

**A Patriotic Sectionalist:  
The Political Transformation  
of John C. Calhoun,  
1816-1833**

**Paul A. Cyryca**

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**Paul A. Cyryca**

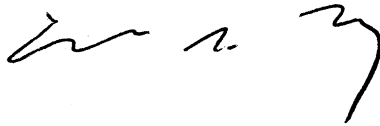
**This project for the M.A. degree in  
History has been approved for the  
History Department by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Carlander", written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Jay Carlander, Thesis Director**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Case", written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Sarah Case, Second Reader**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Long", written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Creston Long, Department Chair**

John C. Calhoun is almost exclusively remembered  
as the most ardent defender of the South and states' rights.

His name has become a byword for sectionalism.

Such associations only tell half of the story.

For the first decade of his political career,  
Calhoun was the archetypal nationalist, promoting  
tariffs, internal improvements, and a national bank.  
He refused to abandon his nationalism in spite of a  
surge in radicalism in his home state of South Carolina.

Ironically, it was a group of northern, not southern,  
radicals who ultimately drove Calhoun to embrace  
the doctrines of states' rights and sectionalism.

Abolitionism represented a grave threat to the Union  
Calhoun loved so dearly by striking at the heart of the  
one institution the South could not do without--slavery.

Thus, in the 1830s, the radical antislavery activists of  
the North succeeded in driving Calhoun into the arms  
of a group of southern radicals that had been  
putting pressure on him all along.

## Table of Contents

Introduction (1)

Chapter I: War Hawk and Arch-Nationalist (2)

Chapter II: The War Department (16)

Chapter III: The Death of Consensus and the Birth of Radicalism (20)

Chapter IV: An Uneasy Vice Presidency (31)

Chapter V: Nullification (48)

Chapter VI: A New Brand of Radicalism (58)

Chapter VII: The Later Years (71)

Conclusion (75)

Bibliography (80)



## Introduction

John C. Calhoun remains one of America's most misunderstood political figures. Many historians have condemned Calhoun for his inconsistent politics, branding him an unabashed flip-flopper. The leading proponent of this interpretation, William W. Freehling, took Calhoun to task for his seemingly contradictory views on tariffs, banks, and consolidated power.<sup>1</sup> Gerald M. Capers, another prominent historian, wrote a scathing biography of the man and gave it the blunt title of *John C. Calhoun: Opportunist*. Capers maintained that a need for personal aggrandizement drove him, alleging that "Calhoun's ambition and his primary objective was his own elevation to the presidency."<sup>2</sup> In spite of the criticisms, however, the direction of Calhoun's political career did follow a rational trajectory. His politics are understandable in terms of a man continually torn between competing obligations to his country, his section, and his state. The consummate nationalist early in his congressional career, circumstances compelled him to revise his political theory and advocate the doctrines of states' rights and sectionalism later in life. Reasons for this transition include the debates over the Missouri statehood bill, Calhoun's own presidential aspirations, and the infamous 1828 Tariff of Abominations. To this we must add the transformation of abolitionism from an inconsequential movement in the 1820s to an undeniable force in the 1830s. Calhoun's career chronology raises questions that are important both for our understanding of the man as well as our ability to comprehend antebellum America's monumental political realignment overall. So when exactly did Calhoun make his historic switch from nationalist to nullifier? Was this transformation more of a process than an event, or vice versa? In the final analysis, the growth of different brands of radicalism in both the North and the South forced Calhoun to choose between them--and he ultimately chose the latter.

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<sup>1</sup> William W. Freehling, *The Road To Disunion: Volume I, Secessionists At Bay 1776-1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). See following pages for specific criticisms: 259, 260, 304, 385, 427.

<sup>2</sup> Gerald M. Capers, *John C. Calhoun: Opportunist* (Chicago: Quadrangle Paperback, 1969), 76.

## Chapter I: War Hawk and Arch-Nationalist

John Caldwell Calhoun was born on March 18, 1782, near the end of the American Revolution, in the Appalachian foothills outside of Abbeville, South Carolina. Just two years earlier, the infamous Colonel Banister Tarleton and his dragoons had ravaged the same countryside. The brutality of the Revolution in the Carolinas, coupled with his Scots-Irish heritage, contributed early to Calhoun's unbridled Anglophobia. (A young Andrew Jackson was similarly impacted by both his family history and British atrocities committed in the South Carolina piedmont.) Patrick Calhoun, John's father, was a model republican citizen: virtuous, self-made, independent, and naturally conservative. He had defended his country's decision to renounce King George III and had even cast a vote in the state legislature against ratification of the U.S. Constitution.<sup>3</sup> A proper government, he told his son, protected society while also sustaining individual liberties. The majority of backcountry planters adhered to the "country ideology" advanced by such noted Whigs as Viscount Bolingbroke, John Trenchard, and Thomas Gordon.<sup>4</sup> All human beings, so went the theory, had a right to liberty and property. Patrick Calhoun, who died when John was fourteen, owned more than thirty slaves, making him one of the piedmont's largest and wealthiest slaveholders. While many others in states like Virginia viewed slavery as a necessary but temporary evil, South Carolina planters like the Calhouns took a different approach. With enslaved Africans constituting a larger percentage of South Carolina than any other state in the Union, John was raised on the premise that a racial caste system was as natural as the sunrise. White men were born members of a natural aristocracy. In a political career of revolving ideologies, John C. Calhoun never wavered in his conviction that slavery

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<sup>3</sup> Ross M. Lence, ed., *Union and Liberty: The Political Philosophy of John C. Calhoun* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc., 1992), xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Irving H. Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 30.

was, as he described it in 1837, “a positive good.”<sup>5</sup>

Calhoun received an education that was, in Freehling’s estimation, “fit for an imperial ruler.”<sup>6</sup> As a child, he attended the esteemed academy of Moses Waddel, his brother-in-law. After completing his degree at Yale College, Calhoun attended the famous law school of Judge Tapping Reeve (Aaron Burr’s brother-in-law) in Litchfield, Connecticut. Calhoun’s eclectic experience as a student would pay off in the long run. In the following decades, friend and foe alike noted his keen intellect, eloquent rhetoric, and poise in debates. One man doubtlessly spoke for many when he said of Calhoun: “I hate a man who makes me think so much...and I hate a man who makes me feel my own inferiority.”<sup>7</sup> Dixon Lewis, Alabama’s celebrated four-hundred pound congressman, described him as “too intellectual, too industrious, too intent in the struggle of politics to suit me except as an occasional companion. There is no *relaxation* with him.”<sup>8</sup> Upon returning to South Carolina Calhoun began a brief, albeit successful, career practicing law in Abbeville. Soon thereafter, he embarked on a political odyssey that spanned four decades, ten presidencies, and virtually every shade of nationalism and sectionalism.

The United States was officially the largest neutral power in the world during the Napoleonic Wars. A policy of neutrality, however, could not guarantee amicable relations with the British and French. Tensions between the United States and Great Britain began over the latter’s insistence that British ships had a right to search American vessels for deserters from the British navy. Although many of the confiscated sailors were genuine Americans, the Royal Navy did not seem to mind. The matter came to a head on June 22, 1807, when the American

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<sup>5</sup> Clyde N. Wilson, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume XIII, 1835-1837* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1980), 395.

<sup>6</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 262.

<sup>7</sup> Gerald M. Capers, “A Reconsideration of John C. Calhoun’s Transition from Nationalism to Nullification,” *The Journal of Southern History* 14, no. 1 (Feb., 1948): 37.

<sup>8</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 250.

ship *Chesapeake* set sail from Norfolk destined for the Mediterranean. Soon thereafter, she was stopped by the British ship *Leopard*, whose captain insisted that four of the *Chesapeake*'s crew were actually British deserters. When the *Chesapeake*'s captain refused to hand the men in question over, the *Leopard* opened fire on the hapless vessel. With his ship crippled, and twenty-one of his crew either killed or wounded, the *Chesapeake*'s stunned captain promptly surrendered the four sailors and limped back to Norfolk.<sup>9</sup> The events of that day sparked outrage throughout the United States, including Abbeville, South Carolina.

Recent developments afforded Calhoun the opportunity to speak in public for the first time. He did so on August 3, 1807, from his platform in the local courthouse. Harkening back to the very Revolution that had freed Americans from British tyranny less than three decades earlier, Calhoun waxed eloquent. Admonishing the British for their insolence and "murderous conduct," he implored the local militia units to prepare for war.<sup>10</sup> He became the principal author of Abbeville's "Resolutions on the Chesapeake-Leopard Affair," which warned that a passive response from America "would disgrace our character abroad, and exhibit us as a degenerate and pusillanimous people."<sup>11</sup> Almost overnight, Calhoun became a local celebrity. Just as word of the *Chesapeake*'s misfortune spread throughout the United States, so too did word spread in South Carolina about a fiery, patriotic lawyer from the piedmont. Given his sudden popularity, he was unanimously elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in October 1808.<sup>12</sup> Some members worried about the young, opinionated newcomer. One declared that "I am afraid I shall find this long, awkward fellow from Abbeville hard to

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<sup>9</sup> John Niven, *John C. Calhoun and the Price of Union: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 28.

<sup>10</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 57.

<sup>11</sup> Steven Watts, *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790-1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 262.

<sup>12</sup> William D. Crane, *Patriotic Rebel: John C. Calhoun* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1972), 35.

manage.”<sup>13</sup> Yet, at the state level, Calhoun displayed a propensity for compromise--the sort of resolution he viewed as a model for future healthy debates in America.<sup>14</sup>

In the waning months of 1810, Calhoun received word that he had been elected to the United States House of Representatives. These were pivotal times in the young nation’s history, which had recently doubled in size with President Thomas Jefferson’s celebrated Louisiana Purchase of 1803. As America continued to expand, inevitable boundary disputes surfaced not only with the native populations, but with the British and Spanish. In Europe, the armies of Napoleon Bonaparte exacted a terrible price as the ripples from the French Revolution, born some two decades earlier, turned into tidal waves. As the fight spilled into international waters in every corner of the globe, the impressment of American seamen continued at an alarming rate. Into the maelstrom, and the Twelfth United States Congress, stepped John C. Calhoun.

