucky legislature to occupy that spot for the remainder of the term. Early he established himself as one of the first proponents of a new movement for internal improvements, making a speech supporting an appropriation for a bridge to span the Potomac River as well as drafting a resolution for the purchase of land on which to build a canal in Kentucky.

When his term ended, he returned to the Kentucky state legislature and served as the general assembly's speaker, where he took a more active part in debate than had past speakers. Yet he lasted only until 1809 as speaker since the state legislature again elected him to fill a vacancy in the U.S. Senate. Clay was a distinguished advocate of protection for domestic manufacturing and internal improvements. However,
interestingly, he opposed the recharter bill for the Bank of the United States since he felt the national bank would produce no gains in the general welfare and would merely encroach on the rights of the states.

In 1811, Clay was elected by Kentucky in a general election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Perhaps because of his strongly patriotic views on how to deal with British impressment and other offenses at sea, and certainly because of his recognized ability, he was chosen to be Speaker of the House in his first session as a member. As Speaker, he directed the selection of committees, enabling him to put fellow War Hawks on the foreign relations committee, thus making a declaration of war practically inevitable.

As Clay certainly had an influence on the timing and nature of the war with Britain, he also participated in its settlement, starting in January 1814. Sent with Jonathan Russell to join American diplomats Albert Gallatin, James Bayard, and John Quincy Adams already at Ghent, he became embroiled in an argument with Adams over the navigation of the Mississippi River. Clay contended that, since the British no longer had land adjacent the river, they ought not to be granted a re-extension of navigation rights to the river as had been provided in the Treaty of 1783 and in Jay's Treaty (1795). Adams asserted that the U.S., by offering to grant rights to navigation of the Mississippi, could gain access to the
fisheries of Newfoundland, then in control of the British. This apparently sectional issue came to rest when Bayard joined Russell and Clay in opposition to any extension of rights, which was supported by the minority of Adams and Gallatin. In the end, the American and British negotiators decided not to include in the treaty any agreement on the matter. Clay's stand against re-extension must be viewed as a defense of the west as a symbol of the nation's hope and future growth, and not really as a defense motivated by sectional and economic interest. Indeed a nationalist, Clay wrote in a similar vein in August of 1823,

It has appeared to me, in the administration of the General Government, to be a just principle to enquire what great interests belong to each section of Our Country, and to promote those interests as far as practicable consistently with the Constitution, always having an eye to the welfare of the whole...13

Again elected to the House of Representatives in 1815, and also chosen it Speaker, Clay returned to Congress with the purpose of seeking to strengthen the nation from foreign affect by binding the national economy. To him, growth of the nation's interior necessitated a changed view of government since the drafting of the Constitution.14 Meanwhile, the war experience emphasized the urgency of that growth so that the

nation could be self-sufficient. While continuing to advocate internal improvements and protective tariffs, Clay moved towards supporting the Bank of the United States' recharter, as the war economy exemplified that the federal government had to retrieve its right to coinage from the states. Furthermore, America needed the B.U.S. as an instrument of growth. Thus, Clay championed his "American System"; and his fellow new Republicans rode its wave of nationalism to political dominance under the presidency of Monroe.

It has long been the favored claim of historians, based particularly on the diary of John Quincy Adams, that Clay expected to be appointed to the State Department's high post in 1817. As Adams wrote on March 18, 1818, Clay "and all his creatures were disappointed by my appointment [to the State Department]. He is therefore coming out as the head of a new opposition in Congress to Mr. Monroe's administration, and he makes no scruples of giving the tone of his party in running me down." Adams also asserted that Clay declined the office of Secretary of War and a mission to England since the speakership in the House was more profitable as a means to Clay's ambition: to succeed Monroe in the presidency. That he was ambitious is of no doubt; but he makes in his writings but one

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16 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
mention of the Secretary of State post at the time and in that there is no evidence of gross disappointment. ¹⁷

The primary focus of this supposed opposition was the administration's South American policy. Clay in the House called for a hurried recognition of South American independence from European nations, especially from Spain; and according to Secretary of State Adams, he was "seizing upon the popular feeling of the moment to perplex and embarrass the administration," which followed a more cautious policy, duly recognizing the threat of the Holy Alliance. ¹⁸

Another area of the Monroe administration's policy that Clay allegedly attacked was the defense of Andrew Jackson in Florida. While Clay disavowed any intentions to oppose the administration's policy of support of the Florida campaign, he felt that sanction of Jackson's "style" was "fatal sanction." ¹⁹ He criticized Jackson for his apparent ignorance of the laws of the United States and the law of nations, and for the harsh terms of the treaty with the Creeks in 1814. However, all resolutions of condemnation presented by Clay were rejected in the House, despite his usually powerful influence.

Yet if Clay acted to hurt the administration of one president, his role in achieving the Missouri compromises saved the Union for several presidents to come. Though resigning as speaker in October of 1820, he continued as a member of the House, greatly influencing debate and tirelessly attempting to reach a compromise. He submitted a resolution which assigned a committee to meet with the senate that would ensure agreement on the compromise Thomas Amendment to the Missouri Enabling Bill; the compromise came at a time when threats of disunion and sectional animosities were daily more violent. Again, in the second Missouri controversy—over the new state's constitution, Clay proposed a joint committee which allowed for the reconciliation of both those who favored the exclusion of blacks from the rights of citizenship and those who demanded the extension of these rights to freed blacks living within the state. After these successes, Clay not only appeared as the friend of harmony in government but also as the man to lead the west (via the American System) to some glorious destiny. Yet, like Calhoun, he depended on unity of spirit and party for his program and political image to appeal to the people; and after the dual crises, unity of spirit and party were quite impossible, despite the resolution of the immediate problems.

Retiring from Congress in mid-1820, Clay was criticized again by Adams in his diary for mismanaging his private life and his personal finances. After serving as legal counsel to
the Bank of the United States since 1819, Clay became superintendent of the bank's legal business in Ohio and Kentucky. Involved in prosecuting claims against debtors of the bank, including states themselves, Clay, it has often been asserted, suffered as a consequence by losing potential support in the debt-ridden west during the 1824 election. However, these claims are not supported by the evidence according to one study."

By 1822, Clay was looking for an appointment as minister to Columbia, after having been approached by Adams with a similar offer in 1821. While in 1821 Clay had to reject Adams' offer because of private demands on his time, in 1822 Clay was not obliged in his request for fear of entangling their different views on South American policy. However, Adams felt that, as Monroe likely could overlook Clay's hostility to the administration since it engendered no sort of betrayal, he too could disregard his hostility if Clay's talents could be made useful in promoting the national welfare."


By July of 1822, Clay was ready to return to Congress and resume his pursuit of the 1824 election. In 1823, he was elected to the House of Representatives and again chosen to be its speaker. His popularity there and ability as a parliamentarian was undeniable. His hope was that his association with the American System and patriotic service in Congress would gain him enough electoral votes in the west to earn his entry into the House election. Once in the House election, he felt confident that his strong following and the general respect that his colleagues had for him would be enough to overcome party and sectional differences and to elect the first western president.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

John Quincy Adams, the son of the second president and a Federalist by first inclination, early in his life impressed his elders with his diligence in education and his soundness of judgment. Yet even in his first mission of diplomacy, a trade by which he would earn the confidence of the nation and its votes in 1824, one sees that, while diligence and soundness of mind were to remain, his adherence to the rigidity of a preordained and quickly decaying Federalist party would erode. He would rather be without a party than without a correct vision.

of the country's needs. Thus, in 1794, at the age of 28, President Washington appointed Adams to a mission to Belgium; however, Belgium fell to the influence of the French revolutionaries, thereby becoming the Batavian Republic. Consistent with his Federalist colleagues, he learned to fear the French, but he failed to become pro-British. Rather, he felt that American interests were foremost and undue, dogmatical association with any foreign nation was a forfeiture of the national well-being.

In 1795, Adams was sent on a mission to England to exchange ratifications of the recent Jay's Treaty and engage in some further negotiations and clarifications. In 1796, upon appointing him to be minister to Portugal, Washington said he was "the most valuable public character we have abroad." His father re-appointed him to be minister to Prussia for his term (1797-1801), only to remove him in 1800 for fear that his successor, Thomas Jefferson, would remove him out of political spite; in fact, Jefferson was considering his continuance.

Elected to the Massachusetts state senate in 1800, Adams displayed an independence of party regularity that would characterize his entire career and that denoted his belief that the consideration of national well-being should dictate governmental acts exclusively, not in coordination with party

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"Quoted in Clark, Bennett Champ, John Quincy Adams, Boston, 1932, p. 58."
politics. After failing in the 1800 election for Congress in a Boston district, he began to iterate dislike of Federalism. Nevertheless, in 1803, he was elected to fill one of the two vacancies in the U.S. senate for Massachusetts, in a victory over the Essex juncto candidate. (The Essex juncto was the more powerful Hamiltonian faction of the Federalists, which opposed the faction headed by John Adams and his partisans.) In Congress, Adams opposed the Essex juncto on several key issues, including the Louisiana Purchase and the trial of Samuel Chase; his opposition, it was charged, was an attempt to gain favor with the Republican majority. In fact, his course was due to a real sense of the national welfare and the inherent incompatibility of Federalism with such a notion.

His drift toward the Republican party—as the party of nationalism in the 1810s—continued in 1807, as he drafted a resolution for a report on internal improvements. Over the course of his career he would also develop into a mild protectionist and a supporter of the Bank of the United States. However, the decisive issue leading to his break with Federalism was the abuse of American rights at sea, especially impressment. Adams introduced a resolution denouncing the acts, and it was fully supported by Republicans but opposed by the pro-British Federalists. Later he would also support Jefferson's embargo. Reflecting Federalist recognition of Adams' conversion to Republicanism, the Massachusetts legis-
lature held its election for his seat in the senate a year early, and Adams lost, though he fittingly had the support of all the Republicans on the vote of the legislature. In the end, his years in Congress signify merely an interlude in his diplomatic career; they helped to solidify his national views and earned him the respect and trust of the Republican leadership.

In 1809, President Madison appointed him minister to Russia, where he served until 1813 with dignity but without the occurrence of any major diplomatic events. One mark of his popularity and recognized talents occurred in these years, as he gained the nomination by Madison and the approval of the senate to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court in 1811. But as the appointment came when Mrs. Adams was sick, he had to refuse the position since she could not make the trip home.

A more vital appointment, and certainly one of more consequence for his political career, was his selection in 1813 to serve on the commission to meet with British diplomats at Ghent. Adams displayed his usual talent for detail and form, but his service on the commission was marked by his personal conflict with fellow negotiator Henry Clay. A trait which rather plagued Adams throughout his lifetime, as it is most evident in his diary, his hyper-criticism and puritanical mindset stressed his relations with Clay. Judgmental and cold, and aloof when in most social settings, Adams would suffer as
a result, almost to the point that his negative personality could overshadow his lifelong statesmanship. Beyond his general disapproval of Clay's habits, the controversy over the Newfoundland fisheries and the re-extension of the rights of navigation of the Mississippi to the British (as previously mentioned) embittered their personal relations thereafter. When they became rivals for the presidency in the 1820s, Adams revived his criticism of Clay in his diary. Nevertheless, he and the rest of the commission emerged triumphantly from Ghent and were well-received by a nationalistic America.

After serving as minister to England from 1815-1817 without any major diplomatic events, Adams returned to the United States to become Secretary of State under the new President James Monroe. Well aware that the post was considered the stepping stone to the presidency, Adams was especially careful not to give the appearance of seeking office. He approached the most important position in Monroe's cabinet with political detachment and with concern only for fulfilling his assigned duties. As he wrote in 1823, "The services that have no tongue to speak for themselves would be ill aided by the loudest trumpet." Therefore, his appeal to the people in the 1824 election would rely more than any other candidate on his record of service as patriotic statesman.

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25 Ibid., p. 58.
Adams' terms as secretary of state succeeded both in capturing the national mood of expansionism and in developing a foreign policy that complemented the nation's economic goal of self-sufficiency. Realizing that Jackson's incursion into Florida in 1818 could be used to the country's advantage, he defended Jackson. He asserted that Jackson, though not under official orders, acted to maintain order among the Seminoles where the Spanish authorities had not; giving Spain a choice between ceding Florida or expanding their Florida administration, Adams forced Spain into what became the Adams-Onis (Transcontinental) Treaty, which ceded Florida to the U.S. and removed the foreign threat from the south. Though Clay opposed the treaty in Congress, criticizing Adams and Jackson, both men gained in popularity as a result of the diplomatic success.

The State department afforded Adams an advantage as a candidate which Clay and the other cabinet members could not enjoy: where Clay, Crawford, and Calhoun each became involved to some extent in the divisive sectional problems relating to the 1819 panic and the Missouri crises, Adams achieved something beyond sectional consideration, enabling him to be identified as a nationalist and continentalist, but without the same negative connotations as were attached to the nationalist schemes of Clay and of Calhoun. However, as we will see, what was necessary to win the popular vote in 1824, was not so much an aloofness to sectional affairs or even a virtuous
nationalism; rather, the people sought a leader with the apparent ability to translate local interests into an efficient, uninterfering federal government.

ANDREW JACKSON

After a raucous, prodigal, and self-describedly "raw" early life that involved gambling, work with horses, fighting for the Revolutionary army, dueling, schoolteaching, land speculation, and law in various capacities, Andrew Jackson began his political career in Tennessee after moving from South Carolina. In 1791, he received an appointment as attorney general of the Meri district of the Southwest Territory, and in 1792 as a judge advocate for the Davidson County Militia; both were granted by virtue of his friendship with territorial governor, William Blount. After serving as a delegate to the Tennessee Constitutional Convention, he resigned his judicial posts to become Tennessee's first congressman to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1796. He gained statewide popularity during the term by seeing through Congress a bill reimbursing Tennessee for the money it spent fighting the Cherokee Indians on the frontier. In 1797, he was elected to assume a vacancy in the U.S. Senate, but which he soon abandoned due to personal financial problems. In 1798, he was appointed to the Superior Court of Tennessee, which paid a much-needed salary of $600.
There he remained for a six-year term, amassing enough wealth to repay his remaining debts and to purchase land and slaves. By 1812, he was a rich cotton planter.

Although Jackson's lifestyle became more aristocratic since his entry into Tennessee politics, he was just as pugnacious, passionate, and self-righteous in 1812 as he was at age 13 when he was captured by the British, argued with his captors, and ultimately escaped. Throughout his life he was a man of passionate hates, quick judgment, stubbornness, yet caution in action. Yet caution never precluded action, for Jackson often did not hesitate to duel a political opponent or an opposing attorney. He quickly earned a reputation throughout the state, becoming a well-known and popular political figure.

While his life experience to 1812 may have been a good indication of his later military successes, Jackson had no formal military experience, but for a inactive term as Major-General of the Tennessee Militia in 1802. With the outbreak of the war with Great Britain, Jackson, hater of the British and the Indians, was ready to lead his volunteers, but, owing to his collaboration with Aaron Burr in 1806, Secretary of War William Eustis chose not to activate his troops.\(^7\) Ultimately, Tennessee Governor Blount empowered him to act against the

Creek Indians who had recently grown belligerent. Jackson decimated the Creeks, earning the nickname "Old Hickory" and the rank Major-General in the U.S. Army.

His service with the army in the War of 1812 is what finally endeared Jackson to the American people, enabling an otherwise conservative Tennessee aristocrat to become the leader in the move to modern American democracy. Moving into Florida as far as Pensacola, Jackson and his troops enforced a suspect Spanish neutrality. His greatest achievement, however, and the greatest American victory of the war was at the Battle of New Orleans. Though not a strategically important battle, since the war had technically been ended by negotiations at Ghent, the victory came to embody American freedom from Britain and a perhaps exaggerated euphoria resulting from the war.

But Jackson became a hero since the victory captured the mood of the nation. For many years Washingtonians marked January 8th as a day of celebration of the victory and of Jackson. As John W. Ward argues, Jackson became a literal "symbol for an age."

As Marquis James wrote, the war hero has an advantage with the people since his accomplishments are spoken of more than are those of statesmen, which can only be fully grasped by the reading minority. Jackson’s potential

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3James, Marquis, Andrew Jackson: Border Captain, New York: Grossett and Dunlap, 1933, p. 68.
for national political success was soon recognized. Aaron Burr in 1815 said that Jackson was "a candidate by whose might the caucus might be overthrown." Likewise, President Monroe, with whom Jackson had been in correspondence since 1815, sought to utilize his popularity, especially in the west, in forming a geographically balanced cabinet, by offering the Secretaryship of War to him. However, he rejected the offer, saying he was content.

The essential character of Andrew Jackson, one of controversial action yet good intentions, was fully understood in his operations in Florida in 1818. Dispatched from Fort Scott to control the Seminole Indians, Jackson marched on Pensacola, executing several Seminole leaders and two British subjects. Though the Adams-Onis Treaty turned the resulting crisis into a triumph for the United States, the whole affair revealed Jackson's disregard for authority and the law. Precipitating great animosity between Jackson and his critics, the campaign was also an episode in the developing conflict between the people and the consolidating federal government. While his critics and even his supporters in the government, like Monroe, were afraid of his militarism, the people were excited by his combativeness and his image of commonality. Monroe, afraid to keep him in the army, appointed Jackson to be governor of the

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Florida Territory; but, although his friends supported the appointment for political reasons, the people wanted anything but his removal from power.