Calhoun officially entered the House of Representatives for his first session on November 6, 1811. At twenty-nine-years-old, he was over six feet tall, slender, and strikingly handsome. His appearance and demeanor almost demanded attention. Celebrated English traveler Harriet Martineau once referred to him as “the cast-iron man who looks as if he had never been born, and never would be extinguished.”<sup>15</sup> Having encouraged war with Great Britain as early as 1807, Calhoun wasted no time making his opinions on the matter known before Congress. America had been humiliated in the eyes of the world, he argued, and it was time to take action. Calhoun proved to be a genuine War Hawk, joining the ranks of men like Tennessee’s Felix Grundy, Speaker of the House Henry Clay of Kentucky, and fellow South Carolinians Langdon Cheves, William Lowndes, and David R. Williams. The War Hawks were a part of the first generation of Americans who knew very little about Europe itself and had no firsthand memories

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<sup>13</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 59.

<sup>15</sup> Richard N. Current, *John C. Calhoun* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), 111.

of the American Revolution.<sup>16</sup> Given their matching opinions on nationalism and war with Great Britain, Calhoun and Clay in particular bonded immediately.

Calhoun's intelligence soon landed him a spot on the Foreign Relations Committee. He emphasized that this was not simply an issue of obstruction of commerce, but one of national pride. The British were not only attacking American ships, but American liberty. A weak response, he cried, would be tantamount to committing "an act of political suicide."<sup>17</sup> Calhoun worked closely with chairman Peter Porter, a New Yorker, on an article empowering President James Madison to bolster the regular army by ten thousand men, recruit an extra fifty thousand volunteers, and prepare the militia, navy, and merchant marine for combat.<sup>18</sup> On November 29, 1811, the Committee presented its report on the situation with Great Britain. Largely the work of Calhoun, it opened with a call to arms: "The occasion is now presented, when the national character, misunderstood and traduced for a time by foreign and domestic enemies, should be vindicated."<sup>19</sup> This was America's chance to seek retribution for all of the past injuries she had endured at British hands. Many concurred with his assessment that this would be "the second struggle for our liberty."<sup>20</sup>

Prophetically, Calhoun warned against the dangers of a "factious opposition" in which "the attachment to a party becomes stronger than to our country."<sup>21</sup> Even so, there existed a large contingent of Americans that refused to support "Mr. Madison's War." The majority were Federalists from New England whose trade would be hurt by such a confrontation. Calhoun could not understand how any true patriot might oppose efforts to restore national pride,

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<sup>16</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 6.

<sup>18</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 71.

<sup>19</sup> Watts, *Republic Reborn*, 257.

<sup>20</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun : Volume I, 1801-1817* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1959), 107.

<sup>21</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, I, 236.

especially in the cradle of the Revolution. "It was incomprehensible to Calhoun," writes biographer William D. Crane, "that the greatest opposition came from New England, the progenitor of American independence. Greed, he felt, had taken the place of patriotism."<sup>22</sup> On June 3, 1812, Calhoun presented a bill to the House for a declaration of war on Great Britain. Although the declaration passed the House, it did so by a majority of only thirty votes.<sup>23</sup>

Calhoun and his fellow War Hawks did indeed get their war when, on June 18, President Madison signed the declaration of war into effect. The story is familiar to the student of U.S. history: the naval engagements on the Great Lakes, the burning of Washington by British regulars, the heroic defense of Baltimore, and Andrew Jackson's decisive triumph at New Orleans. When the smoke finally cleared, both from the political infighting and the actual military operations, America stood victorious. Calhoun was elated that he had been "of a party that drew the sword."<sup>24</sup> Many of his colleagues hailed Calhoun as "the young Hercules who carried the war on his shoulders."<sup>25</sup> Given his strict adherence to Jeffersonian principles, Calhoun rejoiced that victory had reduced American dependence on foreign markets and commerce. It had also enhanced American prestige in the eyes of the world and given the young republic a reason to boast. To Hermann Von Holst, Calhoun's earliest biographer, this period of the future nullifier's political career deserves considerable recognition. Writing as he did in the present tense, Holst explains Calhoun's earliest political agenda:

There is at this time nothing of sectional prejudice and narrowness in him. He stands on the broadest national ground and his political sins are mainly due to the impatient ardor and buoyancy of his patriotism. Undoubtedly he pursues the aims of his personal ambition with full consciousness; he does not, however, seek its satisfaction at the expense of the Union but by promoting what he is fully convinced that the interests and

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<sup>22</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 46.

<sup>25</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 7.

the honor of his country demand.<sup>26</sup>

Although a great victory had been achieved, another conflict loomed large on the horizon. Late in 1814, Treasury Secretary Alexander J. Dallas proposed a plan for the creation of a Second Bank of the United States. (The first, designed by Alexander Hamilton in 1791, had quietly expired in 1811 without discussion.) Dallas advocated the recreation of the institution with an initial government investment of some \$20 million.<sup>27</sup> The currency of the United States was in critical condition at this time. Paper money, simply promissory notes from individual banks, was often useless from one state to the next. State banks--the majority of which had been created during the war--were as ubiquitous as they were unreliable, refusing loans whenever it suited them. If the situation was not remedied immediately, financial ruin was sure to follow.

With national credit needing to be restored and regulated, Calhoun was charged with passing a bill for a new national bank through Congress. Critics insisted that the right to issue currency should be the function of each individual state. That idea, however, did not square with Calhoun's visions of consolidation. Citing the Constitution, he insisted that only the federal government had the power to "coin money and regulate the value thereof."<sup>28</sup> His first attempt at a bank bill met with defeat in the House and the second with a presidential veto. Finally, near the end of 1815, Calhoun and Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster formulated a new bank bill that met with Madison's approval. Set to take effect the following year, the bill granted a twenty-year charter to the Second Bank of the United States. Ever the Jeffersonian, Calhoun let the welfare of the people guide his agenda. In an attempt to establish a reliable banking system, Calhoun and his colleagues had tried to "republicanize" Alexander Hamilton's previous economic system. By early 1816, Calhoun could claim that the Republican Party had the

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<sup>26</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 26.

<sup>27</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 49-50.

<sup>28</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 55-6.



backing of “the yeomanry, the substantial part of our population,” who would “share in the capital of the Bank.”<sup>29</sup> Having helped resolve such a contentious issue, Calhoun reflected on his country’s recent triumph and the wave of national pride it had ushered in. “We see everywhere a nationality of feeling,” he declared before the House. “We hear sentiments from every from every part of the House in favor of union and against sectional spirit--Let us direct our attention, then...to the objects calculated to accomplish the prosperity and greatness of the nation, and we shall certainly create a national spirit.”<sup>30</sup> Many in Congress applauded Calhoun’s immodest rhetoric, but questions lingered as to what America’s bold national agenda should look like.

There existed three main economic issues of the day that, in time, would help opposing groups identify one another, thus helping to reshape the American party system: a protective tariff, internal improvements, and a national bank. Although the issue had temporarily been resolved, debates over the Bank of the United States would resurface twenty years later, with the institution’s charter set to expire in 1836.<sup>31</sup> The discussion now turned to proposals concerning a protective tariff and a national system of roads and canals. Under the circumstances, a protective tariff made sense to Calhoun. From New England to the Carolinas, manufacturers were losing money to the East India cotton trade. In Vermont and Ohio, sheepherders were being undercut by the importation of British wool. Protective duties had the potential to grant the United States industrial independence from Europe. Surely, Calhoun thought, Americans had learned to do without British goods in the days of nonimportation during the previous conflict. The national debt needed to be repaid and higher taxes were required to finance a national army. A tariff also

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<sup>29</sup> Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2005), 205.

<sup>30</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, I, 288-9.

<sup>31</sup> The issue of a national bank remained a contentious one throughout most of the Antebellum period. Most famously, President Andrew Jackson led a crusade in the 1830s to destroy what he called the “hydra of corruption.”

seemed necessary to guard against Calhoun's greatest fear--disunion.<sup>32</sup> By increasing regional interdependence and interaction, it would strengthen the nation. In his speech before Congress on April 4, 1816, Calhoun promised that the tariff would guarantee national security and stimulate economic growth by reducing American dependence on foreign manufactures.<sup>33</sup> Just as he had in previous debates, Capers demonstrates, Calhoun labored under the hope that "Prosperity would prevent the rise of a paralyzing sectionalism."<sup>34</sup>

When the new tariff went into effect on April 27, having passed Congress by a wide margin, Calhoun surely felt some degree of satisfaction. Only a token force of Old Republicans like Virginia's John Randolph decried the measure as "an immense tax on one portion of the community to put money into the pockets of another."<sup>35</sup> For the time being, however, even South Carolinians were persuaded to support a tariff. Freehling himself notes the irony of a delegation from South Carolina, a future hotbed of Southern sectionalism, signing off on such a nationalist endeavor: "In view of the planters' traditional crusade for free trade, the delegation's vote for the tariff of 1816 provides a striking illustration of South Carolina's commitment to nationalism in the postwar period."<sup>36</sup> New tariffs would be passed by Congress every four years from 1816 to 1832, with the only defeat coming in 1820.

Just as he had with the tariff, Calhoun campaigned hard for a federally-funded system of internal improvements. In a speech on January 31, 1816, Calhoun had addressed the issue in spectacular fashion: "Let us make great permanent roads; not, like the Romans, with views of subjecting and ruling provinces, but for the more honorable purposes of defence [*sic*], and of

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<sup>32</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, I, 401.

<sup>33</sup> Lence, *Union and Liberty*, 301-9.

<sup>34</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 49.

<sup>35</sup> Lence, *Union and Liberty*, 299.

<sup>36</sup> William W. Freehling, *Prelude To Civil War: The Nullification Controversy In South Carolina, 1816-1836* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated, 1968), 95.

connecting more closely the interests of various sections of this great country.”<sup>37</sup> Calhoun noted that during the war it had cost sixty dollars to transport a barrel of flour to Detroit. Meanwhile, a cannonball transported to Lake Erie or Lake Ontario from Albany had only cost fifty cents a pound to move after transport charges were paid.<sup>38</sup> The rapid movement of food and clothing, he argued, was as vital to national security as the transportation of weapons and ammunition.