Jackson's political beliefs have long been questioned for their apparently radical shift from economic conservatism to an advocacy of national democratic extension. What is definite is that he always had a dislike for nationalizing, qualifying him more or less as a Jeffersonian. Yet his distrust of banks and federal money for internal improvements were balanced by a nationalistic belief that the federal government must exercise power to ensure the defense and safety of the nation. Tariffs were valid only as a means of revenue to strengthen the Union via measures like a standing army. As his image as a democratic reformer, much of this image must be seen as the work of his political managers. Essentially uninformed, Jackson depended on advisers like John H. Eaton for his democratic ideology. As William B. Lewis wrote, "he could...be led to accept any view which was put before him in a way to strike his mind." But as seen in Eaton's political document, Wyoming Letters, Jackson's appeal was not democratic so much as republican."

Republican virtue and the revolutionary ideal held democracy as

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implicit; his defense of the people derived from this republican virtue because it demanded uncorrupted execution of office. Corruption in politics, which Jackson saw in Crawford, necessitated a return of government to the people under a purified federal regime.

Thus, as 1824 approached, Jackson retreated from the public eye for fear of tarnishing his uncorrupted, republican image. Upon resigning the Florida governorship, Jackson wrote to Monroe, "...for the present...I am truly wearied of public life, I want rest and my private concerns imperiously demand my attention." However, by 1823, as we will see later, the Jackson campaign for the presidency was on and he was elected to the U.S. Senate by Tennessee. Assuming a deferential attitude to the will of the people, as he would during the presidential election, Jackson took his seat in Congress apparently against his own wishes. He immediately set out to conciliate past enemies including Clay, who had denounced him in 1819 for the Florida expedition. While in the senate from 1823-1825, he voted for a tariff, for national defense and mild economic protection; for every bill of internal improve-

11Jackson to Monroe (April 14, 1821), Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, vol. III, p. 129.
13Jackson to Brigadier-General John Coffee (October 25, 1823), ibid., p. 210; Jackson to Andrew J. Donelson (August 6, 1822), ibid., p. 173.
ments, if it did not invade the states' sovereignty; and for measures conducive to the removal of the national debt. As Jackson's term in the senate was marked by passivity, so would be his own role in promulgating his candidacy. Respecting republican virtue and a democratic people, his campaign would bank on a broad-based grassroots appeal to the people, especially in the west; on his military record; and on efficient organization under his campaign managers.
The Campaign of 1821–1823:
The Republican Party Politics and Multiple Candidacies
From the day of the declaration [of Independence], the people of the North American union and of its constituent states, were associated bodies of civilized men and christians, in a state of nature; but not of anarchy. They were bound by habits of hardy industry, by frugal hospitable manners, by the general sentiments of social equality, by pure and virtuous morals...

--John Quincy Adams, Fourth of July Speech, 1821

The patriots of the Revolution, and with them those elevated sentiments of the rights of man which characterized that period, have nearly passed away, and intrigue is fast becoming that passport to office and preferment, which in former times was yielded to virtue and to faithful service.


John Quincy Adams' patriotic assessment of the nation in 1821 may have been exaggerated to exemplify his own republicanism and fitness for national leadership. John H. Eaton's entreaty in 1824 that the people recognize the desperate state of the nation may have been overly cynical to attract attention to Andrew Jackson's candidacy. Yet, however inaccurate the two characterizations are when viewed individually, the span of time separating them was one of just such polarization. The early campaign for the 1824 presidential election completed the drift, started by the dual crises, to moral and political

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1Niles' Weekly Register (July 21, 1821), vol. XX, p. 331.
confusion. The loss of Republican unity removed the locus of political coordination from the national parties. The result was that the state political mechanisms held the balance between the candidates. The issues were delineated more by specific local concerns than by the broad objectives of two opposing political elites. Ironically then, the vicious and almost boundless campaigning, while focusing on appealing to an enlarged electorate, offset much of the purity too readily assigned to the democratization of the elective process that was occurring at the time. Thus, while the period of 1821-1823 saw the decline of the oligarchic congressional caucus, it also witnessed the increase to new heights of "mining and counter-mining for power... attractions and repulsions, bargains and oppositions."1

Throughout the postwar years, John W. Taylor and like-minded politicians of New York complained that the course of factional politics in their state wasted the opportunity for realizing New York's potential as a national political leader. The long-standing Virginia dynasty had outlived its sources of potency, and New York's economic prowess demanded that she defend these interests by staking a claim on the presidential office.

1Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 98.
However, hopes of New York's assumption of leadership seemed dashed when, in 1820, the rift in its Republican party became official. Yet far from some doctrinal division, the Bucktails and the Clintonians were at odds over the distribution of patronage and the governor, DeWitt Clinton. The Bucktails, run by the Albany Regency and Martin Van Buren, opposed Clinton and favored a political alliance with the south. The Clintonians had opposed, for overtly political reasons, compromise with the southern interests in the Missouri crisis, and refused to deal with the south to achieve national pre-eminence for New York.

Taylor was a nationalist who hoped to advance his own career beyond the limitations imposed by petty political loyalties. The course of his career in the early 1820s, though decidedly ambitious, showed the force with which state politics could affect the national political arena in the absence of coherent parties. In 1820, he was elected to the speakership of the U.S. House of Representatives, despite his suspected Clintonianism. Although he had favored restriction of slavery in the previous session, the Bucktails retreated from opposing him since they recognized that most New Yorkers were not sympathetic to the south. However, his bid for re-election in the following year was not as simple.

Taylor's victory in 1820 had robbed him of his neutral stance in New York, as the Clintonians, diminishing in
strength, claimed his victory as their own. Then in the spring of 1821, Governor Clinton was entrapped in a Bucktail scheme that forced him to reject a bill for the calling of a convention to liberalize the state constitution. As a result of the popular reaction, the Bucktails won big in the elections that year, returning to Congress a majority of the congressional delegation. Further attempts by Taylor at this point to disavow the Clintonians were attacked in the Bucktail press. And not only was his neutrality within New York suspect then, but also it was asserted that his Clintonian tendencies were dangerous to certain presidential causes, if he were to remain as speaker in 1821.

By 1821, Congress was becoming the major arena for the 1824 presidential election. Supporters of Crawford, known as the Radicals, favored southern interests, but more generally economy in the federal government. They saw that the south had little to gain from the nationalistic spending programs of Clay and Calhoun, especially in the wake of the 1819 panic. As Secretary of the Treasury, Crawford had to be sure credits matched revenues. Naturally, he directed any needed cuts in expenditure to the department of his southern rival in the Cabinet, Secretary of War Calhoun. Unfortunately for Taylor, he had long viewed economy as one of the fundamentals of a successful national administration. As speaker of the House, then, he appointed committees favorable to such ends, opening
him to charges of fueling the alliance of Crawfordites, Clintonians, and Clay supporters aimed at discrediting the administration. Later, in conversation with Adams, Taylor denied even pursuing selection of committees on any policy-oriented basis. Rather, he maintained that his selection of committees was based more on continuity with the previous session. Of course, those committees were Clay's work, which certainly had a bias towards the ends that Taylor's was accused of trying to achieve. Since the Bucktails favored the southerner, they viewed Taylor's actions as a further sign of his Clintonianism. And as it was generally recognized that the speaker would be in a position to affect the election, the south and the Bucktail majority of the New York delegation in Congress opposed Taylor for that office.

Attempting to buttress his weak position, Taylor sought the support of the Monroe administration. Adams was willing to aid him, because he had thoughts of the 1824 election and because he realized that a Cabinet member needed to be on favorable terms with members of Congress to have a chance at that election. Adams then went to Calhoun and Monroe as an agent of Taylor. Monroe refused to declare a preference for Taylor, especially because of his antagonism toward the War and Navy departments. Calhoun, of course, denied him any support.

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with great vehemence. Though Adams and Calhoun enjoyed a sort of alliance based on a mutual dislike of Crawford, the issue of Taylor led ultimately to a split between them.

Taylor eventually lost the election for speaker to Philip P. Barbour of Virginia, who was aided by an alliance between the Bucktails and several southern delegations. The effects of his election on the candidates were numerous. The most important was that Clinton, who had been a possible candidate for the 1824 election since the late 1810s, was no longer deemed a contender. His demise as a candidate meant that Calhoun, whose chances depended on uniting the south with the north, had an opportunity now to gain support in New York. Although Adams' friend, William Plumer, Jr., told him that Calhoun would continue to consider him an ally, Calhoun's ambitions increasingly conflicted with Adams'. The south perceived Adams as not popular enough to unite New England; therefore, Crawford would only gain in the middle states at the expense of a northern candidate unless a more popular man emerged. Calhoun apparently felt he was that person able to quell Crawford's progress, now that Clinton was removed from

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the picture. So, on December 28, 1821, he announced himself as a candidate for the presidency. However, the day after he came out as a candidate, William Lowndes, a nationalist and a member of Congress from South Carolina, was informed that a caucus of the state legislature had nominated him for the presidency. Lowndes immediately wrote to Calhoun, saying that he had not sought the nomination and that he hoped his nomination would not stand in Calhoun's way. The nomination was intended to counter Crawford's gains and had not gone to Calhoun because of his ties with Adams. This reservation would retard Calhoun's candidacy in the south until Lowndes was finally removed from the contest by his own death in October of that year. Thus, Crawford was the only candidate of the Atlantic states truly to benefit from the success of Barbour and the decline of Clinton. The new speaker, a recognized Crawfordite, continued to encourage perhaps excessive economy in the budgets of the departments of War and Navy. But where Taylor had been friendly to Adams, Barbour also launched a partisan attack on the State department, appointing a Foreign Relations Committee hostile to the administration. The overall importance of the episode is that it demonstrated how political

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9Ibid., p. 239.
alignments were still neglectful of the ever more vocal masses. Politicians behaved as if constituencies were insulated from competition by a party apparatus that was, in fact, by then, non-existent. It would soon become obvious to attentive candidates and their managers that the power of the people was very real and that it could make or destroy a candidacy. The event for such a realization would be the unexpected emergence of Andrew Jackson as the leading candidate by early 1824.

The decline of Clinton as a candidate in early 1822 favored the prospects of Henry Clay as well. As he wrote in April to his New York correspondent Peter B. Porter, since no strong prospect had emerged in either New York or Pennsylvania, he was confident that his candidacy had a good chance for success. Like Calhoun, he relied on the unified support of his own section as the basis for his electoral strength elsewhere. Yet in order to win the election, he had to gain some bloc of support in the east. It was thought that New York would provide that eastern support, since Clay was in favor of granting federal aid for internal improvements, like New York’s Erie Canal project.\(^{11}\) However, to maintain the prospect of an east-west alliance, the eastern politicians had to be certain that their efforts in his favor would be matched by his success.

in the west. In April, Clay felt unanimity in the west was
guaranteed. Apparently, he was unaware of the "democratic"
uprising being planned at the same moment by the compact group
of Tennessee politicians led by John Overton.

The idea of a Jackson candidacy was not new in 1822. Aaron Burr in 1814 had said Jackson was a "candidate by whose
might the caucus could be overthrown." Edward Livingston of
New Orleans had in 1816 and 1817 urged Jackson to run against
Monroe in 1820. Even Adams in 1818 considered Jackson’s
popularity with the people of the west grounds for a future
candidacy.12 Nor was Jackson’s appeal limited to the west.
Colonel A. Butler reported in 1815 that the east was a politi-
cal environment in which Jackson could do well.13 There have
also been assertions that in 1816 a group of Federalists led by
Burr envisioned a great revival of Federalism through the
candidacy of the popular Jackson. Yet the notion is debunked
since he was already the candidate of the Republicans in 1822
when the correspondence with Monroe, which was claimed to have
drawn the group to Jackson, was first known. However, what was
new in 1822 was the mood of the people. The panic of 1819 had
created an entire class of people on the verge of destitution
and certainly distrustful of the government in Washington. The

12 Sumner, Life of Andrew Jackson, p. 99.
13 Bassett, John Spencer, "The Nomination of Andrew
Jackson," American Antiquarian Society, vol. XXXIII (April
internal dissension in the Monroe administration and the constant barrage of charges of mismanagement and of extravagance from Congress implied to the people a lack of virtuous leadership. And the Blount-Overton faction in Tennessee was not long in recognizing that the popular sentiment could be harnessed, under a Jackson candidacy, to obtain their own political objectives.¹⁴

The Blount-Overton faction had been the dominant political force in Tennessee since the early years of statehood, primarily because of its extensive real estate holdings. Jackson was closely associated with the faction as well as their real estate speculation; subsequently, when the conflict between him and John Sevier erupted (see Chapter 2), the latter organized an opposition to the faction of Jackson’s friends. That opposition developed into the Erwin-Carroll faction.¹⁵When the financial hardship of 1819 descended on Tennessee, the Erwin-Carroll faction was able to replace the Blount-Overton faction as Tennessee’s dominant political force by electing Governor William Carroll and a majority to the state legislature.

At approximately the same time (January, 1822), Jackson’s personal friends, especially Major William B. Lewis and John H.

¹⁵That is, Colonel Andrew Erwin and William Carroll.
Eaton, began to publicize their desire to elect Jackson president as repayment for his accomplishments in the military. Several Nashville papers, particularly the Gazette, published editorials supporting the idea. In the meantime, Lewis and his friends had talked to Judge John Overton and had converted him from support of Clay for the next presidency. Overton realized that Jackson's popularity alone could form the basis for a reclamation of political control from Carroll and the Erwinites. At first, Pleasant M. Miller suggested to Overton that Jackson should run against Carroll for the governorship; he would surely win, and a highly favorable legislature could be elected along with him, Miller argued. However, it was deemed more efficient for their ends to concentrate on the presidential scheme. Jackson's nomination would detract from Crawford and Clay (supported by the Erwinites and Carroll, respectively) in certain western states, thus aiding in the election of Adams, whom the Blount-Overton faction preferred. The total effect would be to strengthen their faction, by harming the chances of their competitors' candidates. In addition, Miller would consequently be in line

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to defeat John Williams, an Erwinite and a U.S. senator, in the next election.\(^{18}\)

The product of these deliberations between Overton and Miller and the newly-acquired ally, Felix Grundy, was the nomination of Jackson for the presidency by the lower house of the Tennessee legislature on July 20, 1822. The move was accepted as a matter of political necessity by politicians of every faction because of the enormous popularity of Jackson in the state. As Andrew Hynes wrote to Clay, "It was a kind of resolution that hardly any member would vote against, who was anxious for the political importance of his state."\(^{19}\) But outside Tennessee, the ultimate meaning of a Jackson candidacy escaped all but the few politicians directly affected. Indeed, even fewer imagined that the candidacy would do more than have an impact on some western constituencies.\(^{20}\)

While the Jackson campaign was quietly gathering strength, Adams finally felt safe in declaring his candidacy. Lowndes' nomination in late December and Calhoun's subsequent declaration paved the way for him, removing any reservations he had about appearing to seek office. Yet he was still worried about discrediting his candidacy by excessive efforts from his

\(^{18}\)Ibid., pp. 541-543.

\(^{19}\)Hynes to Clay (July 31, 1822), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. III, p. 265.

\(^{20}\)James, Andrew Jackson: Portrait of a President, p. 37.
partisans.\textsuperscript{21} Therefore, when he spoke to William Plumer, Jr. in early January, he decided to proceed with caution, yet to proceed nonetheless. He preferred his official candidacy to begin with a nomination by Massachusetts' Republican legislators only, fearing a disruptive Federalist presence because of his past abandonment of Federalism. However, this fear of a Federalist backlash appears to have been at least partially unfounded. In the case of many of the old Republicans, like John Taylor of Caroline, objections to the intriguing of Crawford and Calhoun outweighed the problems of principle encountered in Adams.\textsuperscript{22} He also wished it to be made clear to his Massachusetts' partisans that the move for nomination was merely a reaction to the South Carolinians' candidacies.\textsuperscript{23} Such reasoning would appear to be evidence of a competitiveness for public office (an attribute which he denied possessing), although the desired impression was quite the opposite. Thus, the Adams candidacy began to emerge, though with reluctance, and it was this sort of caution that often hindered the development of his prospects beyond New England in the early months of the campaign. He ardently adhered to the old ethic


\textsuperscript{22}Turner, Rise of the New West, p. 175.

that public office went to the man that was most qualified by ability and experience.

The campaign had increased in intensity in 1822, as attacks between the candidates' presses and direct charges in Congress mounted. The candidates were reverent of history, refraining from direct personal appeals to the people for their votes. Yet at the same time, some publications were directly linked to certain candidates. Crawford's extensive network of support in the press testified both to his ambition and to his lack of appeal beyond the south and his political alliances earned through political patronage. Among the newspapers involved in the Crawford campaign, Adams cited the National Intelligencer of Washington (which also would go full circle on occasion to aid Calhoun), the Richmond Enquirer, the National Advocate of New York (through which Van Buren was maintaining his support of Crawford), the Boston Statesman, the Portland Argus, the Democratic Press of Philadelphia, and, his leading instrument, the Washington City Gazette.