With national pride at an all time high, the present seemed the most propitious time to initiate a federally-funded program of internal improvements. The country’s population numbered some eight million in 1815, spread along a thousand miles of coastline from Maine to Georgia and west to the Mississippi.<sup>39</sup> Never before had American needed new and improved transportation highways so urgently. Fortunately for Calhoun, he and Clay were genuine friends at this point--quite remarkable considering where they ended up politically.<sup>40</sup> The two men worked together, shared similar visions of America’s future, and ate at the same boardinghouse in Washington.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, both wished to see America flourish under a national system of roads and canals. Distance could very well equal disunion. On February 4, 1817, and with the confidence of the Speaker of the House, Calhoun rose to address his contemporaries:

We are greatly and rapidly--I was about to say fearfully--growing. This is our pride and our danger, our weakness and our strength. Let us bind the Republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals. Protection would make the parts adhere more closely--it would form a most powerful cement....Let us bind the Republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals. Let us conquer space.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 28.

<sup>38</sup> Niven, *Price of Union*, 55-6.

<sup>39</sup> Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815-1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 14.

<sup>40</sup> Clay in particular was a good friend for a young politician to have. Only five years Calhoun’s elder, he had already accomplished much in the world of politics. Derisively referred to as the “Western Star” by Virginia’s John Randolph, Clay had already served twice as a senator from Kentucky before assuming his role as Speaker of the House.

<sup>41</sup> Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 82.

<sup>42</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, I, 398-401.

The Bonus Bill of 1817 drafted by Calhoun and Clay resembled in many respects the earlier plan championed by Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury for both Jefferson and Madison. In much the same way, Calhoun wanted to connect the Atlantic cities with the West and the Hudson River with the Great Lakes.<sup>43</sup> (Later that same year the Great Lakes would be declared a demilitarized zone by the Rush-Bagot Treaty.) Calhoun, however, had no desire to pre-appropriate money for specific ventures or pre-select the routes of roads and canals. Such matters were for Congress to decide. Funding for the bill would come from the \$1.5 million bonus the newly rechartered Bank of the United States owed the federal government, plus a piece of the institution's future profits.<sup>44</sup> In his seminal book on internal improvements in the Early Republic, John Lauritz Larson records that "Calhoun was trying to bind the people to their federal government before state and local politics completely mastered their allegiances."<sup>45</sup>

Henry Clay had nothing but the highest regards for Calhoun's nationalism, praising him for proposing a scheme "cementing the union--in facilitating internal trade--in augmenting the wealth and the population of the country."<sup>46</sup> Calhoun also observed that a national system of roads and canals would be as beneficial to his state and region as they were to the nation as a whole. He abruptly dismissed any criticisms that special interests might be given precedent over the common good. Calhoun's inflated rhetoric had already persuaded South Carolinians to back a protective tariff. One year later he had convinced them of the efficacy of federally sponsored improvement projects. "High nationalism," Freehling writes, "seemed best for the Union, best

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<sup>43</sup> Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun: Nationalist, 1782-1828* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944), 135.

<sup>44</sup> John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 64.

<sup>45</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 66.

<sup>46</sup> David S. and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Henry Clay: The Essential American* (New York: Random House, Inc., 2010), 132.

for South Carolina, and best for his own ambition; never again would the world seem so manageable.”<sup>47</sup> This period of relative consensus, particularly in South Carolina, would be transitory to say the least. For the time being, however, Calhoun’s home state was on board with his nationalist agenda.

Calhoun and Clay were both stunned when Madison vetoed the Bonus Bill on March 3, his last day in office. Opponents of the bill, many of them Old Republicans, had already denounced any national system of internal improvements as unconstitutional. No less than Jefferson, from his home at Monticello, derided the bill as an attempt to “loosen all the bands of the constitution.”<sup>48</sup> Madison supported a national system of road and canals in spirit, but felt that such things needed to be written into law via a constitutional amendment. Although Calhoun implored the President to leave the issue to his successor, Madison’s mind was made up. Approving such a liberal reading of the Constitution, he supposed, might set a dangerous precedent and grant Congress an uninhibited “general power of legislation.”<sup>49</sup> A man of Madison’s political--certainly not physical--stature could certainly halt any debate over constitutionality in its tracks. The celebrated “Father of the Constitution,” he had previously outlined the Virginia Plan, authored some of the most significant *Federalist* papers, and constructed the Bill of Rights in 1789. Logic dictated that if anyone knew what the Constitution did say or meant to say, it was James Madison.

At the crux of the matter were two competing interpretations of the United States Constitution known commonly as strict versus broad construction. Calhoun freely acknowledged that the right to build roads and canals was not among the enumerated powers of Congress. Such things, he argued, were written into the Constitution *implicitly* rather than

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<sup>47</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 93.

<sup>48</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 68.

<sup>49</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 68.

*explicitly*. The Constitution contained both a commerce clause and, more importantly, a clause empowering Congress promote the general welfare. Was this not sufficient cause to promote a federally-funded system that would benefit the entire nation? The resultant wrangling in Congress over the proper interpretation infuriated Calhoun. In his speech on the Bonus Bill, he had argued that the Constitution “was not intended as a thesis for the logician to exercise his ingenuity on. It ought to be construed with plain good sense.”<sup>50</sup> Congress should have the power to enact legislation promoting the common good. The rules of interpretation, he maintained, need not be “invariably rigid against the power of the general government.”<sup>51</sup> Throughout the duration of his nationalist phase Calhoun continued to believe that broad powers were “indispensible [*sic*] to our happiness and permanent prosperity.”<sup>52</sup>

Most northern politicians embraced such a liberal interpretation. Many of Calhoun’s southern contemporaries did not. If the nation’s elected representatives could find sufficient cause in the Constitution to authorize banks, tariffs, and internal improvements, then they could just as easily find a reason to attack the institution of slavery. Such fears prompted the famous quip from North Carolina’s Nathaniel Macon that “If Congress can make canals, they can with more propriety emancipate....The states having no slaves may not feel as strongly as the states having slaves about stretching the Constitution, because no such interest is to be touched by it.”<sup>53</sup> Randolph echoed such sentiments amid debates over a major internal improvement measure in 1824: “If Congress possesses the power to do what is proposed by this bill...they may emancipate every slave in the United States.”<sup>54</sup> Still in the throes of his nationalist phase,

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<sup>50</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, I, 403.

<sup>51</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 174.

<sup>52</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume VI, 1821-1822* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), 413.

<sup>53</sup> Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 62.

<sup>54</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 65.

Calhoun apparently did not see the correlation. He had done what he perceived was best for the country, certain his bill transcended sectional biases, and suffered a severe backlash for his efforts. Seven years later, he was still trying to make sense of Madison's veto in a letter to Virginia Representative Robert S. Garnett, confirming that "the bill did not even make an appropriation of money" and that "there was nothing in the bill to make it unconstitutional."<sup>55</sup> Moreover, Calhoun could think of numerous instances in which government funds had been appropriated with no reference to the enumerated powers, including funding for the Cumberland Road and even the Louisiana Purchase.<sup>56</sup>

Although his proposed scheme for a national system of roads and canals had met with defeat, Calhoun could look back on his congressional career thus far and be satisfied. He was only thirty-five and had influenced some of the day's most important debates. Calhoun's star was clearly on the rise, as evidenced by a letter he received on October 10, 1817 from President James Monroe, inquiring whether Calhoun would accept an appointment as his Secretary of War.<sup>57</sup> The fact that Calhoun was the fifth person Monroe had asked to fill the post--behind the likes of Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay--did not seem to bother the South Carolinian. (Clay declined to keep his position as Speaker of the House.) The offer was too much for the War Hawk not to accept.

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<sup>55</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume IX, 1824-1825* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), 201.

<sup>56</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 56.

<sup>57</sup> Monroe was in many ways the end of an era as far as the presidency was concerned. He was the last of the generation of the Founding Fathers and the last to wear knee britches and powdered wigs. Like three out of four of his predecessors, Monroe was both a Virginian and a slaveholder.

## Chapter II: The War Department

Calhoun took his seat in the War Department on December 14, 1817. From the outset, fears of another conflict with Great Britain helped shape his policy decisions. The year earlier, he had assured a friend that “I am sure that future wars with England are not only possible but are highly probable.”<sup>58</sup> Calhoun conferred with military leaders on the possibility of constructing a major road leading to Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River. In both the Revolution and the War of 1812, the United States had launched abortive invasions into Canada. Improved roads would increase the chances of victory, should another invasion be necessary. To Major General Jacob Brown, Calhoun wrote that “By means of this communication, the intercourse between our troops on the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain would be perfectly easy, the want of which, in the last war, was so severely felt.”<sup>59</sup>

Despite his misgivings, Calhoun presently had more pressing matters to attend to. Upon entering the War Department, he faced a litany of logistical problems stemming from the recent demobilization of much of the army. Supply was currently in the hands of private contractors, with some \$40,000,000 worth of unsettled accounts.<sup>60</sup> The army itself was divided, with Generals Jacob Brown and Andrew Jackson commanding the northern and southern wings respectively. Added to this was a muddled Indian policy that was under fire from settlers and fur traders alike.<sup>61</sup> To remedy the situation, Calhoun implemented plans to tighten military regulations and organization. He vowed to expand West Point, construct coastal fortifications, and initiate exploration of the frontier. The secretary’s report of January 14, 1819 best documents his agenda at this time:

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<sup>58</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 62.

<sup>59</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume III, 1818-1819* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1967), 480.

<sup>60</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 63.

<sup>61</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 63.



A judicious system of roads and canals, constructed for the convenience of commerce and the transportation of the mail only, without any reference to military operations, is itself among the most efficient means for “the more complete defence of the United States.” Without adverting to the fact that the roads and canals which such a system would require are, with few exceptions, precisely those which would be required for the operation of war, such a system, by consolidating the Union, and increasing our wealth and fiscal capacity, would add greatly to our resources in war.<sup>62</sup>

Calhoun also championed westward expansion, convinced that it was America’s “Manifest Destiny” to lord over the continent.<sup>63</sup> He supported the construction of military outposts on the Missouri River to help reduce British influence in the Louisiana Purchase lands. Calhoun made a concerted effort to advance the military frontier, especially in the Northwest where, in his mind, “the most warlike and powerful tribes” resided.<sup>64</sup> Fears of British influence on the native populations continued to haunt Calhoun, and his suspicions were confirmed regularly by military leaders operating in the territories. Calhoun also encouraged exploration of the Mississippi River’s upper reaches and numerous other forays into its tributaries. Such efforts, he hoped, would encourage trade with neighboring Indian tribes and allow the United States to better patrol its borders. “To produce these desirable results,” he wrote to Speaker Clay in December 1818, “foreign adventurers, whose influence must at all times be hostile to our interest, and dangerous to our peace, must be excluded. With this view, and to protect our own trade, means have been taken to extend our military posts on the Mississippi and Missouri.”<sup>65</sup>

Despite Calhoun’s careful planning, the Missouri Expedition failed to accomplish most of its objectives.<sup>66</sup> Conversely, the Mississippi expedition was a success. Military posts were established along the river’s upper reaches in present-day Iowa and Minnesota. The expeditions,

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<sup>62</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 39.