Calhoun's candidacy was equally dependent on newspapers, and especially on the work of correspondents who contributed to local newspapers throughout the country. His primary reservoirs of opinion were the Patriot of New York, the Washington Republican and

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Congressional Examiner, and the Franklin Gazette of Philadelphia. At the time of the formation of the Washington Republican in July of 1822, Calhoun had asked Adams, in not so many words, if he wished to enter into the enterprise as a joint venture whose goal would be to defeat Crawford. Adams rejected both the proposal, preferring not to partake in political warfare that could only distract from his execution of duty, and the very mode of politics which it implied:

From the nature of our institutions, the competitors or public favor, and their respective partisans, seek success by slander upon each other, as you add to the weight of one scale by taking that of the other. I disdain this ignoble warfare, and neither wage it myself nor countenance it in my friends. But from present appearances it will decide the succession to the Presidency. 26

At the time Adams wrote this, he had been under the duress of one of many attacks on his character. According to Adams, John Floyd, a member of the House of Representatives, was in league with Clay and Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. They had concocted a bill in Congress to bring to the surface a letter written by Jonathan Russell during the Ghent negotiations to then Secretary of State Monroe. 27 The letter produced by Russell charged Adams with the intentional violation of orders from President Madison on how to conduct the negotiations with regard to Britain’s right to navigation of the Mississippi

27Ibid., pp. 57-58.
River and American access to some Newfoundland fisheries. The implication was that Adams was willing to sacrifice western security for northeastern economic interests.

Clay...has, from the day after the signature of the Treaty of Ghent, been working like a mole to undermine me in the West, by representing me as an enemy of the Western interests, and by misrepresenting the transactions at Ghent in a way to suit that purpose. ²⁸

Adams challenged the letter produced by Russell, showing that the duplicate Russell presented was inconsistent with the content of the original. Adams, on August 7, published a response in the National Intelligencer to the changes made by the pro-Clay Argus of Western America, published by Amos Kendall. ²⁹ Adams thought that Clay had initiated the controversy in order to gain support from disgruntled supporters of Adams, thereby earning Clay the votes necessary to enter into a House election. In the House, he would bargain with Crawford either for the presidency or for the State department under him, which was considered the last step before the presidential office. ³⁰

In private, Clay stated a policy indeed more like Adams' own view of electioneering. Clay felt that the campaign at the

²⁸Ibid., p. 58.
²⁹Ibid., pp. 49-50.
present stage was too far from its final form, thereby dictating that "the policy of my friends should be that of maintaining at least respectful relations with the other gentlemen and their friends." Nevertheless, the controversy had produced a rift between Adams and Clay. Still, Clay's course with regard to relations with Adams would seem not contradictory to his stated policy. As Adams wrote after visiting with him on November 30, they "parted on friendly terms, and although Mr. Clay's political course as a member of the House had not been remarkably friendly to me, I had never been unfriendly to him."

After such remarks were made to John Taylor, by whom they were meant to get back to Clay, Clay wrote a letter to the National Intelligencer, in which he asserted that Adams' account of the events at Ghent was erroneous. Yet he deferred stating what the errors were until a more politically profitable time. Adams in turn responded in the same publication. Thus, both men, whether they liked it or not, had become involved in the very kind of politics they were attempting to avoid.

The controversy was traumatic for Adams. It threatened his reputation before the nation; deprived him of the friendship of his past colleague (Russell); and strained his relations with President Monroe, who was hesitant to release

pertinent documents for fear of losing neutrality." Yet in
the end the controversy appears to have aided its victim more
than it hurt him: "[Adams'] Contest with Russell has elevated
Adams immensely, both as an honest Man and as a Man of tal-
ent." Furthermore, Kendall wrote to Clay that the public
favored the claims of Adams and that Clay was suspected of
motivating the whole affair. While the true feelings of the
public may be difficult to assess in any absolute terms, the
"Duplicate letter" controversy does reveal that the candidates
were becoming increasingly aware of the need to establish some
sort of image—both of themselves and of their competitors.
Not that this implies a unique outlook in an election, but it
does suggest that the candidates were more conscious of the
people as a force in the upcoming election.

Rather fittingly, as Adams and Clay were exchanging words
in the newspapers of Washington, the prospects of both had
likewise become entangled in New England. Henry Warfield wrote
to Clay that Adams' candidacy was not able to unite the New
England states.\textsuperscript{16} Since that section certainly wanted to
elect the next president, they would in turn look to other
candidates or to the directives of the larger states like

\textsuperscript{14}Langdon Cheves to Clay (November 9, 1822), Hopkins, Clay
\textsuperscript{15}Kendall to Clay (June 20, 1822), \textit{ibid.}, pp. 236-237.
\textsuperscript{16}Warfield to Clay (December 10, 1822), \textit{ibid.}, pp. 335-337.
Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Adams' friends saw that this implied either Clay or Crawford (or even Calhoun). As a result, a considerable portion of Adams men were said to be "very willing" to make Clay the Vice-President, hoping to remove Clay as a competitor. Of course, Clay refused to make any promises so early in the race.

Yet while Clay refused to join in any definite political pacts, he vitally needed to conciliate Adams, Jackson, and Calhoun. As John Norvell argued, Crawford was opposed throughout the Atlantic states by "liberal and honest republicans"; a strong Clay candidacy could earn the support of the other candidates and their adherents if they thought Clay could succeed in beating Crawford in the east. But to take advantage of such sentiment, his campaign efforts had to be accelerated to match the efforts of the others.

Very soon after, Clay's candidacy was given that needed boost, for on November 18, 1822, Clay was unanimously nominated by the Kentucky state legislature for the presidency. The legislature then formed a committee of correspondence, and urged the Ohio state legislature to follow suit in nominating

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37Francis Johnson to Clay (December 10, 1822), *ibid.*., pp. 333-335.
38Norvell to Clay (November 14, 1822), *ibid.*, p. 321.
This Ohio did on January 3, 1823, the legislature’s second attempt to nominate Clay. Soon after this nomination, Clay’s support in New York showed signs of vitalization. Peter B. Porter informed Clay in late January that many former partisans of Crawford had recently indicated a preference for him and would work for his nomination. But there were also rumors that he was to run with DeWitt Clinton as his Vice-President, which if true would kill his chances in New York, because of that senate’s recent rejection of all the proposed Clintonian judgeships. Yet Porter expressed hope that Van Buren and the powerful Albany Regency might still favor him, if they could be sure of his victory. This was despite earlier rumors in November that Van Buren and the National Advocate were ready to pledge fully for Crawford.

The increasing favor encountered by Clay’s candidacy in early 1823 can be attributed to three factors. First, there was the general belief that Jackson "declines all offices and will retire." The rumor, propagated in the newspapers and with a good basis in Jackson’s history, was accepted as truth by many contemporaries. If true, it would have meant that Clay would receive much of the west’s electoral votes without

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40Ibid., p. 309n.
41Porter to Clay (January 29, 1823), ibid., pp. 356-357; Cheves to Clay (November 9, 1822), ibid., pp. 314-315.
42Cheves to Clay, ibid., p. 314.
a contest. Jackson was apparently aware of this rumor. In January, he wrote to Henry Baldwin, his chief political organizer in Pennsylvania, that he would come out of retirement if elected to the presidency. Nonetheless, the overall effect of the rumor was to strengthen Clay. The second factor contributing to Clay's increasing hopes was the decline of Calhoun's prospects. Calhoun had become dependent on the support of Pennsylvania as the pivotal state in his campaign. Yet Pennsylvania's political leaders recognized that, to serve the state's interests, they had to contribute to the election of a person of nationalistic principles and that the field of candidates included several nationalists. More and more, Calhoun appeared not to be strong enough elsewhere to be elected. Crawford, who was his rival in the south and his arch enemy in principle, had overpowered him in terms of political organization. So, Pennsylvania in 1823 began to look to other candidates, primarily to Clay and Jackson. Clay's candidacy showed strength both inside his home state of Kentucky and beyond. Besides his nomination by the Ohio legislature, Tennessee was consistently viewed optimistically. Governor Carroll of Tennessee said that, if Jackson's candidacy declined as expected, Clay would have the support of many of the younger Jackson supporters. Only Crawford's strength among the

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*Jackson to Baldwin (January 24, 1823), Bassett, *Correspondence*, vol. III, p. 184.*
Erwinites could challenge him in that contingency. The third factor that favored Clay was the belief that he would return as a representative to the U.S. House, and hopefully be elected speaker. Since the presidential election was likely to devolve upon the House because of the large number of candidates, all Clay was thought to have to do to be elected was finish in the top three in the electoral college. His election would then be all but secure because of his popularity among the congressmen. This surely acted on the state politicians in considering whom to support.

However, Crawford was still the leading candidate throughout most of 1823 because of his partisans' proficiency in maintaining control of the vital organs of the press and because of his apparent ties with the New York political organization of the Albany Regency. Porter's hopes that Van Buren might still favor Clay were dashed in the spring. The Albany Argus, a newspaper favoring Van Buren's faction, announced that it would favor the candidate chosen by the congressional caucus, but would not make any commitment until the caucus had officially made its decision. This meant that Van Buren's men would favor Crawford, although they would not be explicit, since a change in the expected outcome of the caucus still could occur. These views became official in

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"Carroll to Clay (February 1, 1823), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. III, pp. 360-362."
April, when the Republican members of the New York state legislature passed a resolution pledging to support the candidate of the congressional caucus.\textsuperscript{45} Thus, it appeared that, as long as Van Buren and the Bucktails retained power in the New York legislature and the electoral votes of that state continued to be chosen by the legislature, Crawford had a strong position from which to work toward a more general support throughout the Union. That is, New York's vote of support would likely be decisive for the other large states (especially Virginia), since New York was the first state whose legislature would vote for electors.

Crawford's competitors still found hope in New York and elsewhere. As Albert H. Tracy wrote in April, five days after the New York resolution in favor the caucus' nominee,

\ldots the only advantage he [Crawford] now has over his rivals arises from his having friends among the dominant party of this state [New York] who are willing to incur the responsibility of openly taking ground, which the friends of the other candidates appear afraid to do...\textsuperscript{46}

Indeed, the other candidates all made particular claims to the popular sentiment in New York. Adams felt he had a substantial base of support in New York since nearly half of its residents were displaced New Englanders. Yet this advantage was in fact diminished by the support he received in the Federalist press.


\textsuperscript{46}Tracy to Clay (April 27, 1823), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. III, pp. 411-412.
of New York, which caused many Republicans to question how well he would serve their interests if they were to help elect him. Clay felt that eventually New Yorkers would realize that it would be in their own best interests to support him, since his views favored a developmental national policy that would benefit the larger states in particular. He also believed that the people of New York were attracted to his early support of emancipation in Kentucky. Furthermore, he believed that he would gain the support of Adams’ adherents if the latter’s candidacy were believed to be hopeless, and that he would be victorious in an election by the people, if held spontaneously and without the interference of the Crawfordites. Even Calhoun, whose chances would decline with the rise of Jackson, did not abandon all hopes of success in New York, because he felt his national program made him inherently the choice of the people.

Thus, the expectations of Crawford’s rivals in New York all hinged on the chance that their own merits would somehow usurp Crawford’s strong hold on the public mind. From the rivals’ point of view, the fight against Crawford was a political battle for the most prestigious spot in the govern-

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"Clay to Porter (June 15, 1823), ibid., pp. 431-435; Thomas I. Wharton to Clay (August 13, 1823), ibid., p. 466; Porter to Clay (May 26, 1823), ibid., p. 421."
ment. While Calhoun and Adams struggled against the intrigues of the Secretary of the Treasury, the fight was still on Crawford's terms--on the terms dictated by a solid base of party support. As long as Calhoun tried to defeat him in the newspapers at his own, better-run game, and Adams tried to counter Crawford's corruptedness by a facade of silent virtue, Crawford would remain the leader. Clay's advantage, which Adams enjoyed to a certain extent as well, was in his sectional identity; still, exploitation of sectional identity could only get a certain number of votes for each, and in neither case was it enough to win in the electoral college. And if the election went to the House, Crawford's political machine would likely decide the election. So, to defeat the forces of Crawford and his organization required a combination of Adams' silent virtue and Calhoun's aggressive attempts to discredit Crawford. Yet in addition, what was required was the popular appeal to back up the claims of one's political managers. As we will see, the shifting nature of the nominating process bears this out, as it also contains the sources of Crawford's decline and Jackson's emergence. As one letter in the Columbian Observer asserted,

The contest is not between Clay and Adams or between Jackson and Crawford, but between political honesty and integrity on the one side, and intrigue, corruption and infamy on the other. To you it will not be of the least difference whether Adams or Clay or Crawford or Calhoun succeeds. The same principles and the same measures will triumph. But should
Jackson be elected the triumph will be yours, for the victory will be yours.\(^4\)

From this account, therefore, one can infer that Jackson's lack of experience and lack of involvement in Washington's politics were a boon to his cause. What Jackson said was looked upon not as the words of an office-seeker, but truly as the words of an idealist and spokesman of the people. Therefore, when the rivals of Crawford rallied their opposition around the caucus beginning in late 1823, Jackson was the greatest benefactor of the democratic uprising that accompanied this politically (not ideologically) motivated movement. Yet until that time, few regarded his candidacy as potent enough to demand any attention, even when it showed signs of popular support:

The numerous meetings in favor of Gen. Jackson are deceptive. Under certain circumstances the General might have a powerful vote here, but will not. A majority of those who attend those meetings I am confident are for Mr. Clay. He could not..., unless as the opponent of Mr. Crawford, obtain the elector-al vote of Pennsylvania.\(^5\)

However, Jackson's campaign was in fact showing signs of popular support throughout the nation. The first such sign was a nomination by a public meeting in Westmoreland County,


Virginia, in late January, 1823. In early 1823, there were also two meetings held in Greensburg and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to organize a statewide campaign for Jackson. Meanwhile, his friends elsewhere were becoming a nuisance to the efforts of the other candidates. In February, 1823, Clay supporters in the Mississippi legislature were successfully opposed by Jackson men in their attempt to nominate Clay for the presidency. On March 4, Jacksonites offered a resolution at a Pennsylvania state convention proposing Jackson for nomination; Calhoun's friends had to abandon their plans to move for a nomination as a result. Moreover, Calhoun felt that Jackson's candidacy was intended to affect adversely Clay in Ohio.

By December, 1823, Jackson's candidacy had established a more serious basis for success, and discussion of his candidacy was changing in line with his prospects. Adams asserted that Jackson could win all the western states as well as Pennsylvania, if Clay was sure not to succeed. Furthermore, he had little trouble envisioning a Jackson presidency, despite the flaws of character he felt Jackson had displayed in the

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52 Isaac L. Baker to Jackson (February 14, 1823), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 187.
past. Calhoun, previously confident about his prospects in Pennsylvania, could not ignore that "Jackson has a strong hold" there. The primary factor that helped to crystallize much of Jackson's early strength among the people and that clearly enunciated Jackson as a serious contender for the presidency was his election to the U.S. Senate.

The ramifications of the election for Tennessee's empty seat in the Senate were contemplated fully even before the state legislature convened for the vote. Senator Ninian Edwards of Illinois traveled to the capital of Tennessee to lobby for Calhoun's interest, while Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri spoke for the Clay candidacy. However, it is important to remember that Jackson was not intended to be a candidate for the senate from the start. But, despite Jackson's absence from the slate of candidates, the nature of politics dictated that the re-election of incumbent Senator John Williams, would reveal a weakness in the Jackson candidacy that would be transmitted to the nation. Subsequently, Jackson's strength would sink and that of Clay would rise, a

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situation which would work against the interests of the Blount-Overton faction that desired Adams as president.

However, there is evidence that, by October, 1823, Overton and Felix Grundy no longer felt that Jackson's continued candidacy was a good idea. If their original intention in nominating Jackson was to serve their local political and economic ends, then their continued support for a strong Jackson candidacy was working against their own interests, for Jackson had recently been iterating a "social philosophy" that was not compatible with the Blount-Overton interests in banking and land speculation. Therefore, it is likely that when Jackson wrote, "...my feelings and wishes all conspired to remain at home, but it was thought expedient by my friends that my name should be brought out," the term "friends" referred to men like Major Lewis and John Henry Eaton, instead of the politicians who first publicized his candidacy. The inability of the two Jackson candidates—John Rhea and Pleasant M. Miller—to draw enough votes to secure Williams' defeat meant that Jackson's own name had to be used: defeat of the Jacksonian candidate in the state legislature would indicate to the rest of the country that Jackson did not have his own state's support, so victory had to be definitive. As Thomas

57Ibid., p. 547.

Ritchie, editor of the Richmond *Enquirer*, wrote in the *National Intelligencer*, "He was the only man in Tennessee who could turn out John Williams. He has done it. The country may yet rue the change."  59

If Jackson's election to the U.S. Senate maintained the positive acceleration of his cause throughout the nation, then his efforts at conciliating past enemies established him as a serious candidate—no longer the tool of others. As Clay wrote,

> I understand that the General has altered essentially his course of personal conduct; and has become extremely gentle, affable & conciliatory. It is said that he has extinguished some of his most ancient and bitter enmities...What would you think of receiving from him a sincere and cordial shake of the hand?" 60

Jackson reconciled his differences with Clay and Calhoun, who both had been responsible for some of the more vocal attacks on Jackson's conduct in the 1819 Seminole campaign. 61 He also came to an understanding with General Winfield Scott, who was to fight a duel with Jackson in 1817, and with Senator Thomas Hart Benton, an ally of Clay from Missouri and the

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brother of a man who had shot Jackson." In general, as Jackson acted the part of the serious candidate, he became known as a serious candidate. No longer was his candidacy suspected to be simply the political tool of Overton and Grundy. From this change of perception alone Jackson gained ground. As Remini wrote, "...he was the center of attention wherever he went. As hero, senator, and now presidential candidate, he commanded instant recognition and applause."

Several other developments in the latter half of 1823 had equally precipitous results for the candidates. Crawford became seriously ill in September, 1823, with what has been described as anything from "inflammatory rheumatism" to erysipelas. Whatever the medical diagnosis, the symptoms were debilitating, and Crawford was bedridden and did not attend a Cabinet meeting until April 2 of the following year. He took care of his departmental work from his bed, employing a facsimile of his signature to "sign" documents, according to a critical Adams. The National Intelligencer likewise tried to lessen the appearance that his illness was serious by

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67James, Andrew Jackson, p. 65; John H. Eaton to Mrs. Andrew Jackson (December 18, 1823), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 217.


reporting on November 14, 1823, that he returned to his duties in Washington, even though he was still quite ill. 62 Although Crawford’s illness was not politically significant at first, as the elections of the fall grew closer, his continued ill health after May became important as a political liability for Crawfordites who remained hopeful to have him elected president.

Meanwhile, Clay had returned to Congress and was again elected speaker of the House of Representatives, defeating the former speaker and Crawfordsite Philip Barbour of Virginia by a vote of 139 to 42. Following Clay’s victory on the first day of the new session, the Washington Republican published an article that implied that Barbour’s decisive loss to Clay reflected the weakness of Crawford’s forces both in Congress and at large. Niles’ Weekly Register reported that the National Intelligencer responded to the article with "about two dozen lines" calling it "‘absurd’, ‘preposterous’, ‘ridiculous’," and so on. 63 Whether the National Intelligencer’s response indicated a panicked Crawford camp, as Hezekiah Niles believed, was not as important as what Clay’s speakership was to mean for his own chances. Crawford’s congressional support was no secret; but Clay’s campaign had recently been faltering,


63‘Niles’ (December 6, 1823), vol. XXV, p. 209.
and this sign of his strength within Congress, where the election was likely to be resolved, was an important one. As Clay's letter to Porter of December 11, 1823, suggested, a congressional caucus as planned by Crawfordites would not be to the Secretary of the Treasury's advantage, particularly because of Clay's show of strength in the House of Representatives."

The congressional caucus came under increasing fire in late 1823 and 1824, as most realized that the election would likely go to the House and that the caucus might irreversibly decide the fate of a House election if it strongly endorsed any particular candidate. That it would be called became certain: "The caucus is maturing, and is to be precipitated. One hundred and fifteen expected to attend." But by the time the caucus could be called, the opposition to it had been made vocal, organized, and self-righteous. At the forefront of the attacks on the caucus were Jackson's supporters. Therefore, it is fitting that Jackson was to be the recipient of the popular sentiment that accrued to opposition to the oligarchic "King Caucus" in 1824.

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IV

The Campaign of 1824:
The People versus 'Corrupt' Politics
I shall not degrade myself by importunity, or suffer it to be done by others. I shall avoid the contamination of faction and intrigue. If I am placed in office, I will be free to follow the dictates of my own conscience and judgment. I am, however, under no more apprehensions now of being forced into office, than I was in 1816, when office was clearly in my reach if I had been ambitious for it.

--William Harris Crawford, 1821

The congressional caucus represented as much the collision of the old elective system of the nation's first quarter century of federal existence with the new, emergent form of participatory democracy as the counterbalancing of the opposing forces of virtue and corruption. Crawford and his political allies did not at all feel any misgivings about holding a congressional caucus to advance his candidacy; the caucus to them was as pure as its first nominees, like Thomas Jefferson, and belonged not to the competitive politics of the Washington tabloids but to the aged era of the founding fathers. However, to Jackson and especially to Calhoun, it was the symbol of the Radical opposition to progressive nationalism and the nation itself.

'Crawford to Charles Tait (September 4, 1821), quoted in Mooney, William H. Crawford, p. 227.'
The caucus call of the friends of Crawford was well-anticipated by the friends of Jackson and Calhoun. Jackson's supporters in Tennessee acted first, passing a resolution in the state legislature that denounced the congressional caucus as undemocratic and therefore neglectful of the mood of the people. Tennessee urged Congress to avoid convening for a nomination by a caucus and requested that other states follow their example in passing resolutions against caucussing. Although only Maryland and Alabama formally adopted the Tennessee resolutions, other states did react consistently with the spirit of the resolutions. In Indiana, the state senate passed a resolution declaring caucuses "anti-republican," although Indiana's lower house indefinitely postponed action on a similar resolution. The Indiana general assembly did pass a law placing the selection of presidential electors on a general ticket for voting by the people. Furthermore, Pennsylvania abandoned the idea of a legislative caucus, adopting instead the state convention as its nominating device. Yet, of course, the mood of the nation was far from unanimously against the caucus. Even within Pennsylvania, the apparent leading state in the drive for a truly democratic vote in 1824, a meeting in Alleghany county recommended a

nomination by a congressional caucus. Furthermore, the legislature of Pennsylvania, along with those of North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Ohio, postponed indefinitely action on the Tennessee resolutions. And in other states, particularly where Crawford was strong or where a state's interests were not clear cut, the Tennessee resolutions did not fare well. Thus, the resolutions were rejected in New York, Georgia, Virginia, and Maine, where caucus nominations were approved.

The opposition questioned not only the constitutional validity of the caucus, but also the very logic of its convocation under the circumstance that there were so many Republican candidates. As Hezekiah Niles wrote,

Those from Washington shew it as probable that an attempt to get up a caucus will not be made—and why should it? Does any one believe that, in the present state of the public mind, a caucus nomination would induce the friends of either of the candidates to give up his pretensions to the presidency?

Because a caucus was never held in a time of such political disarray, Crawford's competitors did not understand what the caucus was meant to achieve. As Clay wrote: "Those who are urging a Caucus are perfectly desperate and despondent...if they do meet their number will not exceed seventy and will

'Ibid., p. 258.
'Niles' (December 13, 1823), vol. XXV, p. 225.
probably be short of it. What will be thought of a Caucus of such a minority?" Jackson wrote as well of the caucus:

...it is the last hope of the friends of Mr. Crawford, and I have no doubt it will be attempted—with what success time will determine. But it appears to me that such is the feelings of the nation that a recommendation by a congressional caucus would politically damn any name put forth by it.

However, no matter how hopelessly the convention of a caucus was depicted in writing, the opponents of Crawford were apparently worried by the possibility. For, as Crawfordites charged, the caucus had opponents in a campaign of multiple candidates simply because it could give only one endorsement.

But the ideological fault found with the caucus was very real: though it was expected to be conducted by just a few politicians, the caucus could very well decide the election. The legislature of the most powerful state, New York, had pledged in April, 1823, to support the caucus' nominee; and, unless that state managed to place the choice of electors with the people, that promise was expected to be fulfilled. Furthermore, Virginia was firmly behind Crawford, especially if he was the caucus' nominee. Because the numerous smaller states were all eager to act to their own advantage, they looked to the lead of those two states. The problem, then, for

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7Jackson to Andrew J. Donelson (January 21, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 225.
Calmoun and the others was that the caucus, if not adequately discredited, could potentially dictate the election's result.

The question of the congressional caucus was being taken up by meetings of the people at the same time that the candidates were protesting it. These meetings generally represented the efforts of the smaller states to avoid domination by the larger states under an antiquated version of American republicanism. A typical meeting occurred in late November, 1823, in Northampton county, Pennsylvania, that passed resolutions against the congressional caucus and in favor of the candidacy of Andrew Jackson. Other such meetings were held in Pittsburgh (November, 1823); in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania (December, 1823); Steubenville, Ohio (December 2, 1823); and in Philadelphia (December 20, 1823).” In other states, similar action was taken that favored Jackson and opposed the caucus. One of the earliest of such meetings occurred in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1823; the meeting of the citizens of Louisville and Jefferson county resolved that "the President should be the choice of the people" and that Jackson was their choice.” Thus, Jackson’s candidacy increasingly was linked with the efforts to produce a more democratic election in 1824. Some newspapers, generally pro-Jackson, conducted the first

"Niles' (November 29, 1823; December 20, 1823; December 27, 1823), vol. XXV, p. 194, pp. 242-243, pp. 257-258.

ever political polls in an effort to show that, even though the congressional caucus may decide for Crawford, the people favored Jackson and did not intend to abide by the caucus' decision. Such polls were pioneered by the *Pennsylvanian*, the *American Watchman*, and the *Raleigh Star*. Niles' *Register* also did much to procure anti-caucus awareness in the west. In general, one sees that the west as a section emerged as the primary impediment to the lingering authority of political parties from a past and indeed less democratic era.

While the people and some presses declared independence from the caucus nomination, the leading anti-Crawford politicians struggled to prevent a caucus, though for perhaps less noble reasons. Colonel Richard M. Johnson, a friend of Clay, organized an opposition to the caucus, earning the support of Adams, Calhoun, Clay, and Jackson. These candidates requested their partisans to boycott a congressional caucus, adopting the cause of the people which held that the caucus unnecessarily usurped the rights of a democratic citizenry. Adams even asserted that he would reject any nomination conferred by a caucus, and Jackson wrote, "I keep myself entirely aloof from the intriguers and caucus mongers..."11 Meanwhile, the


progress of Crawford in New York forced Calhounites Samuel Ingham and Thomas Rogers, both of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation, to take steps to "ascertain individually the intention of every member for or against a caucus nomination." A similar endeavor had been republished in Niles' Register on January 17, 1824, from the Franklin Gazette, and reported that only sixty-eight members of Congress were for a caucus. Fully one-hundred and ninety declared against one.1

While the desire to see Crawford fail was of course part of the motivation for such a large scale disavowal of the caucus, another reason certainly was republican duty. Congressmen wanted to delay the convocation of the caucus in order to see what the verdicts of their state legislatures would be. Presumably, since the state legislative bodies were considered a quite accurate measure of the popular will in a particular state, congressmen could look at the result of their state's nomination and then could more accurately vote their constituency's will at a congressional caucus.2 However, the extent to which this motive figured in opposition to the caucus in early 1824 is difficult to determine.

1Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 236.
2"Niles" (January 17, 1824), vol. XXV, pp. 308-309.
At this time, when concerted efforts were being made against Crawford, rumors emerged that Adams and Crawford were to join their friends in a caucus vote to gain a nomination as vice-president and president, respectively. Undoubtedly, the object of such rumors was to disrupt any concerted action against the caucus. Moreover, according to John Taylor, a Crawfordite named Churchill C. Cambreleng said that a caucus was being planned yet not until April. In the meantime, there was a plan to convince either Adams or Clay that Crawford would carry a majority in the electoral college. A caucus, then, would be held, with Clay or Adams as Crawford’s vice-presidential running mate. Adams commented that it was a simple “game of playing off Clay and me against each other, but I should not have expected Cambreleng would have had the simplicity to disclose it.”

Finally, on February 7, 1824, there was a public declaration, announcing that a congressional caucus was inexpedient. The document was signed by twenty-four congressmen, saying that all but eighty had rejected the notion of a caucus. The chief instigators of the effort were Johnson, Ingham, James Hamilton, Jr., and Joel R. Poinsett—all of the House—and Senator Robert Haynes.” As the apparent fate of a caucus became clear,
George McDuffie’s statement in the previous December appeared quite appropriate:

The Caucus managers are lulled into a false security. They are not aware of the fact that the friends of Calhoun, Clay, Jackson, & Adams have a perfect understanding and are united in the determination to give the Caucus a death blow. The explosion will blow up all Mr. Crawford’s machinery & put an end to his hopes forever."

However, according to Robert V. Remini, Martin Van Buren and his associates were well-aware of the sharp opposition in Congress. They had surveyed the situation in Congress themselves, and realized the lack of support the measure had. Yet to Van Buren, the caucus was Crawford’s one hope, given his illness.1 He hoped that the use of a caucus would better establish Crawford as a substantial Republican, employing the time-tested methods of the old parties. In pursuit of such an image, caucus promoters sought the support of such respected Republicans as Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin. Jefferson’s name alone could salvage the dignity of the event; and Gallatin, it was hoped, could convince his fellow Pennsylvanians in Congress to attend the caucus. However, the former was never contacted, and the latter had previously vowed never to attend another caucus.2 So, on February 14, 1824, the caucus

1McDuffie to Charles Fisher (December 14, 1823), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun...," p. 491.
2Remini, Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, vol. II, p. 64.
met, but totalled only sixty-six members of Congress. As expected, Crawford received the nomination, but not unanimously. Adams, Jackson, and Nathaniel Macon all detracted from Crawford's total, which then amounted to sixty-four of sixty-eight votes (two were by proxy). The absence of the Pennsylvania delegation and the majority of New York's and Virginia's delegations verified the desperation of Crawford's chances and confounded Van Buren's plans of leading the rest of the nation to support Crawford by the example of the three major states. Even though most Crawfordites preferred Clay for the vice-presidential nomination, Gallatin was nominated for the vice-presidency. The move was seen as a petty electioneering trick, designed to appeal to the old Republicans. The caucus demonstrated Crawford's weakness within the party and the factiousness of the support he attracted. More than anything else, however, the weak showing was a symbolic victory for Jackson's candidacy, which was the great foil to oligarchy and aristocracy.

Immediately after the caucus, Jackson gained particularly in Pennsylvania, where Calhoun's forces suffered division and dissent. For some time before February, 1824, George M. Dallas had been soliciting Adams for the appointment of U.S. Minister to Mexico. Ingham, fellow Pennsylvanian of Dallas, urged Adams to realize that the appointment of Dallas was critical to the success of the Republicans in his state. However, Adams felt
that Dallas was not of ministerial caliber and that Pennsylvania's interests were not necessarily dependent on Dallas' appointment. Nonetheless, Monroe had committed himself to appointing a Pennsylvanian, if that state's delegation could suggest a worthy applicant. Henry Baldwin, a Jacksonite, was suggested by a faction of Calhoun supporters of eastern Pennsylvania, but Ingham and the friends of Dallas disliked Baldwin's high-tariff views. As a result, a split developed between the two groups. Subsequently, Monroe was forced to nominate Senator Ninian Edwards of Illinois for the job.21 The split ultimately weakened Calhoun in the state; and at a meeting in Philadelphia, Dallas resolved to nominate not Calhoun but Jackson.

Calhoun's decline continued at a more important meeting in Harrisburg on February 18, at which Dallas and the rest of the delegates unanimously nominated Jackson. Although Dallas' decision to favor Jackson may be interpreted as spite for failing to obtain the Mexico ministry, he insisted that he merely acted for the best of the state, as the Jackson candidacy clearly was the stronger. Indeed, Dallas had forewarned Calhoun early in January, 1824, that Jackson's immediate

prowess may dictate Calhoun’s abandonment.” Jackson wrote to John Coffee on February 22 that Calhoun’s Pennsylvania partisans announced his withdrawal from the contest and declared the state to be for Jackson. Jackson’s grip on that state was further reinforced when, on March 4, the state convention nominated him for the presidency, with Calhoun as its vice-presidential nominee. However, the change in Calhoun’s prospects was not quite as sudden as it seemed. As Adams wrote in late January, Calhoun allegedly proposed to Richard M. Johnson, a Clayite, a coalition of the enemies of Crawford. The arrangement would have placed Adams in the presidency and Calhoun in the secretaryship of the Treasury. Although Calhoun denied making the offer later, the idea that Calhoun may have been trying to ensure himself a spot in the government is not inconsistent with the evidence. Calhoun was certainly ambitious enough and a sufficiently adept politician to realize that Jackson’s improving chances were bounded to collide with his own in Pennsylvania. Adams wrote: "...[the proposed coalition] discloses the forlorn-hope of Calhoun, and the total exclusion of Crawford." \(^2\)


\(^3\)Jackson to Coffee (February 22, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, pp. 229-230.

Despite Calhoun's exit as an essential competitor for the presidency, the Calhoun candidacy continued to play a significant political role. Although Calhoun's actual support throughout the Union had rarely exceeded a strong second, the weight of his partisans when added to one of the remaining candidacies for the presidency could have a substantial impact. Calhoun himself easily adapted to his role as vice-presidential candidate, since his aim had always been to secure Crawford's defeat if he could not succeed to the presidency himself.