<sup>63</sup> The phrase would not be coined until 1845 by newspaper editor John L. O’Sullivan.

<sup>64</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume IV, 1819-1820* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 520.

<sup>65</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, III, 351.

<sup>66</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, III, xxx.

while instructive, also had the effect of draining the Quartermaster of valuable financial resources. For Calhoun, however, the security of the Union and her borders transcended monetary matters. W. Edwin Hemphill, editor of the first eleven volumes of *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, records that “Calhoun received praise that was nationally circulated for having authorized so beneficial an attempt to reduce the nation’s ignorance of its own geography.”<sup>67</sup>

To his superiors, Calhoun also stressed the importance of resolving lingering boundary issues with Spain in the Southwest, the Floridas, and the Caribbean. With 1819 drawing to a close, it seemed likely that the United States would be going to war with Spain over East and West Florida. (Spain had yet to ratify the Adams-Onís treaty, approved by the Senate on February 24, 1819, by which the two Floridas would be ceded to the United States.) Another major source of anxiety for the Secretary of War was Cuba. “No American statesman ought ever to withdraw his eye from it,” he wrote to Jackson, “and the greatest calamity ought to be endured by us, rather than it should pass into the hands of England. That she desires it...I cannot doubt; and that such an event would endanger our Union, is to me very manifest.”<sup>68</sup> Later, in 1823, Calhoun confided in Monroe that “There is no portion of Spanish America, that bears so immediately on our interest, as Mexico, and Cuba, and which consequently will so probably become the theater of British management and intrigue.”<sup>69</sup>

Like his predecessor, James Monroe insisted that a constitutional amendment was needed before he would approve a bill for internal improvements.<sup>70</sup> In response, some states began building roads and canals for themselves, the most obvious example of which was New York’s

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<sup>67</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume V, 1820-1821* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), xvi.

<sup>68</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IV, 591.

<sup>69</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume VIII, 1823-1824* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), 284.

<sup>70</sup> *Capers, Opportunist*, 68.

celebrated Erie Canal. Under the auspices of Governor DeWitt Clinton, construction began on July 4, 1817. Upon its completion eight years later, the canal created, in the words of Jacksonian historian Harry Watson, “a water highway from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic.”<sup>71</sup> These earliest canal projects helped him demonstrate that internal improvements were an absolute good and that the federal government should help support them. On September 22, 1819, Calhoun penned a letter to Brown addressing the general’s desire to improve the main road along the Niagara frontier. Calhoun advised Brown to postpone improvement of the road for various reasons, but did so “Independent of the doubts which the President [Monroe] might have on constitutional principles.”<sup>72</sup> This seemingly innocuous declaration is monumental given Calhoun’s later misgivings about a liberal reading of the Constitution.

Calhoun partnered with Secretary of State John Quincy Adams to better promote his nationalist agenda. Adams was the ideal candidate to occupy the State Department. (An intellectual in every sense, he was fluent in both French and German.) A bitter enemy of Calhoun’s later in life, Adams presently thought quite highly of him, recording in his diary that the South Carolinian seemed “above all sectional and factious prejudices more than any other statesman of this Union with whom I have ever acted.”<sup>73</sup> Calhoun reorganized the War Department, taking it from a logistical nightmare to an efficient, highly regarded bureau. Freehling records that, at the time, “Calhoun could be a-Southern because South Carolina’s imminent sectional anguish had not yet spoiled the state’s patriotic nationalism.”<sup>74</sup> Historians have since dubbed, however erroneously, this period of relative harmony the Era of Good Feelings. On Saturday, February 13, 1819, any semblance of tranquility came to an abrupt end.

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<sup>71</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 25.

<sup>72</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IV, 341.

<sup>73</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition And the Men Who Made It* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1948), 69.

<sup>74</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 266-7.

### Chapter III: The Death of Consensus and the Birth of Radicalism

Having amassed the requisite population to apply for statehood, the territory of Missouri did just that. Things proceeded in the normal fashion until Representative James Tallmadge of New York rose to offer a unique stipulation on admission to the Union. It was his recommendation that the further importation of slaves to Missouri be halted immediately. All children of slaves born after Missouri became a state would be free upon reaching age twenty-five.<sup>75</sup> Slaveholders balked at this unexpected assault on their way of life. No less than Thomas Jefferson, living out his final years at his Virginia estate, “considered it at once as the death knell of the Union.”<sup>76</sup> Thomas W. Cobb of Georgia put the matter well when he famously observed: “You have kindled a fire which all the waters of the ocean cannot put out, which seas of blood can only extinguish.”<sup>77</sup> Although the great conflagration that was the American Civil War would not begin for another forty-two years, Cobb ultimately proved prophetic.

The Missouri statehood bill eventually passed Congress without Tallmadge’s proposed amendment. (Even if it had passed, Monroe surely would have vetoed it.<sup>78</sup>) What did pass muster, however, was a compromise line suggested by Senator Jesse Thomas of Illinois which prohibited slavery in all lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase north of latitude 36° 30’, excluding Missouri.<sup>79</sup> Maine, formerly a district of Massachusetts, was admitted as a free state, establishing a new tradition of preserving the sectional balance of free and slave states. (The resulting parity in the Senate, which lasted until 1850, guaranteed that the South could veto

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<sup>75</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 147.

<sup>76</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 63.

<sup>77</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 148.

<sup>78</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 154.

<sup>79</sup> The Missouri Compromise seemed destined to provoke controversy in the near future. Northern and Southern politicians alike resented this new line dividing their nation, albeit for vastly different reasons. Remarkably, the restriction against slavery north of the compromise line was not repealed until 1854 with the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

antislavery legislation originating in the House, where she was still a minority.<sup>80</sup>) The Missouri Controversy had dire consequences in that it represented the first instance in which sectional loyalties had taken precedent over political ones. It probably had some influence on the growing sectional alignment on the tariff issue, although few people made such a connection at the time.<sup>81</sup> The issue of slavery had plagued America since the drafting of the Constitution. James Tallmadge had single-handedly demonstrated that there could be no peaceful means for resolving this blight on the nation's character.

From his seat in the War Department, Calhoun watched the proceedings carefully. The Missouri Controversy could have forced him and many others to take a stand on the issue of slavery, but it did not. "His conclusion," Crane records, "was that the whole matter was purely political, and he saw no danger of a dissolution of the Union, the one thing at the time he most dreaded."<sup>82</sup> Compromise, he thought, was a healthy symptom of a functioning democracy.<sup>83</sup> As long as a balance of power was maintained between the various sections, there was no cause for alarm. Calhoun echoed these sentiments in a letter to his friend Virgil Maxcy:

I can scarcely conceive of a cause of sufficient power to divide this Union, unless a belief in the slave holding States, that it is the intention of the other States gradually to undermine their property in their slaves and that a disunion is the only means to avert the evil. Should so dangerous a mode of believing once take root, no one can calculate the consequences; and it will be found, that a reagitation of the Missouri question will tend strongly to excite such a belief.<sup>84</sup>

While some prescient southerners perceived the first rumblings of Northern aggression in the Missouri debates, Calhoun and many others refused abandon their vision of a glorious Union. He remained convinced that the South could not only survive, but thrive under the current

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<sup>80</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 70.

<sup>81</sup> August O. Spain, *The Political Theory of John C. Calhoun* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), 17.

<sup>82</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 68.

<sup>83</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 76.

<sup>84</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, V, 327.

arrangement. According to renowned U.S. historian Richard Hofstadter, “What he wanted was not for the South to leave the Union, but to dominate it.”<sup>85</sup> Both the myriad biographies and Calhoun’s own letters bear out that his nationalism was not shaken at this time. “We to the South,” he wrote to his friend Charles Tait, “ought not to assent easily to the beleif [*sic*] that there is a conspiracy either against our property or just weight in the Union. A beleif of the former might, and probably would, lead to the most disasterous [*sic*] consequence. Nothing would lead more directly to disunion with all of its horrors [*sic*].”<sup>86</sup> Yet, while Calhoun remained as optimistic as ever, the nation was not having a very encouraging year--and things would only get worse before they got better.

The wrangling over the Missouri statehood bill was not the only significant development of 1819. In that year, the Supreme Court and Chief Justice John Marshall reaffirmed the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States in the landmark case *McCulloch v. Maryland*. The institution had already made headlines that year with its pitiful response to a financial meltdown that hit both Europe and the United States. The Bank had effectively burst the country’s financial bubble when it demanded specie payments from state banks that could not be met. A year that had looked so promising in January had become a living nightmare. Calhoun viewed the financial meltdown as a wakeup call for the nation’s banking sector, admitting to a friend that “I fear the shock has not yet reached its maximum; and that we shall not speedily recover from it. We must look to patience and industry & economy as our most certain, perhaps, only, remedy.”<sup>87</sup> Secretary Calhoun had sought to enlarge the army. Now he had to bear the embarrassment of watching Treasury Secretary William H. Crawford, a Georgian, downsize the

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<sup>85</sup> Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, 69.

<sup>86</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, V, 413..

<sup>87</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IV, 217.

army from 10,000 men to 6,000 as defense appropriations were cut again and again.<sup>88</sup>

Despite the embarrassing situation, all was not lost for the young nation. On February 13, 1821, word of Spanish approval of the Adams-Onís treaty was received and Congress duly ratified the settlement nine days later. With the annexation of East and West Florida, one more exposed border was secured. Then, in August, Missouri was officially admitted to the Union as the twenty-fourth state, thus resolving a two-year-long debate and temporarily shelving discussions on the extension of slavery. Certainly the most encouraging sign was the economy's slow but steady recovery. After hitting rock-bottom early in 1821, the nation's economic institutions began to recuperate later that year. Excluding some lingering issues with obstinate Indian nations like the Creeks, Choctaws, and Cherokees, Calhoun and his contemporaries had good reason to revel in America's future prospects. Calhoun conveyed his optimism in an April 1821 letter to Tait: "Missouri is happily admitted and encircled by the golden chain of this Union; Florida is ours, and the American Eagle will in a few weeks spread its protective wings over the [Fortress] Bar[r]ancas and the Walls of St. Augustine."<sup>89</sup>

While Calhoun was preoccupied in Washington, however, the political currents in his home state had been steadily changing. In 1816, the South Carolina legislature elected a man named William Smith to the U.S. Senate. Twenty years Calhoun's elder, Smith was a proponent of states' rights, a strict constructionist, and an opponent of consolidation. Given that Calhoun had only just begun his career as a nationalist, it was little surprise that the two men disliked each other intensely. (In fact, Smith and Calhoun already had a history of mutual animosity, brought about by the older man's resentment of Calhoun's meteoric rise.) Calhoun, however, seems not

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<sup>88</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume VII, 1822-1823* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), xii.