...the destruction [sic] of the caucus system, which seems now admitted to be destroyed, is calculated to give great prominence to the office in question [the vice-presidency]; & that a ticket to succeed before the people, must be strong, both for the first and second office.25

Calhoun's apparent alliance with Jackson after the Pennsylvania state convention certainly contributed to Jackson's strength in other states, especially in the Carolinas, Maryland, and New Jersey. Jackson liked the prospect of an alignment with Calhoun, which would unite the south and the west as well as the Carolinas.26 A step was taken in this direction when the South Carolina legislature announced a

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25Calhoun to Lewis Cass (April 24, 1824), Hemphill, Papers of John C. Calhoun, vol. IX, pp. 49-51; see also Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 252, in which Benjamin Crowninshield communicates for the Calhounites that Calhoun would like Adams' support for the vice-presidency as a counter to Crawford.

26James, Andrew Jackson, pp. 74-75.
presidential ticket split two ways between Calhoun and Jackson. However, Calhoun was not committed to outright alliance with Jackson alone. As Adams wrote, "Calhoun's game is now to unite Jackson's supporters and mine upon him for Vice-President." Indeed, Calhoun himself made overtures to Adams' friends with respect to the vice-presidency. However, Adams felt Calhoun was unfit for the position. Certainly part of the reason Adams felt Calhoun was not fit for the vice-presidency stemmed from the strained relations that existed between them. Adams complained that Calhoun did not hesitate to change his views on matters of Cabinet discussion if it suited his "electioneering purposes." But more importantly, Adams disdained Calhoun's code of conduct that permitted him "to tear my reputation to pieces for the benefit of Mr. Calhoun, but that...[was] preceded and accompanied by professions of great respect and esteem."

Instead, Adams had been mentioning that Jackson would be his choice for the vice-presidency. It would provide a good geographic balance of offices, and "his name and character would serve to restore the forgotten dignity of the place." Adams continued, "it would afford an easy and dignified

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27'Niles' (March 6, 1824).
29'Ibid., pp. 232-233.
30'Ibid., pp. 244-245.
retirement to his old age." (Ironically, Adams was only about four months younger than Jackson, though he himself was not thinking of retirement by any means.) The motives of Adams here are difficult to decipher. Much of his thought on the subject came in the month after Jackson received the nomination of the Pennsylvania convention. He was also well-aware of the developing prospects of the Jackson party in New York under the management of James Tallmadge. Adams, however, did not view the Jackson party there as a threat to his own cause but as a divisive force that detracted from Adams in a contest that was essentially between Crawford and himself. He felt that the Tallmadge efforts were only intended to elect Jackson to gain a route to national eminence for Clinton. But he did warn that "Jackson's being a candidate for the first office" was "reason for hesitation." 31 Perhaps the only fit resolution to Adams' feelings about Jackson and the vice-presidency is that argued by Frederick Jackson Turner: he simply did not appreciate the force of Jackson's popular appeal. 32

However, as a republican and a democrat, Adams did not discount the force of the people per se. While Jackson may not have been able to gain an election by the people, that was because his merits were not what the majority of the people looked for, according to Adams. Rather, it was statesmanship

31Ibid., pp. 266-333, passim.
32Turner, Rise of the New West, p. 177.
and duty to the country through governmental service that the masses respected and deemed requisite for the presidential office. By virtue of such thinking, politics and campaigning (in the sense of the emerging election style first exhibited in this 1824 campaign) were not necessary for the truly worthy to pursue to be elected. Only those with less than a valid claim on the office needed to entice the public mind. Worse yet were those politicians who employed tactics to bolster negativistically their own causes. As he wrote in 1821, "If that office is to be the price of cabal and intrigue, of purchasing newspapers, bribing by appointments, or by bargaining by foreign missions, I have not [a] ticket in that lottery."

Yet the campaign of 1824 proved to be perhaps more intense than even Adams suspected in its early stages. By November, 1823, he found it necessary to respond with similar tactics. The National Journal, based in Washington and edited by Peter Force, was then conceived and soon commenced an attack on Calhoun who, as previously mentioned, had been duplicitous and in general opposition to Adams. However, the National Journal was more discreet than the Washington Gazette or the Washington Republican. Indeed, if the Journal was not at least respectable, it is unlikely that Adams would have accepted its

official endorsement in August, 1824. Although Adams never admitted participating in the newspaper's founding, the flagrancy of the Washington presses seemingly made it quite necessary for Adams' survival as a candidate. Finally, in September, 1824, Adams had to admit that, due to the "bitterness and violence of Presidential electioneering," the election was a great "uncertainty" and required unusual measures. No longer was the election to go to the most qualified, but rather the loudest. With the participation of the nation's perhaps most dignified statesman in the newspaper battles, it is fair to say that a new era of presidential politics had begun.

Undeniably, the most well-publicized newspaper attack of this first campaign of the new political era was launched by the political forces of Calhoun at Secretary of the Treasury Crawford. Despite the overtly political nature of the attacks because of the known Calhoun-Crawford antagonism, the "A.B." letters were nonetheless potentially damaging for Crawford's standing with the people since memories of the 1819 panic were still painfully recent. A letter to the pro-Calhoun Washington Republican on January 20, 1823, charged its editors, Joseph Gales and William Seaton, official printers of the government, with suppression of certain documents in a 1822 Treasury report to the House, in order to protect Crawford from the exposure of

"Ibid., p. 346.
certain extralegal activities involving several western banks. An investigative committee was formed in the House, and found that suppressions had occurred, but that ill intent on Crawford's part was not apparent and that Gales and Seaton were not responsible for those suppressions. Nevertheless, "A.B." continued to assert Crawford's guilt in the newspapers."

Senator Daniel P. Cook of Illinois urged a deeper examination of Crawford's correspondence with certain western banks, insisting that illegal transactions, entirely suppressed by Crawford, had transpired that were well beyond the scope of the minor infractions found by the first inquiry. In the subsequent investigation, the testimony of Senator Ninian Edwards of Illinois, friend of Calhoun and former bank president in Illinois, revealed further evidence imputing Crawford's guilt. Meanwhile, "A.B." began to bring to the public's attention government documents that bore out quite explicitly the charges against Crawford."

The situation was complicated when Edwards was appointed Minister to Mexico in the spring of 1824. Just when he was to leave for Illinois en route to Mexico, Crawford's reply to a House directive asserted his innocence with respect to any missing documents. Edwards heard of this transmission and

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"Ibid., pp. 49-50."
wrote a letter to the House, which arrived there on April 19, admitting to be "A.B."; re-outlining his charges; and criticizing the lack of thoroughness in the previous two investigations. However, he insisted that he was not charging Crawford with ill intent."

Monroe resented allegations in the press that he had given Edwards the mission to Mexico as a reward for his part in a plot to discredit Crawford. To moderate the pressure from the press, Monroe therefore considered recalling Edwards from his position before he embarked from his layover in Illinois. Adams counselled Monroe against such a course, saying that he should be merely ordered not to proceed on to Mexico."

Meanwhile, the third House investigative committee and the Crawfordites depicted Edwards as an accuser unwilling to substantiate reckless charges. Crawford told Daniel Webster of Massachusetts (a member of the committee) that the allegedly illegal deposits in the western banks were made after specific consultation with President Monroe and that the failure to report the deposits was a "mere inadvertancy." But, to Adams, irrefutable proof was in the public documents present in Washington. An intermediate report from the committee on

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"Ibid., p. 53; Mooney, William H. Crawford, p. 245.
"Wiltse, "John C. Calhoun and the 'A.B. Plot,'" p. 54; Adams, Memoirs, p. 299.
"Ibid., p. 306.
"Ibid., pp. 300-301.
May 25 stated that the facts of the case have been fully reviewed; Crawford had acted without improper motives, but Edwards was biased in his perception of the facts. Edwards was not censured, though.\textsuperscript{42} Adams believed that Webster and the rest of the committee were partial against Edwards.\textsuperscript{43} Furthermore, as William Plumer, Jr., of New Hampshire, informed Adams, "there was not a man in the House who would have the spirit to probe the affair to the bottom and expose it in its true colors." Undoubtedly, the reasoning was that Crawford, still ill, may yet have to withdraw from the election; his friends would then be available to support one of the remaining candidates. The intelligent course, then, was to avoid contributing to Crawford's dilemma.\textsuperscript{44}

Monroe was told by a confidante that, unless Edwards produced more substantial evidence, the final report of the committee would censure Edwards. To Adams, this was an attempt to force Edwards' removal from his Mexico post, which would imply his lack of credibility and Crawford's innocence, as well as the administration's agreement with both these implications.\textsuperscript{45} Further investigation of Edwards' motives fell on the question of whether he had denied being "A.B." in order to

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., p. 355.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 297.

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., p. 307; Wiltse, "John C. Calhoun and the 'A.B. Plot,'" p. 53.

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., p. 361, p. 366.
gain Senate confirmation for the Ministry to Mexico. In the course of Senator John Noble of Indiana's testimony in the latter regard, Calhoun was implicated in a plot against Crawford. The War department was mentioned as a means of transmission of certain evidence against Crawford, and Calhoun's name was then mentioned by Noble. However, the witness was cut off by Webster, apparently hoping to draw criticism to the Administration by the conjectures that would and did follow. Under the weight of public opinion that resulted, Edwards finally resigned on June 22, the day after the final report had cleared Crawford."

The alleged "A.B. plot" can be discussed in two substantially different ways. For one, the controversy was driven in part by local politics. The inception of the series of House investigations was essentially the result of Daniel Cook's call for an examination of "A.B.'s" assertions. Cook was able to be convinced, perhaps by Calhoun, to pursue this course not so much because he was opposed to Crawford and Radicalism but more likely since he could reap political advantages over his Illinois rival, Crawfordite Senator Jesse Thomas, if Crawford was forced to resign. However, after Crawford was cleared of the charges, the move worked against Cook and of course Edwards. Politicians were subsequently categorized as either

"Ibid., pp. 374-393, passim."
for or against Edwards. However, despite a period of alienation, Edwards did manage to be elected state governor in 1826; and Cook continued to serve in the House."

A second way to discuss the affair is in terms of its national effects. Indeed, it greatly intensified the presidential contest and particularly as it was embodied in the Washington news media. The National Intelligencer moved toward full sponsorship of Crawford, especially because of allegations of the editors' involvement in the suppressions. Its issue of July 1, 1824, was so anti-administration that the Monroe administration officially retracted its patronage. The National Journal, fast becoming Adams' official organ, was then named the administration's newspaper. A symptom of this intensification was an unseemly breach of Washingtonian etiquette. The committee organizing the capitol's Fourth of July celebration, which included among it ranks several Crawfordites and Joseph Gales, neglected to include Edwards on the guest list. Monroe and the Cabinet then refused to attend, as did most other non-Crawfordites."

Previously careful not to offend any Cabinet member, the National Intelligencer commenced an attack on Adams on July 6.

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Throughout July, Adams responded to continual attacks, trying to balance his duties at the State department with defense of his character. Finally, the pressure from the presses was too great, and he decided to take a one-month vacation beginning in September. To some, Adams should never have recognized the slanders of the *National Intelligencer* and others. As Clayite Josiah S. Johnston wrote, "Mr. Adams cannot write himself into that office & every time he acts personally on the Election it will hurt--The great public approves a dignified & retired course."

Clay and Jackson received considerably less abuse from the Washington tabloids. In August, Johnston, witnessing the recent hostilities between the Crawford and Adams presses, expressed relief that Clay did not have an active political press. However, the nature of the election of 1824, with its extraordinary number of candidates and the popular sentiment in favor of a more democratic method of nomination and election, dictated that strong sectional identity or a record of statesmanship would not be able to triumph alone. One had to maintain a rapport with the public as well. Clay was slow to learn this. He depended too much on the waning ideal of the

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passive campaign; and, as a result, rumors of Clay's withdrawal as a candidate circulated throughout the summer and into October. Clay's managers subsequently were to employ the New England Galaxy and Masonic Magazine to keep alive Clay's candidacy.57 Other techniques, such as a circular that was issued in the September 22, 1824, edition of the Argus of Western America, were used to quell rumors that Clay had withdrawn from the contest.58 Hezekiah Niles on June 5 also sought to dissuade such rumors. In June, friends of Clay even had planned a paper in Washington, to be called the American Mercury; but the Mercury project was abandoned for an unknown reason.59

Unlike Clay, Jackson was directly attacked by Crawford's organs in part because of his known dislike for the Secretary of the Treasury after Crawford's vocal opposition to Jackson's measures in the Florida campaign and also because Jackson was considered Crawford's rival in certain southern states. But, as Jackson wrote, "The subjects the[y] embrace, if I am rightly informed, will increase my standing with the nation more than

57Johnston to Clay (August 25, 1824), ibid., pp. 817-819; Johnston to Clay (October 20, 1824), ibid., pp. 869-870.
58Ibid., vol. III, p. 823n.
59Niles' (June 12, 1824), vol. XXVI, p. 244.
any other course they can pursue; they will elect me, contrary to their wishes, by their abuse.""32

The subject by which Crawfordites berated Jackson was ironically Jackson's republicanism, the quality which likely accounted for his electoral successes in the fall. Senator Walter Lowrie of Pennsylvania in February, 1824, claimed to have received an anonymous letter that contained an original correspondence between Jackson and Monroe in 1816-1817. In one of the letters, Jackson recommended that Monroe appoint Colonel W.H. Drayton of South Carolina to a minor position within his administration. Although Colonel Drayton was a Federalist, Jackson felt that he would still serve ably under Monroe.36 When Lowrie questioned the letters' intent, Jackson stated that the letters reflected "freedom of opinion"; but Lowrie and the Crawfordites claimed the letters revealed his weak commitment to the Republican party and his sympathy for Federalism.57 Even worse, according to his opponents, Jackson had written in the correspondence that, if he had been at the scene of the Hartford Convention in 1815, he would have hanged its leaders. To Jackson's political opponents, this was

"Jackson to Andrew J. Donelson (March 6, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 235.
"Jackson to Andrew J. Donelson (January 18, 1824), ibid., pp. 223-224; Jackson to Donelson (February 26, 1824), ibid., p. 231; Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, pp. 248-249.
"Jackson to Donelson (April 16, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 248.
further evidence that Jackson was undisciplined and dangerous to the continuation of civilized government. As one writer felt,

Despotism, in its most absolute form, would find something more plausible for its bloodiest deed, than the general has drawn from the rules and articles for the government of the armies of the United States of America, to justify his fancied exploit."

By April, a considerable portion of the controversy had shifted to Monroe, who appeared equally as treacherous in the correspondence. Monroe was depicted in Crawfordite presses as disloyal to his party and set on the elimination of partisan politics in American government. The publication of the correspondence in May, 1824, in the National Intelligencer and in Niles' Weekly Register, among others, seemed to be a deathblow to the ailing Republican party. The revelation that Monroe did in fact desire to create a bipartisan administration in 1817 laid additional stress on the electoral process that was to produce a president in the fall. Crawfordite politicians, especially Martin Van Buren, felt that the last hope for the Republican party was in a rejuvenation of the New York-Virginia alliance. However, as we will see, New York politics were no longer Republican politics per se, but rather they were symptomatic of the nation's drift toward greater

"Niles' (June 5, 1824), vol. XXVI, p. 219; quoted from the Boston Gazette (May 26, 1824).

"Remini, Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, pp. 72-73."
democratic awareness. Not of course that democracy and party politics were mutually exclusive, but the parties were fragmented, and the people were increasingly self-righteous. Political parties aspired either to win over the people, or to cling to old methods by suppression of the new. But the very coexistence of the two conflicting political desires of old and new doomed the old, since it depended on party regularity and unified control at the top of the political heirarchy. In a political system increasingly driven by events from "below," Crawfordites in New York and old Republicans in general were destined to decline in strength.

Returning to Jackson's candidacy, Jackson was able to resist serious injury in the wake of the Lowrie publications for the same reason he had mentioned in his March letter to Donelson (quoted above, p. 118). The basis for the Jackson candidacy by 1824 was an implicit promise to the people that his presidency would return morality and republican virtue to the government. The hostile campaigning, as much as the congressional caucus, was perceived by a considerable portion of the people to be a betrayal of the Founding Fathers' idealism and an abandonment of the people as the source for both the power and the moral force in American government. Certain politicians in states like New York went to great efforts to preserve their control over the state governments; and when local politicians did bow to the people, the measures
used to gain support insulted the dignity of the process as it had been known in the past. Thus, Lowrie's scheme only reinforced the grounds on which Jackson's candidacy was already based.