<sup>89</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume VI, 1821-1822* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), 69.

to have been bothered by the vitriol of a man who until recently had forged a reputation as an unsuccessful lawyer and a drunkard. What did bother him was the rising tide of sectional animosity he could sense was trending in the South. A letter Calhoun wrote to Tait, himself a former politician, on October 1, 1821 clearly illustrates his growing concern:

The political world would, with little exception, appear very calm. Yet I am of the opinion, that an attentive observer may see symptoms of the brewing storm....When I see one of your age, experience, wisdom and virtue thinking as you do on this point, I confess, I am alarmed. I say to myself, if the Missouri question has excited such feelings in the breast of so experienced and virtuous a citizen, what must be its effects in our section of the country on those less wise and virtuous?<sup>90</sup>

The day was indeed approaching when the “less wise and virtuous” would guide southern policy decisions. From 1816 to 1823, South Carolina politics was dominated by the conflict between the “Calhounites,” who espoused nationalist measures, and the more conservative “Smithites.”<sup>91</sup> Those Carolinians who followed Smith’s logic saw in the tariff a dangerous attempt to consolidate federal power. In spite of the obvious differences of opinion, however, both factions agreed that any debates concerning slavery should be forbidden. Before long, the entire state would condemn protective tariffs, regardless of political affiliation. South Carolina was suddenly growing very hostile towards the federal government. Once a minority voice, writes Calhoun biographer Richard N. Current, the radicals “were rapidly becoming a majority in the state.”<sup>92</sup> Conversely, Unionists were becoming fewer and fewer.

The perception was widespread in the South that the tariff was no longer a means of raising revenue for national defense, but an instrument by which the nation’s manufacturing interests would be protected and subsidized at their expense. In September 1821, Calhoun confided in Moses Waddel that “I fear that new parties and new agitations are about to arise--not

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<sup>90</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VI, 413-5.

<sup>91</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 105.

<sup>92</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 12.



to advance the interest of the country but that of individuals.”<sup>93</sup> The revelation was unsettling to say the least. Earlier that year, Calhoun had explained to Jackson that those “whose policy revolves round their own *private* interest” needed to be phased out of American politics.<sup>94</sup> As time went by, it seemed less and less likely that this would ever happen.

Calhoun was ecstatic when he received word that William Smith had been defeated in the 1822 congressional election. The victorious candidate was none other than Robert Y. Hayne, himself still a confirmed nationalist. A states’ righter like Smith had no business representing South Carolina as far as Calhoun was concerned. To his cousin, John Ewing Calhoun, he confirmed that “I do not think that he [Smith] fairly represents the State....If reelected, I doubt not that he will come out openly, which would do much mischief.”<sup>95</sup> (Smith, in fact, would regain his seat in the next election. By that time, Hayne had already cast his lot with the radicals. Any hostilities that had existed between Hayne and Smith were effectively rendered moot, leaving Calhoun the odd man out in South Carolina politics.)

Most South Carolinians had reluctantly gone along with the tariff of 1816, which had been considerably lower than any following ones. Four years later, a new tariff was proposed that would have raised cotton and woolen duties from 25 percent to around 33 percent. The so-called Baldwin Tariff of 1820 passed the House, although the South voted against it 40 to 3, but met with defeat in the Senate by a single vote.<sup>96</sup> With his colleagues from South Carolina opposing the bill, Calhoun was forced to denounce it as well. The tariff of 1816 represented the last effort at protectionism that the Calhounites would back. From then on, they denounced

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<sup>93</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VI, 388.

<sup>94</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VI, 25.

<sup>95</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VII, 196.

<sup>96</sup> *Capers, Opportunist*, 73.

every project generated from the proceeds of tariffs as being “local” in their scope and benefits.<sup>97</sup>

National legislation, they argued, must affect each section equally. Current recalls the political shift that took place following the Panic of 1819 and the Missouri Controversy:

Calhoun and other political leaders throughout the nation had been brought to reconsider their views on national policy in consequence of economic changes that were affecting the various regions in different ways. Earlier, as a congressman, he had been free to urge nationalistic policies because his own constituents in South Carolina, or large numbers of them, had favored such policies....After 1816, however, the Carolinians devoted themselves more and more to planting, and few mills appeared. The planters came to look upon the tariff as no help but a hurt to them.<sup>98</sup>

Despite their recent opposition to protective tariffs, most South Carolinians still wanted to see the Union endure. Desperate to prevent the introduction of pork-barrel legislation into the halls of Congress, they had merely done what seemed best for their state and their country.

“Even their sectionalism was,” according to Freehling, “in an important sense, nationalistic, for Calhoun and his followers were convinced that high tariffs and slavery agitation, if not checked, would dissolve the Union.”<sup>99</sup> Even so, the states’ rights element continued to garner support.

Hostility towards the federal government was at an all time high in Calhoun’s home state, which had never fully recovered from the Panic of 1819. As early as December of that year, Moses Waddel was warning Calhoun that “The scarcity of money in Abbeville now is by far greater than I have ever seen it before. During the Embargo & late war I think it was five times more plenty than at present in these parts.”<sup>100</sup> South Carolinians were riding a wave of discontent that showed no signs of slowing. While many left for the black soil of Alabama and Mississippi, those that stayed behind clamored for change. Calhoun biographer August O. Spain confirms that “The work of Judge William Smith and of Thomas Cooper in South Carolina began to bear

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<sup>97</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 121.

<sup>98</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 10.

<sup>99</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 131.

<sup>100</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IV, 492.

fruit in the protests by local meetings and resolutions of the State legislature.”<sup>101</sup>

The predicament Calhoun now faced was one of competing loyalties to his nation and his home state. Men like Smith accused him of trying to balance regional and national interests purely for his own political advancement. Smith went so far as to declare that Calhoun had “lost his party both at home and abroad.”<sup>102</sup> While Smith may have exaggerated the matter, there was some truth in his statement. The “Smithite” faction was gaining considerable momentum in South Carolina, bolstered by such states’ rights advocates as James H. Hammond, Stephen D. Miller, David R. Williams, Josiah Evans, Robert Barnwell Rhett, and Thomas Cooper, who was not even a native-born South Carolinian. Born in Great Britain, Cooper spent many of his formative years in Revolutionary France and did time in jail cells on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>103</sup> As the President of South Carolina College in Columbia, this bitter, hump-backed old man was now filling South Carolina’s young minds with his treasonous rhetoric. His influence extended far beyond the classroom as well. In fact, Freehling asserts, “Cooper was probably even more important than Smith in urging the gentry to repudiate the nationalist heresies Calhoun preached.”<sup>104</sup> The majority of South Carolinians could be persuaded to sign off on a powerful military, Calhoun biographer Irving H. Bartlett records, “but they did not expect to benefit from internal improvements, and as historic free traders they instinctively opposed tariffs.”<sup>105</sup>

The collective paranoia South Carolinians seemed to be experiencing worsened during the summer of 1822 when Denmark Vesey, a free black man in his fifties, tried to incite a rebellion among slaves in and around Charleston. Betrayed before his plan was put in motion, Vesey and his coconspirators were hanged and a violent backlash ensued in which many

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<sup>101</sup> Spain, *Political Theory*, 17.

<sup>102</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 142.

<sup>103</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 256.

<sup>104</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 130.

<sup>105</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 139.

innocent blacks were killed as well. The state legislature passed a law requiring free Negro sailors entering Charleston harbor to remain on board their vessels until departure. Their fears and suspicions about over free blacks confirmed, South Carolinians looked to their own in Washington, Calhoun included, to set things right.

As Secretary of War, Calhoun's office was inundated with requests for assistance from leading South Carolinians, including Governor Thomas Bennett. Calhoun responded with instructions to Major James Bankhead, commanding officer in Charleston, to "consult with the Governor of South Carolina...and co-operate with him upon such measures as may be deemed adviseable [*sic*] in quelling the disturbances at Charleston."<sup>106</sup> It seemed all too clear that Calhoun did not share the misgivings of his fellow South Carolinians. Curiously, esteemed Jacksonian historian Daniel Walker Howe is of the opinion that "Vesey's conspiracy had profound implications, which included influencing the momentous transformation of John C. Calhoun from a nationalist into the most famous champion of state rights."<sup>107</sup> If, as Howe contends, Calhoun's nationalism took a hit in the immediate aftermath of the attempted uprising, there exists no primary source evidence to support such a claim. Calhoun hardly made mention of the event in his correspondence and even then only did so to downplay its scope and significance. Calhoun's attempts to please both nationalists and radicals alike, however, left him desperately short of allies in both Washington and South Carolina. In trying to please everyone, he was pleasing no one. In these tumultuous times, steering a middle course was hardly a workable solution. Acclaimed Calhoun biographer Charles M. Wiltse confirms that "No public man could much longer remain aloof, allied to no interest or cult; for these were fast becoming

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<sup>106</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VII, 219.

<sup>107</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 163.

the organs through which the collective will was to be made manifest.”<sup>108</sup>

South Carolinians had permitted a tariff to be passed in 1816 amid promises that such measures were beneficial to the entire Union. By the 1820s, however, the luster of America’s victory over the British had faded and the economic realities of tariffs and internal improvements were readily apparent. South Carolinians were being asked to help fund roads and canals that did not benefit their state in the least, while tariffs seemed to enrich New England at the expense of the South. In his landmark book on the Nullification Crisis--still eleven years hence in 1820--Freehling brilliantly summarizes South Carolina’s list of grievances:

The only certain effect of the great “national” schemes, they maintained, would be to drain away the prosperity of South Carolina planters. Since the state had no pending projects which required federal aid, the planters’ dollars would bolster the economy of other, richer states. Since improvement schemes swallowed up much of the federal government’s funds, the public debt would remain unpaid despite ever-rising tariffs. At best, “national” roads would perpetuate onerous present tariffs. At worst, improvement schemes would force the passage of still higher duties.<sup>109</sup>

Despite the unrest, Calhoun still saw the future of America in great internal improvement projects. To a friend he confided that “Clay and myself are the only two [possible presidential candidates], who are openly in favour [*sic*] of a system of internal improvement.”<sup>110</sup> On May 27, 1825, at an Abbeville dinner party given in his honor, Calhoun was still proclaiming that “I gave my zealous efforts to all such measures...a due protection of those manufactures of the country which had taken root during the period of war and restrictions: and finally, a system of connecting the various portions of the country by a judicious system of internal improvement.”<sup>111</sup> Pressure from home had already compelled Calhoun to oppose the last two protective tariffs. On the issue of internal improvements, he was not prepared to alter his thinking.

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<sup>108</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 309.

<sup>109</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 99.

<sup>110</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 153.

<sup>111</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 40.

Calhoun had almost concluded his time in the War Department in December 1824. Over the previous eight years, he had accomplished much in that capacity: reorganizing the military, mapping western lands, appeasing Indians, securing the borders, and promoting projects for roads and canals. The unexpected rise of radicalism in South Carolina had hardly altered his agenda. Earlier that year, Calhoun had even assured his friend Virgil Maxcy--a Maryland lawyer whose father had once been President of South Carolina College--that "I feel daily a greater confidence, that the Radical cause is hopeless."<sup>112</sup> In his last official report from the War Department, submitted to James Monroe on December 3, Calhoun reiterated the importance of internal improvements to national security and efficiency. "The whole Union," he affirmed, "must be considered as one, and the attention directed...to those which may bind all of the parts together and the whole with the centre."<sup>113</sup> Having skillfully administered his duties as Secretary of War, Calhoun prepared for the next challenge.

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<sup>112</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, 76.

<sup>113</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, 424-5.

#### Chapter IV: An Uneasy Vice Presidency

The men who vied for the presidency in 1824 were as varied politically as they were geographically. Besides Calhoun, there were two other members of Monroe's Cabinet: Secretary of State Adams and Treasury Secretary Crawford. The list of presidential aspirants also included fellow South Carolinian William Lowndes and the indomitable Henry Clay, still serving as Speaker of the House. The dark horse was Major General Andrew Jackson, the hero of New Orleans and the First Seminole War. Unfortunately for Calhoun, he was still too much of a political neophyte for others to take his prospects seriously. In September 1823, Justice Joseph Story confided in a friend that "I have great admiration for Mr. Calhoun, and think few men have more enlarged and liberal views of the true policy of the national government. But his age, or rather his youth, at the present moment, is a formidable objection to his elevation to the chair."<sup>114</sup> Another of Calhoun's contemporaries described him as "a giant of intellect, who was a child in party tactics."<sup>115</sup>

Calhoun originally felt that he had a good chance of being elected president, given his ardent nationalism. In August 1823 he assured a friend that "I am the only man from the Southern States, that the North can be induced to support."<sup>116</sup> He went to great lengths to prove that, as he wrote to Jacob Brown in 1823, "Though a farmer & living among farmers I was the earliest & most efficient supporter of the manufacturing interests."<sup>117</sup> For much of his career, Calhoun felt that he could become the candidate of the South, while still maintaining his popularity in critical northern states like Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, Capers records, "the Vice-President found himself in the impossible position of attempting to ride two horses which

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<sup>114</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 59.

<sup>115</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 244.

<sup>116</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VIII, 210.

<sup>117</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VIII, 215.

were heading in opposite directions.”<sup>118</sup> In the 1820s, however, sectional antagonisms were a long way from reaching their zenith, allowing Calhoun to remain optimistic about the future.

Not long into the presidential campaign, Crawford and Lowndes both withdrew due to health-related issues. Calhoun knew that his remaining opponents were older, more experienced politically, and one of them was a national icon. He instead settled for an uncontested vice presidential nomination by both the Adams and Jackson camps.<sup>119</sup> When election day arrived in November 1824, Jackson received 99 electoral votes, Adams 84, Crawford 41, and Clay 37. Jackson’s popular vote equaled roughly 155,000, with Adams’s at 105,000.<sup>120</sup> Since neither of the top two vote-getters received a majority of electoral votes the issue fell to the House to resolve. Being that he was still the Speaker of the House, Watson records that Henry Clay “thus found himself in the interesting role of kingmaker.”<sup>121</sup> Clay effectively had the issue decided in Adams’s favor and, on February 9, 1825, John Quincy Adams was officially declared the next President of the United States. In return, Adams named Clay his Secretary of State.

Jackson and his followers naturally screamed bloody murder, declaring that a “corrupt bargain” had been struck--a memorable phrase that stuck with Americans and played a pivotal role in the next election. Still others derided Adams as “our *Clay* President.”<sup>122</sup> Indeed, although the House was not obligated to select the candidate with the most popular votes, it did seem as though Adams had been selected in defiance of the will of the people.<sup>123</sup> “Before his administration even began,” writes Jacksonian historian Daniel Feller, “his rivals hung on it the

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<sup>118</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 102-3.

<sup>119</sup> Although two presidential candidates supporting the same man for vice president would seem strange by today’s standards, the rationale was simple. Both men knew Calhoun carried weight in the South. Adams, of course, was sure to carry New England with Jackson gaining the majority of Western states, save for Clay’s home state of Kentucky.

<sup>120</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, lvi.

<sup>121</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 81.

<sup>122</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, lxi.

<sup>123</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 61.



most damning epithet in the American lexicon: ‘aristocracy.’”<sup>124</sup> Calhoun was horrified by the treachery of Adams and Clay, albeit not enough to refuse a position as vice president. Calhoun still entertained thoughts of becoming president in his own right and perhaps now saw himself as the man to restore integrity to American politics.

Lost in all the talk of corruption was the fact that Henry Clay had a vested interest in seeing Adams elected. Of the two remaining candidates, there was no doubt that Adams was more likely to sign off on Clay’s plan for the development and improvement of America. According to Feller, both men “subscribed to an underlying belief in the federal government’s duty to nurture the young nation toward maturity.”<sup>125</sup> Clay may have been delighted with his appointment to the State Department, the traditional stepping-stone to the presidency, but support for his economic agenda was equally important to him. Early in his political career, Clay had outlined plans for a national system of federally-funded internal improvements and high tariffs that he called his American System. With high tariffs protecting America’s infant industries, lands in the West would be sold at a considerable price, generating the required revenue for a large-scale system of roads and canals. The American System was, as Clay styled it, the “path which leads to riches, to greatness, to glory.”<sup>126</sup> Clay’s system was stifled by those who feared the growth of executive power and a broad construction of the Constitution. Leading opponents of Clay’s plan, many of them Old Republicans, were horrified at the prospect. At one point, Randolph scoffed that Clay’s plan “*out Hamiltons* Alexander Hamilton.”<sup>127</sup> With his characteristic sharp tongue and shrill voice, Randolph had also been opposing Calhoun’s nationalist measures since the South Carolinian’s first days in Congress. He is even said to have

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<sup>124</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 70.

<sup>125</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 72.

<sup>126</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 66.

<sup>127</sup> Heidler, *Henry Clay*, 124.

begun one of his speeches with the words: “Mr. Speaker [Calhoun]! I mean Mr. President of the Senate and would-be President of the United States, which God in His infinite mercy avert.”<sup>128</sup> Only with the lapse of Calhoun’s nationalist phase would the two men exchange any semblance of pleasantries.

South Carolinians in particular came to resent the American System, denouncing it as anything but national in scope. Protective tariffs forced them to choose between buying inferior American goods at inflated prices or European products at far more than their real value.<sup>129</sup> Cooper denounced Clay’s plan as “a system of fraud, robbery and usurpation.”<sup>130</sup> Fears of consolidated power were just as real for many citizens as they were for Clay’s opponents in Congress. Clay biographers David S. and Jeanne T. Heidler record that “the American System proved oddly out of phase with popular attitudes in the 1820s. Many Americans had grown wary of centralization, were increasingly opposed to the Bank of the United States, and were troubled by the prospect of paying for projects that were seen to help only distant locales.”<sup>131</sup> A congressman from Louisiana spoke for many when he warned Clay that “our Citizens are very impatient to *feel* in their State the beneficial effects of internal improvement. They are in favor of the system, but they want something here.”<sup>132</sup>

Although it ultimately met with defeat, Clay’s American System would serve another, more important, purpose. As a sundry group of men vied to succeed James Monroe, it became clear that the long feared breakup of Thomas Jefferson’s Republican Party was imminent. Two distinct parties emerged, with men like Adams and Clay forming the National Republican Party, which was later reborn as the Whig Party. Followers of Jackson and his political mastermind

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<sup>128</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 329.

<sup>129</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 71.

<sup>130</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 73.

<sup>131</sup> Heidler, *Henry Clay*, 162.

<sup>132</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 73.

Martin Van Buren formed the Democratic-Republican Party, or simply Democrats. In its earliest years, a number of aggrieved minorities made their home in the party of Jackson even though many of them detested the old general, united only by their opposition to the Adams-Clay coalition. With his unequivocal stance on improvement over expansion and a strong federal government, Henry Clay helped potential enemies and allies identify one another, thus forming America's Second Party System.<sup>133</sup>

On February 14, 1825, Calhoun received word of his election as vice president. No longer the novice of fourteen years earlier, Calhoun had already accomplished much at the national level. Even his opponents begrudgingly acknowledged that Calhoun had created order out of chaos in the War Department. His prospects for the future looked just as bright. Already in possession of a plantation on the Savannah River, Calhoun purchased a new one at Pendleton, South Carolina. He enjoyed the respite from the political backbiting with his young children and his wife Floride Bonneau Calhoun, whom he had married in January 1811.<sup>134</sup> Significantly, the family's plantations were also occupied by a small amount of slaves.<sup>135</sup> Calhoun called his newest acquisition Fort Hill after a colonial fort which had stood on the same location. The name would have special significance for leading radicals just a few years later.