The establishment of Jackson as an essential foil to the "corruption" in politics during the 1824 campaign was achieved certainly because of Jackson's reputation as a military hero. But equally important too was the publication of a series of letters by "Wyoming" (John Henry Eaton) that expounded Jackson's virtue, especially his revolutionary war experience, and his dedication to freedom. The letters sought to dispense with fears that Jackson's reckless military past would bring down the republic by comparing Jackson to General George Washington of 1789 and by presenting Jackson as the contemporary example of the "revolutionary ideal." First appearing in the *Columbian Observer* of Philadelphia in 1823, the letters were later committed to pamphlet form in 1824 and were referred to or quoted in papers throughout the country.66

While every candidate recognized the need to project the image of a forthright republican to overcome the generally negative perception of the country's political leadership, the year 1824 presented a number of issues that were both sectionally and economically charged. Debate on a new tariff began in

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early March in the House of Representatives, and early reflected the tension surrounding the uncertain and hostile presidential campaign. One exchange between Philip P. Barbour of Virginia and Samuel D. Ingham of Pennsylvania developed into a dispute over the legitimacy of Virginia's ascendancy within the Union, and whether that state had taken advantage of its early economic strength and quality of leadership to sustain an unfair representation in the national government after its original justification had vanished. Ingham complained that Virginia did; and that now, with the issue of the tariff, Virginia was abandoning Pennsylvania and the states in need of tariff protection for the pursuit of its own greedy ends.61

However, while the tariff debates mirrored the chaotic machinations of the 1824 campaign, they also had the effect of clarifying those machinations as time progressed. The issue of the tariff overshadowed practical political alignments and brought into focus one's true interests. The candidates were given the opportunity to establish a distinct identity on an issue that affected the whole nation. Henry Clay's speech on March 30-31 represented his American System in its most mature form, and cast Clay's electoral hopes with that program.62 Any southern states that had been tending toward him for the presidency were thereafter less likely to support him.

61Niles' (March 6, 1824), vol. XXVI, pp. 14-15.
62Niles' (August 7 and 14, 1824), vol. XXVI, pp. 378-394.
However, Clay still thought that any losses experienced in the south because of his association with the tariff would be compensated for by gains elsewhere."

Clay's motives for supporting the tariff, among other things, were attacked by Crawfordites despite his history of being a protectionist. The April 9 edition of the Richmond Enquirer called his congressional support of the tariff and of independence for the South American states as mere "electioneering schemes." Adams also felt that, throughout his two terms as Secretary of State, Clay's advocacy of South American independence represented one of his efforts at "seizing upon the popular feeling of the moment to perplex and embarrass the administration." In Clay's defense, his constituency in Kentucky had a clear interest in protection of the domestic hemp market; and the democratic west certainly sympathized with the rebels of the South American republics. In both cases, Clay was embracing the sentiments of those who elected him; perhaps to Adams, who held more conservative views on the role of the elected official, Clay acted selfishly when not acting for the good of the whole nation; but to Clay, following the public's sentiments was his essential task both

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"Ibid., p. 737n.
in order to fulfill his duty and in order to perpetuate his own political existence. But as his tariff stand in March and April placed his hopes with the west and possibly New York, his chances for the fall election suffered, as the election would seem to require a more national body of support.

The tariff bill passed the House by a vote of 107–102, thanks largely to Clay. It mandated modestly high tariffs, despite a universally well-regarded speech by Daniel Webster on April 1–2 in favor of free trade. Even though the bill passed in the House, voting against the bill by the delegations of Tennessee and the southwestern states was a bad omen for Clay's electoral performance.

Before being passed into law, the bill was amended in the Senate, but retained Clay's stamp of protection. Jackson voted for the tariff, considering it judicious and necessary for the defense of American freedom; for the protection of U.S. industry, with a view towards self-sufficiency in wartime; and for the employment of American labor. He justified his support for the bill, using language that echoed Eaton's "republican virtue" rhetoric:

If our liberty and republican form of government, procured for us by our revolutionary fathers, are


"Jackson to L.H. Coleman (April 26, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 249."
worth the blood and treasure at which they were obtained, it surely, is our duty to protect and defend them." Some of Jackson's advisors felt a vote for the tariff would hurt his campaign, especially in South Carolina. But Jackson could see no danger in decisions that were based on sound principle.

Another measure that Jackson supported in the Senate was the ratification of the Slave-Trade Convention with Great Britain. The treaty of the Convention specified, in general, that 1) the slave trade was piracy; 2) Great Britain and the United States would each possess the right of search and capture of offenders; and 3) the trial of the seized pirate would be conducted by his own nation. Although Jackson's vote for the treaty may seem surprising in light of his ownership of slaves, the Convention had become an element of the ongoing conflict between the Crawfordites and the Monroe administration. Jackson did not want to be associated with any measures that might link him to the unprincipled opposition in Congress.

"Niles' (June 12, 1824), vol. XXVI, p. 245.


Ibid., vol. VI, p. 350.

"Niles' (June 5, 1824), vol. XXVI, p. 271.
The Crawfordite opposition to the treaty, which was led by Webster of Massachusetts and John Holmes of Maine, was as much political as economic. Politically, the treaty's defeat would embarrass Adams and the State department, who had been working to establish better relations with Great Britain since the end of the War of 1812. Furthermore, the treaty's granting of the right of search to Great Britain—a certainly unpopular notion since the experience before the War of 1812—was used by the Crawfordites to attack the treaty for unnecessarily endangering American freedom at sea.

But more important for Crawford and the south than the political benefits of defeating the treaty were its economic implications. Ratification of such an agreement threatened to produce further agreements about slavery. And Britain, which was already discussing the abolition of slavery in its Parliament, might propose joint action on the subject. Isaac Hill, editor of the pro-Crawford New Hampshire Patriot, and General John Cocke of Tennessee sought to exploit this fear of abolition by starting rumors and misrepresenting facts about Adams' position in 1820 with regard to slave restriction in Missouri. But Adams, who had not favored restriction, was little affected by their efforts."

""Ibid., p. 321; ibid., pp. 328-329.
""Ibid., pp. 342-343.
The issue of ratification by the Senate and the political opposition that the treaty was receiving there strained relations further within the Cabinet. Adams and Monroe were anxious to ratify the convention since it was they who had agreed the arrangement on Great Britain. The failure of the Senate to accept the convention in the form agreed upon in consultation with Great Britain would weaken American prestige and threaten to disrupt talks in progress with Britain over the boundary of Maine. With this in mind, the President asked Crawford, who had previously been in favor of the arrangements when they were discussed in the Cabinet, to call off the opposition in the Senate. But Crawford refused to intervene in Senate affairs, and denied that he had supported the convention's principles." As a result, the treaty was amended several times by the Senate opposition; the altered terms of the convention were unacceptable to the British; and negotiations on the Maine boundary collapsed.

By the end of May, Crawford's health had again become a source of uncertainty in the campaign. Having suffered a severe relapse that indeed threatened his life, Crawford

"Hecht, Marie B., John Quincy Adams: A Personal History of An Independent Man, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972, p. 385; Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 362. Adams had originally resisted concession of the right of search to the British, at which time Crawford and his partisans favored the treaty and used Adams' resistance to this concession as evidence that he favored the slave trade; Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 428."
managed to recover, though his energy was low and his eyesight
and speech were impeded." However, because his managers had
worked in the past to minimize the outward appearance of his
incapacity, reports of his recovery did not stifle rumors of
his withdrawal as a candidate. At the time of Crawford's
closest brush with death, Adams speculated that the Craw-
dorditites had made up their minds to favor Clay. Why else would
they have come out so strongly against the Slave-Trade Conven-
tion? Adams believed that, if Crawford's future status as a
candidate was as yet not certain, Crawford's supporters would
be careful about offending a candidate who might later prove to
be the strongest and therefore the most worthy to take Craw-
dord's place as their favorite. But since Jackson and now
Adams were distinct enemies of the Secretary of the Treasury,
Clay was the clear second choice for the Crawfordites.
Indeed, Clay wrote even in April that other Crawfordites were
anxious for him to make it into the House election since
Crawford's prospects were declining. And in May, Clay inter-
preted the travels of Van Buren and Governor Mahlon Dickerson
of New Jersey in Virginia as the last efforts of a dying candi-
dacy.  

"Clay to Peter B. Porter (April 3, 1824), Hopkins, Clay
Papers, vol. III, p. 731; Clay to Francis T. Brooke (May 28,
1824), ibid., p. 767.
enough to travel to Bath, Virginia, from Washington, Adams and Clay men continued to doubt reports of his improving health, though they did not deny the important role Crawford's faction would play in the election, whether Crawford was healthy or not."

However, by September, it became apparent that Crawford would remain a contender. Clay's hopes declined subsequently, especially in Virginia, and talk of a coalition with Crawford to make Clay his vice-president were renewed." However, Clay did not feel the west would be unified enough behind him to get the east to concur in a plan placing him in the vice-presidential office. Furthermore, settling for the vice-presidency would be said to display a most inordinate desire for office, which I certainly am not conscious of feeling. It could not look well in any aspect, if it were supposed that I was instrumental in the attempt to elect me."

Finding no recourse, his lack of support in the east for the presidency was expected to discourage much of the west and would lead to his abandonment there." However, as Josiah S. Johnston counselled him, "after all much will be found to

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9Clay to Johnston (September 3, 1824), *ibid.*, pp. 826-827.
10Clay to Johnston (August 31, 1824), *ibid.*, pp. 821-823.
depend on Geographical considerations—or other great causes over which an individual has no control."

Meanwhile, in New York, the state political system was nearing a watershed change in 1824. In January, a bill was passed by the lower house of the state legislature that challenged the control of Van Buren's Regency. It proposed to transfer the selection of presidential electors from the legislature to the people, on the basis of a general ticket. As James Tallmadge, one of the leaders of the People's Party of New York, described the situation,

There is much excitement arising from our electoral bill and other local causes. The season for acting is at hand. The state administration is acting for Crawford. It must be met, and a definite object, be held up to our people."

However, by September, the enthusiasm of the early months of 1824 had calmed in New York, as the forces of oligarchic control were able to freeze the electoral bill in the state senate by postponing action on the bill until after the presidential election." For Clay and Adams, and certainly for Crawford, whose forces composed a near majority in the state legislature, the defeat of the bill was good news: if the bill had passed and the people had received the power to

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81 Johnstone to Clay (August 9, 1824), ibid., p. 809.
82 Tallmadge to Jackson (March 6, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 236.
elect directly the presidential electors, it was likely that DeWitt Clinton would have run for the presidency with the effect at least of splintering their support in New York and creating even greater uncertainty.

The New York gubernatorial election of 1824 contributed to the political confusion that already surrounded the Regency's attempts to prevent the selection of electors by the people. For the Regency, the gubernatorial election represented a chance to solidify its control of the state political mechanism that it had gained in the previous state elections. For the nation, the New York political situation was a clear example of the political and moral chaos that might afflict the nation as a whole if republican virtue and dignity were not restored to the national government with the new president. But perhaps of greatest importance, the posturing for position in the campaign for governor of the state of New York would create the ground-work for the New York legislature's decision on its presidential electors; and as New York was long considered to be the state of paramount importance in the 1824 election, the gubernatorial contest deserves all the more attention.

On April 3, the legislative caucus for the nomination of a candidate for governor chose not to endorse the incumbent Governor Joseph C. Yates, since he was too highly associated with the unpopular defeat of the electoral law bill. Instead, the Regency decided to nominate the popular Samuel Young, most
often associated with the People’s Party. The nomination of Young encouraged Clay, who deemed the nominee both a strong candidate for election and a supporter of his cause for the presidency. The decision to drop Yates was regarded by Clay and Adams as a blow to Crawford’s chances in New York, and Adams thought that it demonstrated the weakness of Van Buren’s party in New York.” However, as events unfolded, the nomination of Young was only a symptom of the Regency’s confidence in its control over politics and the people.

Robbed of its first choice, the People’s Party threw its weight behind Tallmadge for governor. This provoked the Regency to move for the removal of Clinton from the post of Canal Commissioner, hoping to weaken Tallmadge’s candidacy by forcing him to take a stand in the senate on a vote for or against Clinton. The people were outraged by the Regency’s apparent contempt for the good of the people of the state, as Clinton had been a very able administrator of the state’s extensive projects, especially the Erie Canal. Governor Yates saw the opportunity to improve his standing with the people in part by dissociating himself from the Regency’s motives; on June 2, he ordered a special session of the state legislature to begin August 2 for the further consideration of the electoral law bill. However, the legislature shunned the gover-

nor's right to convene the legislature and adjourned after four days without taking any action on the bill."

With this final act of resistance to democratization by the legislature, the democratic hopes of New York turned to the convention, planned by the friends of Clay and Adams and scheduled for September 21 at Utica. The delegates came from around the state and represented the local concerns of nearly every quarter. In general, the delegates were "chosen by voters opposed to William H. Crawford for President and in favor of restoring the choice of presidential electors to the people."** In all, roughly one-fourth of the convention was believed to favor Tallmadge and to claim membership in the People's Party. However, Tallmadge's vote for the removal of Clinton operated as the Regency had hoped. His nomination was not acceptable to a majority of the delegates despite the strong presence of the People's Party. Clinton emerged as the next-best choice for the convention, as John Taylor was more popular but did not intend to accept a nomination if it was extended. Clinton's nomination upset Tallmadge's party, and the delegates favorable to him convened separately and announced his nomination. However, the contest became primarily a battle

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**Ibid., p. 327.
between Clinton and Young, or, the people versus the forces of political domination."

Clinton’s resounding victory over Young, a virtual reversal of equal proportion of the decisive 1822 realignment that established Van Buren’s faction as the ascendant force in New York politics, was a victory reflecting the arrival of a pluralistic political system, which, compared to the oligarchy of the Regency, seemed like true democratic control. However, Calhoun wrote to Smith Thompson of New York that he was disappointed with the result of New York’s gubernatorial election since he felt that it was not likely that machine politics would decline under Clinton. Although one may argue that the Clintonian faction played a part in the defeat of the Regency candidate, the primary motivation for his candidacy came not from the struggling Clintonians but from the people themselves and from their desire to gain political control of the state, especially for the selection of presidential electors.

Meanwhile, the candidates and their reservoirs of popular opinion speculated furiously as the November elections approached. The quantity of candidates and the novel amount of electoral mechanisms that democratized the process produced a

"Ibid., pp. 331-333.

myriad of possibilities. Moreover, in the states where electors were chosen by the legislature, the results were even more uncertain, as the complexity of local political affairs and the rather immediate pressure that the people exerted on the state legislators created room for substantial diversity of opinion and effect on the election. Practically all that was universally held was that the election tended toward uncertainty.

Not the least powerful effect on opinions of the presidential election was the existence of complex campaign organizations that disseminated both fact and fiction as to the state of affairs in the various parts of the country and as to the mood of the people. Adams and Crawford enjoyed the advantage of having their departmental bureaucracies and patronage to help their causes among the people, though only Crawford fully exploited this advantage. Several of the candidates (namely, Crawford, Calhoun, and Clay) established committees of correspondence, a sort of precursor for the modern political campaign. Although these committees did not possess a national quality in their organization, they were linked across the nation in the sense that the candidates themselves and their closest political confidantes were the guiding force of the committees. Calhoun's candidacy was the

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*Clyto Johnston (September 10, 1824), Hopkins, *Clay Papers*, vol. III, pp. 832-834.*
most explicit example of the operation of the correspondence committee; many of Calhoun’s non-official writings of the campaign years were directly related to his efforts to organize a chain of support throughout the country which would in turn act on the local political arenas. Rather than defy the political ethic that stipulated removal from the machinations of one’s candidacy, the candidate sought to promulgate their views and to convey their character through chains of correspondence. Certain candidates adhered more and others less to this ethic. Adams and Jackson generally did not employ letter writing as a means to advance their candidacies; but while both eventually came to depend on newspapers, the advantage of the correspondence committees was that the newspapers operated rather independently of the candidates, and often a newspaper’s support was voluntary. The obvious exceptions were the Washington newspapers, whose support was essentially bought with contracts for the printing of government documents. The committee of correspondence, thus, represents the rather unique character of the 1824 campaign since they pay due homage to the import of local opinion as well as the power of the common voter.

*For example, see Clay to Johnston (October 27, 1824), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. III, pp. 787-788; also Hemphill, Papers of John C. Calhoun, vols. VIII, IX, passim.*
Meetings of the people occurred in virtually every state, and the conspicuous lack of consensus within state boundaries demonstrated by the resolutions of these meetings only reinforced the uncertainty of the election's result. However, the very existence of nominations by such meetings of Jackson, Crawford, and Clay in the same state underlines the fact that one must not assume that Jacksonian popularity in Pennsylvania, for instance, implied that all sections of that state favored him equally. Furthermore, it was indeed rare for the committee of such a meeting of the people to report a unanimous decision. And as there was a tendency for those committees to exaggerate, the inherent diversity within the voting public is all the more apparent. Thus, the presidential election was to be, at least when closely viewed, the amalgamation of local and, indeed, individual results. As Remini wrote, "...the election of 1824 marked the first presidential election in American history in which popular voting figured in the outcome."

However, while uncertainty seemed inherent in the results of popular meetings, rational guesses were more easily made where the people chose the electors directly since inferences

"Niles' vols. XXVI, XXVII, passim.
"For examples, see Niles' (June 5, 1824); Edward Patchell to Jackson (August 7, 1824), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, pp. 262-264.
"Remini, Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, p. 81.
as to the likely interests of the citizenry at large were often clear. This was not the case, though, when a state’s electors were chosen by the legislature. In 1824, six states—Delaware, South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, Louisiana, and New York—still chose electors by the legislature.14 As has been and will be shown, by the example of New York, state politics played a decisive role, in varying degrees in the legislature’s decisions. In some states, like Vermont and Georgia, the decision of the legislators was not controversial since the state had an obvious interest in one candidate. However, in other states, the political and economic interests of the people were not well-defined, and the legislature’s decision therefore was controversial and indeed splintered between candidates.