Adams appeared to be a lame duck president from the outset, with Jacksonians in Congress waging a successful war of obstruction. Old Republicans voiced their anger with particular rage. (Randolph and Clay even fought an inconsequential duel over the former's

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<sup>133</sup> The old Federalist-Republican party system ended with the close of the War of 1812. The majority of New England's leading Federalists refused to support the conflict from the outset, which had the effect of signing a political death warrant. While a few Federalists like John Marshall and Rufus King remained relevant after the war, their party had been discredited beyond repair. Significantly, John Quincy Adams went to great lengths to distance himself from his own Federalist roots.

<sup>134</sup> The couple married when John was twenty-eight and Floride eighteen. The two were second-cousins, despite the fact that Floride's family spelled their last name Colhoun. They enjoyed a happy marriage by all accounts and gave issue to nine children.

<sup>135</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 75.

reference to “the Puritan and the Black Leg.”<sup>136</sup>) The opposition prevented Adams from getting any of his legislation passed and kept Clay’s plans in the drawing room. Given the President’s unpopularity outside of the Northeast, Calhoun began contemplating the possibility of allying with Jackson instead. In the winter of 1825, Calhoun received a visit from Martin Van Buren, architect of the young Democratic Party.<sup>137</sup> Convinced that Adams would be a one-term President, Calhoun listened intently to Van Buren’s suggestion of a political alliance. Calhoun believed that the next election would restore the credibility of the American democratic process. Although he was still young compared with most other candidates, his pride was deeply wounded by Clay’s appointment to the State Department. It was an decision that was, in Calhoun’s words, “the most dangerous stab which the liberty of the country has ever received.”<sup>138</sup> Clay had seemingly moved closer to fulfilling his own presidential aspirations, while Calhoun was left to serve in the political purgatory that is the vice presidency.

With the situation in South Carolina steadily deteriorating, Calhoun could no longer back his former colleagues. From 1825 to 1827, the value of South Carolina’s exports dropped all the way from \$11,000,000 to \$8,000,000.<sup>139</sup> Relations between South Carolina and the federal government continued to worsen even as Calhoun tried to avert a permanent schism. In their comprehensive biography of Henry Clay, the Heidlers provide a brief but profound summary of Calhoun’s political career:

Calhoun’s philosophy of government had undergone a dramatic transformation in the years after the War of 1812. As a nationalist War Hawk, he had matched Clay’s enthusiasm for protective tariffs, internal improvements, and a national bank. His alliance with Jacksonians in the 1820s abruptly forced him to oppose all such policies, in part because Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams promoted them. Yet there was more to

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<sup>136</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 261.

<sup>137</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 129.

<sup>138</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume X, 1825-1829* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1977), 10.

<sup>139</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 352.

it than that. South Carolina's growing opposition to the American System also tugged Calhoun away from nationalism.<sup>140</sup>

With each passing day, radicals in South Carolina were tightening the noose of sectionalism around Calhoun's neck. He could not continue promoting tariffs and giving nationalist sermons without provoking a severe backlash. Although he was not as yet ready to abandon protectionism or internal improvements, Calhoun began modifying his rhetoric to appease his critics. He wrote to friends explaining that "I think, I may confidently say, that there is not on record a single expression of mine in relation to the construction of the Constitution, which would offend the most rigid defender of States rights."<sup>141</sup> To another he confirmed that "As much then, as I value freedom, in the same degree, do I value State rights."<sup>142</sup> Those who condemn Calhoun for flip-flopping on matters of states' rights and constitutionality do not seem to grasp the pressure he was under to do so. The fact that his turnaround was a lengthy process, as opposed to a singular event, is further evidence that Calhoun did not willingly abandon his former position. In an important essay on the South Carolinian's political transformation, Capers agrees that Calhoun underwent a "gradual and reluctant transition" in the 1820s.<sup>143</sup> Yet, for all their efforts, the South Carolina radicals would never fully convince Calhoun of the efficacy of their position. Not until the 1830s, when a new kind of radicalism was unleashed, would Calhoun be persuaded to partner with the likes of William Smith and Thomas Cooper.

Adams had pushed hard for the repeal of "preventive detention" concerning all black sailors in Charleston harbor since his days in the State Department.<sup>144</sup> The impetus for this legislation had fittingly come in 1822, with Denmark Vesey's abortive rebellion against the local

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<sup>140</sup> Heidler, *Henry Clay*, 226-7.

<sup>141</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, VIII, 243.

<sup>142</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, 198.

<sup>143</sup> Capers, "Reconsideration," 39.

<sup>144</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 250.

white elites. Many Americans found the Negro Seaman Law offensive, but South Carolinians argued that their safety and security were at risk. As such, they publicly denounced Adams for his disregard for their well-being. George McDuffie, himself a member of the House of Representatives, warned the President that “a tremendous storm” would hurl him from the White House “at the end of four years.”<sup>145</sup> Added to South Carolina’s list of grievances was a minor victory for protectionists, by a narrow margin, in the shape of the tariff of 1824. The vote itself split along regional lines with the mid-Atlantic, Ohio valley, and Old Northwest heavily in favor.<sup>146</sup> While the New England vote was divided, there was no such ambiguity in the plantation South, where the tariff met with heavy opposition.

Calhoun had previously supported tariffs that in his mind benefited southern agriculture as much as northern mercantilism. Yet the tariff of 1824 seemed, in the words of Calhoun biographer John Niven, “so blatantly particularistic, so lacking in the mutuality of interest,” that even Calhoun was obliged to oppose it.<sup>147</sup> The tariffs of the 1820s had increased dramatically from the tariff of 1816 that he had supported so vociferously. Opponents were quick to seize upon Calhoun’s change of heart. Fragments of his tariff speech of 1816 were quoted and his turnaround attributed to frustrated ambition.<sup>148</sup> What they did not comprehend, or simply refused to acknowledge, was the intense pressure Calhoun was under to revise his position. In the following months, Calhoun would go to great lengths to demonstrate that he did not harbor new opinions concerning tariffs. He had always feared, he explained, that congressional authority would be “diverted from national objects or made subservient to political

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<sup>145</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 174.

<sup>146</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 59.

<sup>147</sup> Niven, *Price of Union*, 107.

<sup>148</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 384-5.

combinations.”<sup>149</sup> Worse, the tariff yet again did nothing to benefit his home state. “Thus,” Freehling claims, “by 1824 South Carolina planters had several reasons to regret their old commitment to nationalist dogmas.”<sup>150</sup>

Calhoun continued to desperately cling to his nationalist agenda, discouraging calls for a congress of aggrieved southern states. He continued to see the rightness of both sides of the tariff debate and held out hope for compromise. “He would reconcile the Northern manufacturers with the agriculturalists of the South,” Crane asserts, “if this were at all possible, and he would never stop trying.”<sup>151</sup> This man was no sectionalist, and he would not become one until the matter was out of his hands. Thus, at a dinner party in Augusta, Georgia, Calhoun could still declare that “No one would reprobate more pointedly than myself any concerted union between States for interested or sectional objects. I would consider all such concert as against the spirit of our Constitution.”<sup>152</sup> Although Calhoun did not recognize the impending storm, circumstances were about to compel him to revise his political economy.

William Smith continued to garner support for states’ rights in South Carolina, successfully driving a new set of resolutions through the state legislature that condemned both internal improvements and protective tariffs as unconstitutional. Pamphlets such as Cooper’s *Consolidation* attacked nationalist programs while other prominent figures like David R. Williams and Stephen Miller introduced strict constructionist, anti-tariff resolutions to the state legislature. Former nationalists now appeared to be jumping ship. George McDuffie, Henry L. Pinckney, and James Hamilton Jr. had all grown more sympathetic to the radicals’ cause. Pinckney, a brother-in-law of Hayne, allowed radical tirades to be published in the *Charleston*

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<sup>149</sup> Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 172.

<sup>150</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 117.

<sup>151</sup> Crane, *Patriotic Rebel*, 78.

<sup>152</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 66.

*Mercury*, which he edited.<sup>153</sup> Soon, the essays of low-country planter Robert J. Turnbull began appearing in the paper. Reprinted as a pamphlet insipidly entitled *The Crisis*, Turnbull's work urged fellow South Carolinians to depend on "the undiminished sovereignty of our state--when the rights of one sovereign are invaded by another sovereign. There is no course but resistance. If resistance produced Disunion, let Disunion come."<sup>154</sup> Langdon Cheves favored outright secession if the rest of the South could be persuaded to join them.<sup>155</sup> McDuffie, the finest orator among the group, gained prominence with his controversial Forty Bale theory, which held that a forty percent tariff robbed planters of forty bales of cotton per one hundred.<sup>156</sup> Although McDuffie's premise was a gross oversimplification of the matter, its plain language resonated with many southern planters and, in Freehling's words, "turned high tariffs into vivid scapegoats."<sup>157</sup> Hayne, another former nationalist, decried the tariff as a measure of "grievous oppression" that would "soon involve the whole South in irretrievable ruin."<sup>158</sup> Perhaps most famous of all was Thomas Cooper's assertion that "We shall ere long be compelled to calculate the value of our union and enquire of what use to us is this most unequal alliance?"<sup>159</sup> In his hostile biography of Calhoun, Capers gives a good account of the sudden transition made by many of Calhoun's erstwhile allies:

At first Calhoun had won the younger Carolina politicians--Robert Hayne, George McDuffie, and James Hamilton, Jr.--to his broad nationalism, but early in the twenties they began to follow public opinion in their state and deserted to the Southern rights party. In the Senate, along with Webster, Hayne made one of the leading speeches against the tariff of 1824 which he declared to be unconstitutional. Hamilton and McDuffie became even more vociferous state-righters than they had formerly been arch-nationalists....It was they, rather than their former mentor, who were fast becoming the

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<sup>153</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 353.

<sup>154</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 143.

<sup>155</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 87.

<sup>156</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 110.

<sup>157</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 256.

<sup>158</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 163.