As to the effect of Clinton’s election on the contest for New York’s presidential electors, it determined only that the mood of the people was one of despair with the system. While the New York senate remained firmly with Crawford’s partisans, the lower house of the legislature was undetermined as to how it act in fulfilling its crucial role in the presidential contest.15 The contest was to be between Adams, Clay, and Crawford; Jackson was generally recognized to be too weak to

15Hecht, John Quincy Adams, p. 395.
garner any portion of the state's electors, even though Clinton was known to prefer Jackson. Indeed, that the preference of the popularly elected governor carried no weight with the legislators highlights the fact that the people's elected representatives did not perform the will of the people.

The New York constitution held that only two electoral tickets could be considered by the legislature. As a result, in early October, Clayite Peter B. Porter was expecting that Clay's forces would be part of a compromise between the more dominant Adams and Crawford factions, especially because of the comparatively amicable relations maintained by Clay with the other candidates. However, the forces of Adams and Crawford recognized that, if Clay was granted too many electors to elicit his entry into an agreement on a compromise ballot, he may likely have enough to enter into the House election (which it was presumed he would win if he were to qualify for that election). In the end a decisive Clay-Adams coalition was arranged by their New York partisans. The Clay forces were feeling betrayed by the Crawfordites, with whom the Clay forces in New York had seriously discussed a coalition. However, the Crawfordites had thrown their votes behind Adams in the lower house's nominating caucus, thinking that, if only a Clay and

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"Hecht, John Quincy Adams, p. 395."
Adams ticket existed, Clayites would follow through with their previous arrangement to favor Crawford. As a result of the Clayites' perception of the Crawfordites' movements, an agreement was secretly reached between Clay and Adams men to form a split ticket, the plan being that the Adams men would confer Clay seven electors in exchange for support of the joint ticket of electors of electors and on the condition that Clay won in Louisiana. 100

Despite the existence of the agreement between the two candidates' supporters, the election was calculated and recalculated to be extremely close. Crawfordites, having played out all their remaining options, resorted to bribery to sway three Adams men to vote for the Crawford ticket of electors. This act of corruption was figured to be enough for Crawford to win the state. However, Thurlow Weed, an ardent supporter of the Adams' candidacy, staved the corrupt dealings and returned the votes of the three men to Adams with threats of exposure of the bribery. 101

On the day of the joint session of the New York legislature, the discovery of the split ticket created a great stir among the Crawfordites, who threatened to disband—a rather fit finale to a generally poor demonstration of American democracy.

100 Mooney, William H. Crawford, p. 279.
Once the session was brought to order, the results were announced: twenty-six electors for Adams, five for Crawford, four for Clay, and one for Jackson. Some Clayites claim, like Jabez Hammond in his history of New York, that Adamsites had reneged on the agreement for a coalition. However, the legislature of Louisiana had decided against Clay and in favor of Jackson, thereby not satisfying the conditions of the agreement. Clay attributed the Louisiana defeat to a number of forces. In a letter to Porter, he mentioned a report that two Clayites were involved in an accident on the way to the legislature, and failed to vote, thus causing Clay to lose by a vote of thirty to twenty-eight. Also, three legislators deserted his ticket, given to rumors of his withdrawal elsewhere. But in the end, the decisive factor in Louisiana was a coalition of Adams and Jackson men. The result of the coalition, despite Louisiana's numerical insignificance (only five of the total two-hundred sixty-one electors), certainly was a clear example of the virtue of the election by the people. That state had been divided throughout the contest between Clay and Jackson; the Adams forces were only large to

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assure that, if they voted in a block, they could decide the election between the Clay and Jackson, though they had no chance of electing Adams. However, by the scheming of partisans, Adams came away with forty percent of the electors in a state where he had very little popular support; and Clay was deprived of a victory in that state, and consequently of a victory in New York, and therefore arguably of an entrance into the House election. By 1828, Louisiana would pass a law in favor of a general ticket for the election of presidential electors by the people.

As the election returns trickled into Washington, it was seen that Jackson fared very well in the polling throughout the South, earning all electors except for two from Louisiana and the votes of Crawford's home state of Georgia. This decisive showing reflected the weakness of Crawford and would essentially limit the contest in the House to Adams and Jackson. In addition, continued reports of his "infirm health" into December contributed off his decline as a competitor in the 1824 election. But most of all, strong opposition to Crawford in the House of Representatives and the willingness of his enemies to join in coalitions to secure his defeat was the final step in his decline.

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Calhoun wrote that Adams' and Jackson's defeat of Crawford was evidence of "the force of truth and principles." As the defeat of Crawford was the defeat of corrupt politics and unethical use of public office, the decision of states like New York, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina for candidates other than Virginia's favorite (Crawford) was held to mark the end of its era of leadership and the shifting of influence in the national government to the economically more progressive states.\footnote{Calhoun to James Tallmadge November 20, 1824), Hemphill, Papers of John C. Calhoun, vol. IX, p. 393.}

Furthermore, while the west was not unified behind one candidate,\footnote{Calhoun to Charles Fisher (December 10, 1824), ibid., pp. 438-439.} it showed a coherent trust in their own leadership. The New England states were united behind Adams, while Maryland and Delaware were split among Jackson, Adams, and Crawford. Jackson managed to win the votes of New Jersey, which was heavily influenced by its neighbor to the west, Pennsylvania.

Overall, Jackson won the popular balloting with a plurality of forty-five thousand over Adams, his nearest competitor.\footnote{Jackson won Tennessee, Indiana, and two of the three Illinois electors (the third going to Adams); Clay won Missouri, Ohio, and Kentucky.} That translated to a plurality of electoral votes as

\footnote{The popular votes were 153,544 for Jackson, 108,740 for Adams, 46,618 for Crawford, and 47,136 for Clay.}
well, but not a sufficient number for a majority.\textsuperscript{110} As a result, by the Twelfth Amendment, the election was to go to the House of Representatives for its final decision.

\textsuperscript{110}Jackson had 99 electoral votes, Adams 84, Crawford 41, and Clay 37.
V

The Election in the House of Representatives
and the Question of Corrupt Bargain
The great constitutional corrective in the hands of the people against the usurpation of power, or corruption by their agents is the right of suffrage; and this when used with calmness and deliberation will prove strong enough.

—Andrew Jackson, June 25, 1825

According to Thomas Hart Benton’s interpretation in Thirty Years’ View, the election of 1824 was a test of the Constitution’s demos krateo in that the turbulence effusing from the existence of one-party rule since the elections of 1816 was to result in the electorate redirecting the government, therefore asserting the people’s role as a stabilizing force. Benton asserts that the popular plurality that Andrew Jackson received should have been translated into a majority vote in the House of Representatives in his favor. However, according to Benton, the activities of Henry Clay and the others associated with the ultimate victory of John Quincy Adams defied the dictates of demos krateo. The result was the fall from prestige of Clay and the failure of congressmen to be reelect-

Jackson to James Buchanan (June 25, 1825), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 287.
ed to office who did not vote in the House with a proper regard for the popular balloting..SetFloat

After the election's result was determined in the electoral college, the nation was told that it would have to wait until February 9 of the following year to know who its next president would be. The selection of Calhoun by a considerable majority (182 to 78) conferred the advantage in the early weeks of the "second campaign" to Jackson, who had been allied with the Secretary of War since the Pennsylvania nomination of Jackson on March 4, 1824. However, the nature of the campaign for the electors to sit in the electoral college had been governed by a distinct pattern: where the people controlled the elective process by direct balloting, the election proceeded upon an predictable basis, with economic and local advantage being followed almost without exception. However, when elected officials, possessing political mandates withdrawn from the public interest, had a hand in the process of election, decisions were not entirely representative of the forces actually operating in society at large. Thus, ironically, in an election that has been consistently lauded as the election that was the start of true representative American democracy, powerful politicians would determine the result for the very reason that the election had been so democratic. The broadly

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divergent forces present in the people and the collapse of the Republican party meant that several candidates all had the opportunity to win the election, but such diversity was transformed by the system of democracy established in the Constitution into an election that had to be decided by an elite of politicians in the House who were given to machine politics and scheming.

The politician at the center of this elite in the Congress in Washington was Henry Clay. As a quite popular and respected speaker of the House, he was generally recognized to hold the power to determine the election in the House. His ability to win the support of his fellow legislators was amply proven in his leadership in the formation of the nation’s first cohesive legislative program, the American System. Before the American System, Clay had led the successful drive for war with Great Britain during the Napoleonic wars as a leading War Hawk. As Marquis James wrote, "None but Clay had the slightest chance of diverting from Jackson the Western states Adams must have to succeed."

However, Clay consistently rejected the idea of using his influence in the House to effect any result in the election; instead, he continually referred to his duty and his conscience.

'James, Andrew Jackson, p. 110.'
as the forces that would direct him in his vote. In the letter
to Leigh on December 22, 1824, Clay wrote,

I can only say that the duty which I have to perform
shall be fulfilled with an anxious and solemn deter-
mination to promote the public good, if I can dis-
cern it, and without the slightest reference to
personal considerations. 4

In a letter to Rufus Easton on December 18, 1824, Clay again
implies that he will not play an active role in the House
election: "It is impossible at present to predict the choice
which the House of Representatives may finally make. Whatever
it may be I hope it will tend to promote the happiness of our
Country." 5 Thus, Clay in his correspondence attempted to
dispose of the possibility that he may use his obvious influ-
ence to condone a result not consistent the public good. Yet
these declarations were mere words, not reflecting necessarily
his ultimate actions.

Certainly both the Adams and Jackson men recognized the
influence that Clay had in the House. An Adams man said in
1825, "It is very much in Mr. Clay's power to make the presi-
dent." 6 In a letter dated January 8, 1825, to Blair, Clay said
that partisans were accosting him on a regular basis. 7

4Clay to Leigh (December 22, 1824), Hopkins, Clay Papers,
vol. III, p. 901.
5Clay to Easton (December 18, 1824), ibid., pp. 898-899.
6James, Andrew Jackson, p. 103.
7Clay to Blair (January 8, 1825), Hopkins, Clay Papers,
vol. IV, pp. 9-10.
However, many doubted his devotion to public duty and the soundness of his political morality. Robert Hayne, in a letter to Andrew Jackson in 1827, said of Clay,

Altogether unprincipled, ambitious, daring, bold and without the smallest regard either to the courtesies or decencies of life, he inspires his political followers with a spirit not unlike that which distinguishes a savage warfare. (Bassett 358)

On April 6, 1820, Adams wrote, "...Clay is essentially a gamester...with a vigorous intellect, an ardent spirit, a handsome elocution, though with a mind very defective in elementary knowledge, and a very undigested system of ethics."

On March 9, 1821, Adams wrote,

Clay had large and liberal views of public affairs, and that sort of generosity which attaches individuals to his person. As President of the Union, his administration would be a perpetual succession of intrigues and management with the legislature."

In a letter to the *Niles' Register* in 1827, Thomas M. Randolph related Thomas Jefferson's views on Clay, which he had gathered from numerous conversations: "Towards Mr. Clay, as a politician, Mr. Jefferson constantly manifested a very strong repugnance, and often said that he was merely a splendid orator, without ... any determined public principles."

Of course, not all depended on gaining the favor of Clay. Numerous coalitions were proposed among the partisans of every

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*Niles' Register* (September 8, 1827), vol. XXXIII, p. 21.
faction. Crawfordites still hoped that they might salvage their leader's candidacy, despite Crawford's apparent physical inability to hold office even if he were elected. Clay wrote rather wryly in response to overtures from Crawford's partisans that their efforts "resemble the eulogisms which are pronounced upon a man after his death." Ultimately, the Crawford forces combined with the Calhoun and Crawford forces in a very unexpected coalition, unexpected especially considering both Calhoun's profound hatred of Crawford and Jackson's self-righteous declarations. As Jackson wrote on January 23 to John Coffee,

"...it was only to discover that there was nothing but show, nothing of pure principles of friendship. In these crowds, hypocrisy and hollow heartedness predominates this city [Washington]."  

Although Jackson wrote this suspecting a coalition of Crawford, Clay, and Adams forces against himself, there is equal and opposite evidence that the same sort of coalition was in the making between Crawfordites and Jackson men, and not necessarily without Jackson's approbation. Adams was told by Representative W.C. Bradley of Vermont that Crawford and Jackson were assuring each other that they held no personal hostilities for each other; this Adams interpreted as a clear

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sign of coalition.\textsuperscript{13} Monroe expressed similar sentiments to Adams, especially both Jackson and Crawford had previously denigrated the other openly.\textsuperscript{14}

By the end of January, the combatants were firmly aligned. On January 24, 1825, Clay announced that he would support Adams in the House. As Adams wrote,

The impression almost universal, made yesterday, was that the election was settled in my favor; but the result of the counter-movement will be the real crisis, and I have little doubt that will be decisive the other way.\textsuperscript{15}

"Re-operation," according to Adams, was what characterized the coalition opposed to his election. That opposition, however, was not necessarily based upon corrupt motives. The charges that Clay and Adams had struck a deal to decide the House election in a mutually advantageous way circulated and threatened to produce a serious uproar. Indeed, on January 29, Adams "received...an anonymous letter from Philadelphia threatening organized opposition and civil war if Jackson is not chosen."\textsuperscript{16} To decipher whether these charges of bargain and corruption are true, it is important to look at the nature of events with respect to the interaction of Clay, Adams, and their friends in the time since mid-December, 1824.

\textsuperscript{13}Adams, Memoirs, vol. VI, p. 474.  
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., pp. 485-486.  
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 478.  
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., vol. VI, p. 483.
On December 17, 1825, Adams was visited by Robert Letcher, an intimate of Clay. About this visit, Adams wrote,

The drift of all Letcher's discourse was much the same as [Edward] Wyer [friend of Adams] had told me, that Clay would willingly support me if he could thereby serve himself, and the substance of his meanings was, that if Clay's friends could know that he would give a prominent share in the Administration, that might induce them to vote for me, even in the face of instructions [from state legislatures].¹⁷

Letcher said that Clay had decided that his actions in the controversy with Jonathan Russell concerning the Ghent negotiations had been misguided and that Clay fully regrets his past actions. To this, Adams told Letcher that, since he repelled the attacks by Russell, which he believed at the time to have originated with Clay, he held no hard feelings for Clay.¹⁸ In these overtures, Letcher had no authorization from Clay.¹⁹ However, circumstances strongly indicate that Adams definitely became intrigued by these intimations.

On December 19, 1824, Clay accepted a dinner invitation from the Adams'.²⁰ It seems at this point that Adams, under the consultation Wyer, understood that the active support of Clay was needed to win in the House.²¹ Also, Adams' quoted

¹⁷Ibid., p. 447.
¹⁸Ibid., p. 447.
¹⁹Sumner, Andrew Jackson, pp. 95-96.
²⁰Clay to Adams (December 19, 1824), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. III, p. 899.
²¹James, Andrew Jackson, pp. 95-96.
mary entry above implies that, although Letcher lacked Clay’s authorization, Clay had in some way given an impression that he would willingly support Adams if he could profit by that support himself. On December 28, 1824, Clay wrote George McClure that he had decided to favor Adams. One can only infer that it was this sequence that established the bargain, yet this inference is indeed strengthened by evidence from Clay’s past that he possessed a strong desire for office.

The charges of corrupt bargaining, however, developed from an entirely different set of interactions. On December 29, James Buchanan visited John Henry Eaton, remarking on rumors of a corrupt deal between Adams’ and Clay’s friends and that they should “fight them with their own weapons.” However, rejected by Eaton, Buchanan was referred directly to Jackson to obtain answers about his intended Cabinet appointees. Finally, on December 30, Buchanan went to Jackson, according to his own version, as a friend of Jackson, to obtain a declaration that rumors saying that if he should win in the House, he would continue Adams as Secretary of State, were not truthful. He desired Jackson merely to negate the rumors, again according to his own account of the meeting, so as to avoid injury to his cause in the House among Clayites. However, one of the men

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2Impartial and True History of the Life and Services of Major-General Andrew Jackson, 1828, p. 30.
Buchanan conferred with before going to Jackson was Philip Markley. In his letter to the public, dated October 30, 1827, he recalled that Buchanan was acting as a friend of Clay and that he desired to see Clay Secretary of State with hopes of becoming President in 1828.24

The implications of this correspondence were fully examined in an anonymous letter from a member of the House of Representatives that appeared in the Columbian Observer on January 25, 1825. The card held that Buchanan, later to be identified as the unnamed person in this first letter, went to Jackson as a messenger of Clay (as Markley asserted), hoping to obtain a promise about the appointment of Clay to head the State Department in return for the support of Clay and his friends in the House. It also claims that Clay favored Jackson over Adams since, although Adams' friends were prepared to accept this same deal of bargain, an equal arrangement with Jackson men would elicit Clay's support of Jackson before Adams.

However, Clay, in all his pronouncements in December and January, clearly favored Adams. Although Clay termed the dilemma between support of his fellow westerner and the highly respected and able Secretary of State a "choice of evils," Clay asserted that

24 *Niles'* (November 10, 1827), vol. XXXIII, p. 169.
the principal difference between them is that in the election of Mr. Adams we shall not by the example inflict any wound upon the character of our institutions; but I should much for thereafter, if not during the present generation, that the election of the General would give to the Military Spirit a Stimulus that might lead to the most pernicious results—I shall therefore with great regret, on account of the dilemma in which the people have placed us, support Mr. Adams.'

Therefore, the conclusion is that Buchanan acted out of his own regard for Clay and Jackson yet with ignorance of Clay’s own preference. Clearly then, when Buchanan denied in an October 16, 1826, letter to the editors of the United States Telegraph having any authority from Clay, it follows that he was telling the truth. He was not participating in a massive cover-up. In the same letter, Buchanan acknowledges the fundamental impossibility of the task Kremer’s card assigned to him: "I trust that I would be as incapable of becoming a messenger on such an occasion, as it is known General Jackson would be to receive such a message." Thus, Buchanan recognized Clay’s preference of Adams and the certainty that Clay would not plot to help Jackson before Adams.

Therefore, the principal component in the Jacksonians’ allegations had in fact no logical inclusion in the actual bargain. George Kremer of Pennsylvania, who identified himself

[Notes]

2Clay to Francis P. Blair (January 8, 1825), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. IV, pp. 9-10.
as the author of the letter in the *Columbian Observer* and had offered in a subsequent letter to prove his statements that appeared in the *National Intelligencer* on February 2, was forced to reply to an invitation to appear before the House investigative committee formed at the request of Clay. However, his response was shrouded in quasi-legal reasons for not submitting his testimony. It was an embarrassment for the Jacksonians, but a retreat from the even greater embarrassment that would have resulted from a lack of evidence on the House floor. In a letter to Clay on April 4, 1825, Chief Justice John Marshall wrote that the charges were "mere aspersions."

Perhaps Marshall's intellect would have produced a different judgment had he the proper charges before him, charges implicating Letterer's visitation and the series of Adams-Clay meetings in the very month before the February 3.

The charges of a "corrupt bargain" to buy the presidency proved ineffective, and the coalition of Clay and Adams men along with Clay's influence would prove to be decisive. However, a number of other small bargains were necessary for several of the western states which had supported Jackson popularly to turn their votes over to Adams. Several of the states, understanding that the Constitution's amendment did not bar a state delegation from voting counter to the popular

*Niles* (February 5, 1825), vol. XXVII, p. 353.

decision, considered passing resolutions requesting their congressional delegations to follow the dictates of the state as decided in the November elections. Clearly, this was a recognition that corruption would not fall idle, even when under the strain of the entire nation's attention and the clear mandate of the popular voting in favor of Jackson. On January 11, Kentucky's legislature passed resolutions advising that state's delegation to support Jackson in the House election. For Clay, personal ambition made his choice to vote in contradiction to the resolution easy, and rhetoric about duty supplied his justification. Again, he wrote of his objections to Jackson's election:

I cannot consent, in this early stage of their existence [American institutions], by contributing to the election of a military chieftain, to give the strongest guaranty that this republic will march in the fatal road which has conducted every other republic to ruin.3

However, the other representatives from the western states, also faced with the prospect of having to vote against the strong popular mood in favor of Jackson, did not feel as confident about defying the wishes of their constituents. However, when no other western states passed similar resolu-

4Clay to Francis T. Brooke (January 28, 1825), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. IV, p 45.
tions, it was clear that at least Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri would go along with the Clay-Adams arrangement.  

While Clay correspondents Alexander Armstrong and Samuel Potts, both of Ohio, wrote that these states' conversion to Adams was judicious since it averted a potential deadlock in the House, the desertion of Jackson by the west in the House election in fact set that section back, after it had certainly gained from its unity in granting its electors in December, 1824, to the two western candidates.  

The decision of these delegations to back the easterner Adams reinforced the political dominance of the east, and deprived the western country of the type of leadership it needed to develop as a vital section of the Union. Furthermore, the ultimate loss of Jackson only excited an opposition to the Adams administration producing a hazardously disjunct four years of national administration.

In the case of the remaining two states that would ultimately favor Adams in the coalition, both Missouri and Illinois were represented by only one representative each in the House. The pressure on the two men was great from Jacksonians, especially of Pennsylvania.  

John Scott of Missouri

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2Armstrong and Potts to Clay (March 9, 1825), Hopkins, Clay Papers, vol. IV, pp. 95-97.

was convinced to favor Adams after he met with the Secretary and reached an understanding with him as to the appointment of government printing in Missouri and as to the status of his brother as a judge in the Arkansas Territory. Meanwhile, Daniel P. Cook of Illinois Missouri subsequently decided to fall in with the rest of the west in favoring Clay in order to preserve western unity, despite a pledge to adhere to the decision of the state of Illinois in the popular balloting."

Adams was sure of the support of the New England states in addition to the bloc of support earned by Clayites operating in the west. However, it has been argued that Adams bargained with Daniel Webster of Massachusetts to secure New England's Federalist support. Webster, it is said, worked to allay fears that Adams would proscribe the Federalists; and in return, Webster received the position as Minister to Great Britain under Adams." Crawford was expected to retain his favor in his strongholds of Virginia, Georgia, and Delaware. The strong Jackson party in Pennsylvania and that state's literal infatuation with Jackson guaranteed his retention of at least that state. Jackson was also confident of Alabama and Mississippi.

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36 James, Andrew Jackson, p. 118.
However, the Adams-Clay forces felt that a victory on the first ballot was vital to the capturing of Louisiana and the maintenance of the understanding that they had reached in the western states. The great uncertainty was again New York, and again that state's was to be the deciding vote. If New York voted to favor Adams on the first ballot, he would then have thirteen states and a majority. If New York's delegation voted any other way, then the House would have to vote on a second ballot and the Clay-Adams agreement was expected to fall apart. Crawford's ill health was recognized and it substantially reduced his strength within the delegation, which was split between Adams and Crawford. However, the Adams forces managed to find support with a bare majority, aided by two votes in favor of Jackson to distract from Crawford.

It is a favorite anecdote that the election of 1824, however decayed and corrupt the process was, was decided by an aging and virtuous New York representative named Stephen Van Rensselaer. Committed to Crawford, Rensselaer resisted attempts by Daniel Webster, Louis McLane, and Alfred Cuthbert to sway him to the Adams ticket. However, after making a brief appeal to God for guidance in his decision that was reputed to have decided the entire election, he raised his head from his desk. The first thing he saw was a ticket with Adams name printed on it. He took it as an answer to his entreaty for guidance, and threw in his vote for Adams, who thus won the
House election and the presidency on the first ballot." The decisive role of Rensselaer, stoic and virtuous, said his friends, indeed seems a fitting way for the election of 1824 to have been decided; in a way, virtue finally had a say in the result.

The defeated Jacksonians again raised the cry of bargain and corruption as the appointment of Clay to the State department seemed to confirm their original charges. However, the accusers' lack of evidence was again conspicuous at the Senate confirmation hearings for Clay as Secretary of State. In a speech on July 12, 1827, Clay states,

...I requested a Senator of the United States, when my nomination should be taken up, to ask of the Senate the appointment of a committee of inquiry, unless it should appear to him altogether unnecessary... when it was acted upon, General Jackson and every other Senator present, was silent as to the imputations now made, no one presuming question my honor or integrity."

Despite the fact that this passage fails to identify the senator, it is true that those levelling the charges outside Congress never energetically pursued an investigation within Congress. Rather, Clay and his supporters have asserted that a reverse conspiracy of truly contemptible means and ends was being conducted against Clay, in order to hurt his prospects in

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"Clay, Henry, "Mr. Clay's Speech," Lexington, July 12, 1827."
the election of 1828, for Clay's position in the State depart-
ment was traditionally considered the in road to the presiden-
cy. Furthermore, since Adams was an easterner, the election of
the next president was likely to go to a man of the west. As
Clay said in his July 12, 1827, speech,

If he who exhibits a political crime is, from its
very nature, disabled to establish it [as Jacksoni-
ans contended], how much more difficult is the
condition of the accused? How can he exhibit nega-
tive proof of his innocence if no affirmative proof
of his guilt is, or can be adduced?""'

The right of Clay to influence the voting of the delega-
tions is a question deep in constitutional and ethical ambi-
guity. The Twelfth Amendment provides that, if the electoral
college produces no majority, then the election is to decided
by the House of Representatives. Each state gives a single
vote regardless of its relative strength in the House under
normal proceedings. The candidate with the majority of states
then becomes president. However, the Twelfth Amendment does
not bind the delegations in the House to adhere to the decisi-
sions made in the states on the voting for electors. Where
there is no stipulation that the delegations adhere, the
deleagations would appear to have a free hand. Ethically, the
issue is less logically based. Clay seemingly felt that it was
his duty, however difficult, to work for the candidate that
would best serve the nation. He knew that his choice would

"Ibid., p. 4."
most likely determine the outcome of the election, though not the voting of every delegation. To Clay, the worse scenario would have been Jackson's election, which perhaps would have more closely correlated with the popular opinion. However, Jackson only had ninety-nine electoral votes, and with all candidates but Adams effectively out of the House vote, that left one-hundred and sixty-two not for Jackson necessarily. But to Clay and the other Adams supporters, whether it was bargain or duty that induced his support of Adams, or both, voting for the candidate who best upheld in his mind the public good would justify overriding the popular sentiment.

Jackson, although he did not respond with any outrage at time of Adams' election by the House, proceeded to spread the charge of corruption for his own political purposes and insist that Clay prove his innocence, despite his declaration in a letter to Carter Beverly that a denial of the charges, which Clay did do repeatedly, would be sufficient to end the accusations.\textsuperscript{46} Reportedly Jackson began this alleged calumniating as early as his trip back to Tennessee in 1826.\textsuperscript{47} However, Jackson only truly began publicly to disseminate the charges in the presses after a scandal in Tennessee in which he was proven to have lied about his responsibility for the execution of

\textsuperscript{46}Colton, \textit{Life of Henry Clay}, p. 324.

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p. 404.
several Tennessee militiamen. The result of Jackson’s publicizing the charges was a letter published under the authorship of Carter Beverly, a letter which repeated the basic charges of the Kremer card of 1825. According to Buchanan’s letter to the Lancaster Journal on August 8, 1827, Jackson never so much as mentioned the conversation he had had with Buchanan. But now in 1827—a safe period of time between himself and the events spoken of—Jackson attaches new and indeed unsupportable definition to Buchanan’s distinctly individual decision to speak to Jackson and his friends.

Jackson did, however, attempt to gather evidence. In the spring of 1827, he and his friends sent out a circular to those who voted with or were friends with Clay and Adams; those who responded answered by necessity independently (for Congress was not in session) but in concert as well—all evincing Adams’ and Clay’s innocence. However, notably without reply was Robert Letcher. That Jackson continued to use the charges without damage to himself, yet at the same time without serious efforts to form an official investigation into the actions of Clay, who was being and would be for the rest of his political career severely impaired by the charges, points toward the existence of Clay’s guilt. Had Clay’s innocence existed, and where Clay’s desire to free his name of corruption obviously existed,
he could have used the same influence in the House and in Washington politics that elected a President and established the American System to carry a full and exhaustive investigation into the charges against him. Thus, bargain did occur, but one which occurred between a small group of persons beyond the sphere of Jackson and his friends so that positive proof became intangible.

For Jackson and the accusers then, Clay's acceptance of the Secretary of State position was all the evidence they needed of bargain to spread calumnies about Clay, and indeed this was the only "evidence" they had, not having access to Clay's record of correspondences. Although one cannot claim empirical proofs that bargaining existed, there is substantially adequate though circumstantial evidence. Clay recognized that his burgeoning desire for the presidency could be fulfilled only if both he was Secretary of State and a New Englander was President in the period prior to his candidacy. However, being head of the State Department would not alone assure his victory in 1828. To this end, he had to assure Adams' election in 1824. The means of assurance was corrupt bargaining. The bargainers were a tightly-knit group including Adams, Clay, and Letcher, with the conspicuous exclusion of Buchanan. Jackson, despite initial silence and his statement that he would rather be elected by an "enlightened patriotic and uncourt people" than by politicking, attended to his own
interests in the 1828 election by trying to "enlighten" the voters about Clay's corruption." He succeeded in destroying Clay and, although he was never able to target the players of the bargain, he did manage to discredit the man undeserving of office in 1828.

"Jackson to Samuel Swartwout (February 22, 1825), Bassett, Correspondence, vol. III, p. 279."
VI

Conclusion
The campaign of 1824 was in part the result of the preceding decade's gradual transformations in the approach of the Republican party to the administration of the national government. President James Monroe affirmed that the Republican party was to pursue a path of nationalistic policy designed to bind the nation. The essence of this consolidation was to be achieved through projects of internal improvement administered by the national government. The War department under John Caldwell Calhoun set about detailed studies of the advisability and advantages that could be reaped for the national economy and especially for the national defense. The Republican party adopted Federalistic measures like the tariff of 1816 that were deemed necessary for the strength of the American economy and the nation's safety, and therefore were considered patriotic. However, in the years 1821-1824 the antagonism between William Harris Crawford and the Monroe administration perhaps reflected a fear of the loss of state sovereignty, but more likely was the efforts of a faction of the Republican party trying benefit from the fears of change. But the political advantage of such an opposition was that opposition to consolidation could find support among the people.
The Republican party stagnated under the influence of its own domination, and the nation showed signs that it was ready for a new leadership to replace the Virginia dynasty. The west and states like New York and Pennsylvania were growing in economic strength and in geo-political importance. Much of the conflict and controversy in the campaign of 1824 was the result of battle for political control between the fading old Republican party, whose more virulent faction was Crawford's Radical allies in Congress, and the portion of the leadership that was prone, due to a regard for their own political advantage, to embrace changes that tended to promote consolidation and the interests of the aforementioned states that were growing in economic and geo-political importance.

Democracy was at issue only in as much as institutional changes favored the voting population. However, as the political machinery of the Republican party broke down in consequence of the panic of 1819 and the Missouri compromises as well as the loss of a competing political party, the mechanism for selection of presidential candidates decentralized. A multiplicity of candidates emerged; and a geographic dispersion of interests became apparent, although four of the five candidates were nationalists. The people must be saved from the corruption in government, became the rhetoric of the campaign. Corruption was rarely proven per se; however, claims were made that certain public officials were not true to the
sacred obligation they had to act in the people’s best interests. Such claims were prevalent and highly useful because of the criticism that was thrown on the government after the 1819 panic. It was said that the national government’s attempts at a consolidating federal regime had added to the severity of the downturn. This complaint fueled the bitter rivalry between Secretary of War Calhoun and Secretary of the Treasury Crawford, both of whom were accused of contributing to the panic. Republican virtue, perhaps more an invention of the politicians like John Henry Eaton than a calling from the people, was hailed by men like Andrew Jackson. Virtue, service in government, and indifference toward office, claimed John Quincy Adams, uniquely qualified him above the others, who sought to entice the people. Henry Clay was the outspoken leader of postwar nationalism in Congress, the primary proponent for the embodiment of patriotic policy, the American System. These were all attempts to differentiate oneself from his numerous Republican competitors for office.

An important factor in the growth of Jackson’s candidacy was the opposition to Crawford. Early on, Crawford was recognized as the candidate likely to succeed Monroe on the basis of his strong support within the Republican party proper. Therefore, it was assumed that he would be the likely recipient of the congressional caucus’ nomination. A sort of unified front developed between the other four candidates, as each
opposed the use of the "undemocratic" caucus. Largely discredited by an active and hostile press, the congressional caucus was associated with a denial of the rights of the people to control the elective process. Although every candidate claimed to be the "people's" candidate, Jackson's benefited most from the opposition to the caucus because the basis of his candidacy was his popularity with the people as a past military hero. Therefore, when the caucus fell, Jackson advanced. His rise was not so much the result of the unwavering desire of the people to elect Andrew Jackson, War Hero, as it was ultimately the result of a political rhetoric started by the weaker Republican candidates to defeat the more promising prospects of Crawford. And the people, especially of the west, took on that cry against the caucus to elect their sectional favorite. Jackson was able to outpoll Henry Clay in the west due to superior political management and a lack of association with a distinct ideology. While concerns about "republican virtue" and the democratic objections to the caucus were the products of campaign managers, their motivation was to appeal to the people. And in this respect, democracy was an essential element in the election of 1824.

Nonetheless, these basic strands, opposition to the caucus and the need to find an appeal that somehow identified oneself, accounted for much of the turbulence that gave the campaign the appearance of a resounding democratic upheaval. The results
show that most of the country still preferred a man with governmental experience. Therefore, one must question how accurate an assessment it is to say that the people really were concerned with corruption and how well Jackson truly represented the people's solution to this sort of a concern. However, another source of turbulence in the campaign was the import of state and therefore local interests. As we have seen, the internal politics of many of the states, especially New York, directly affected the nature and the outcome of the elective process. As state politics were of their nature more correlated to the will of the people, as conveyed by numerous meetings of the people that expressed opinions about the candidates, the people do have a place in consideration of this election, although they were not overridingly concerned with corruption and the condition of republicanism in the national government.
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