<sup>159</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 116.



spokesmen for South Carolina. Not only were they slipping from under his influence, but they were even attacking his program and surpassing him in local popularity.<sup>160</sup>

John C. Calhoun was rapidly becoming a stranger in his own house. Wiltse records that “The middle ground he had so carefully maintained had already cost Calhoun much of the strength he had once had in the North, and now he saw his hold on his own state slipping away.”<sup>161</sup> In his landmark work, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815-1840*, Daniel Feller discusses how developments in South Carolina left Calhoun with no real choice at all:

Calhoun’s state soon turned against the nationalist system, and began to pull him and his friends with it. In 1820 and again in 1824, the lower house of the South Carolina legislature patriotically deprecated state opposition to federal economic policy. A year later it reversed itself and joined the upper house in denouncing both tariff and internal improvements as unconstitutional usurpations of power. In the United States Senate, Calhoun’s colleague Robert Hayne railed against “this scheme of promoting certain employments at the expense of others as unequal, oppressive, and unjust.”<sup>162</sup>

Calhoun’s first act of defiance leveled at Adams came in the winter of 1825, when the President endorsed sending a U.S. delegation to a meeting between the young Latin American republics known as the Panama Congress. The mission to Panama became the perfect target for any politician bent on embarrassing the administration. There were many reasons for men like Calhoun to challenge sending a delegation, including the threat such actions posed to America’s policy of neutrality. Worse, American delegates would be meeting with black representatives from Haiti.<sup>163</sup> The issue of slavery would naturally be a major point of discussion. Given the recent debates, slavery hardly needed to be attracting more attention. The Senate ultimately approved sending a delegation, albeit with the dissent of most southerners. Although neither of the two appointed delegates ever made it to Panama—one later refused and the other died en route--Calhoun’s handiwork was clearly visible in the opposition to Adams.

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<sup>160</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 104.

<sup>161</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 322.

<sup>162</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 59-60.

<sup>163</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 261.

Only a few months removed from his meeting with Van Buren, Calhoun had become a marked man within the administration. Newspapers loyal to Adams condemned the rogue Vice President. Meanwhile, the *United States Telegraph* became the voice of that opposition, bolstered by the financial support of those who sided with Calhoun and Jackson.<sup>164</sup> The rift manifested itself in a series of attacks in public prints in which Adams and Calhoun, assuming the names “Patrick Henry” and “Onslow” respectively, debated everything from the nature of power to slavery. All the while, Calhoun insisted that his behavior was not inspired by a burning desire to fill the nation’s highest office. In a letter dated June 4, 1826, Calhoun promised Jackson his full support and denied any longing to occupy the presidency himself: “I know that much of the storm will fall on me; but so far from complaining I deem it my glory to be selected as the object of attack in such a cause. If I had no higher object than personal advancement, my course would be easy.”<sup>165</sup> Calhoun’s political economy was clearly undergoing serious revision. A chance meeting in 1826 between Calhoun and Smith spoke volumes given their past hostilities. Smith had just won reelection to the Senate over his nationalist opponent. “Do you know, sir,” he later confided to a friend, “that Calhoun, on my return to the Senate of the United States, treated me with so much kindness and consideration that I could not hate him as I wished to do.”<sup>166</sup> Once bitter rivals, these two men suddenly shared more common ground than either of them could have ever imagined.

Then, on February 28, 1827, Calhoun did what would have been unthinkable a short decade earlier. A new tariff had been proposed to raise the duty on imported woollens from

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<sup>164</sup> The *Telegraph* fell under the control of Duff Green, who later became one of Calhoun’s most faithful allies. When, in the early 1830s, President Jackson and Vice President Calhoun had their permanent falling-out, the *Telegraph* became the official voice of Calhoun and his followers. To replace the *Telegraph* as the administration’s newspaper, Jackson brought in Kentuckian Francis Preston Blair to establish the *Washington Globe*.

<sup>165</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 111.

<sup>166</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 119.

around 33 percent to 50 percent. The measure provoked a violent outcry from leading South Carolinians, even those that had once supported tariffs. Freehling records that “McDuffie, a violent nationalist fast becoming a militant Southerner, called the duties ‘more justly obnoxious’ than the English taxes which had justified the American Revolution.”<sup>167</sup> In effect, Calhoun had no real choice in the matter. Wiltse correctly claims that “He did not require the needling of the *Columbia Telescope*, with the portly shadow of Dr. Cooper behind its editorial chair, to convince him that he must go with his state or be abandoned by it.”<sup>168</sup>

Despite the virulent opposition from South Carolina congressmen, the tariff bill passed the House. As presiding officer in the Senate, Calhoun had the final, and decisive, vote. In a shocking turn of events, Calhoun cast the deciding vote to defeat the so-called Woolens Bill. This single action, Current argues, “marked the beginning of the end of his nationalist phase.”<sup>169</sup> Calhoun’s turnabout on the tariff issue was as abrupt as it was severe, yet he had little choice in the matter. “In South Carolina,” Spain writes, “opposition to protection had united all parts of the State by 1827; and Calhoun, although somewhat reluctant for fear of damaging his political fences, showed his stand by defeating the tariff bill of that year.”<sup>170</sup> Calhoun could sense the growing tide of discontent all the way in Washington. “South Carolina,” Feller asserts, “once a bastion of economic nationalism, had by now swung to the opposite extreme.”<sup>171</sup> It must be noted, however, that Calhoun was still several years removed from the official end of his nationalist phase--and it was not southern radicalism that brought about that change. In his *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836*, Freehling recounts the transformation of some of South Carolina’s leading statesmen:

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<sup>167</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 125.

<sup>168</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 112.

<sup>169</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 11.

<sup>170</sup> Spain, *Political Theory*, 18.

<sup>171</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 162.

McDuffie had traveled a long way in a short time from his stridently national pamphlet, "One of the People," in 1821 to his patently sectional Hamburg oration of 1827; Henry L. Pinckney, whose Clariosophic Oration in 1825 was a classic statement of American nationalism, was publishing Turnbull and defending Cooper two years later; Hamilton, who had written the nationalist resolution of 1821, helped to whip up excitement over the woolens bill; Hayne, who had resisted the furor over the seamen law, led the campaign against the American Colonization Society....It would not be long before young Carolina hotspurs like James H. Hammond would be proudly proclaiming that they loved South Carolina better than they loved the Union.<sup>172</sup>

Calhoun certainly could not have maintained his former nationalist position in the face of such rampant opposition at home. The two options he faced were either to reverse his course on the tariff issue or face permanent alienation in his home state. While some historians have attacked Calhoun as an inconsistent flip-flopper, Hofstadter takes the opposite approach:

Changes at home converted the reluctant Calhoun from a nationalist to a sectionalist. As the cotton economy spread, South Carolina became entirely a staple-growing state. Her planters, working exhausted land, and hard pressed to compete with the fresh soil of the interior, found it impossible to submit quietly any longer to the exactions of the protective tariff. Before long a fiery local group of statesmen made it impossible for any politician to stay in business who did not take a strong stand for sectional interests.<sup>173</sup>

A protective tariff, leading radicals argued, could do nothing but harm South Carolina. No less than McDuffie professed his willingness to "poison the monster and commend it to his own lips. This is what is sometimes called 'fighting the devil with fire.'"<sup>174</sup> While South Carolina's leading politicians moved to oppose the tariff in Congress, citizens continued to voice their displeasure by any means available. One angry mob in Columbia burned effigies of Clay and Webster.<sup>175</sup> Thus, Hofstadter argues, "It was tariffs, not slavery, that first made the South militant."<sup>176</sup> Tariffs and slavery, however, were certainly not two separate issues for slaveholders. In his seminal work on antebellum politics and economics, historian John

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<sup>172</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 132.

<sup>173</sup> Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, 69-70.

<sup>174</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 369.

<sup>175</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 378.

<sup>176</sup> Hostadter, *American Political Tradition*, 77.

Ashworth demonstrates how, over the preceding decades, tariffs and slavery had become forever linked in southern minds:

The principal change of policy concerned the protective tariff, which Carolinians now saw as the cause of all their economic woes. By 1830 Calhoun too was preoccupied with the tariff and this was indeed the issue that precipitated the nullification crisis. But as William Freehling has shown, behind the tariff question lay the larger issue of federal power. And the concern with federal power was prompted above all by fears for slavery. Hence even the empowerment of the tariff as an issue among Southern militants depended to a considerable extent upon the slavery question.<sup>177</sup>

Despite his opposition to the most recent protective tariffs, Calhoun continued to hold out hope for a peaceful resolution to the constant bickering. Shortly after Cooper's tirade on the value of the Union, Calhoun wrote to Pennsylvania representative Samuel D. Ingham explaining that "The imprudent decleration [*sic*] of such men as Dr. Cooper, and others of similar character gives no indication of publick [*sic*] opinion in this quarter. Yet I trust the real friends of manufactures will not be so imprudent as to press for further protection at this high[ly] unpropitious period."<sup>178</sup> On this last point, Calhoun would soon be disappointed. The tariff issue was not going to disappear, if only temporarily. New tariffs proposed in subsequent years would have dire consequences, pushing South Carolina to the brink of secession.

It is important to recognize that former nationalists like Hayne and McDuffie had already reversed their course years before Calhoun could ever be accused of reversing his. By the time he had joined the South Carolina radicals, all of his former allies had already done so. Even then, Calhoun would only give sectional loyalties precedent over national ones in response to repeated Northern attacks on slavery. In many respects, South Carolina's leading radicals failed miserably to convert Calhoun to their side. How, then, can he be fairly accused of taking the path of least resistance or pandering to whatever factions were politically expedient? Calhoun

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<sup>177</sup> John Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics in the Antebellum Republic, Volume 1: Commerce and Compromise, 1820-1850* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 133.

<sup>178</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 312.

was no “opportunist,” but a highly-principled man who did not completely abandon his former agenda until northern, not southern, radicals gave him no other choice. In his Introduction to the thirteenth installment of *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, editor Clyde N. Wilson confirms that “His tactics flowed from his principles, not his principles from his tactics.”<sup>179</sup>

The official break between Adams and Calhoun came over what became known in the South as the Tariff of Abominations. Signed into effect on May 19, 1828, the tariff raised duties to around 50 percent.<sup>180</sup> Leading radicals, particularly in South Carolina, were incensed. James Hamilton Jr., soon to be governor of South Carolina, nearly withdrew from Congress in a fit of rage.<sup>181</sup> The economic system Adams was trying to shape effectively forced cotton growers to sell in an unprotected market, but make purchases in a protected one.<sup>182</sup> A South Carolinian who had supported the tariff of 1816 had sold his cotton for twenty-seven cents a pound. Now he was lucky to make nine cents on a pound.<sup>183</sup> The debates raged with free-traders quoting from the great economists like Adam Smith and protectionists insisting that America’s burgeoning industries required a tariff.<sup>184</sup> Even Calhoun was forced to admit to a friend that “The Tariff causes much excitement in our State, which occasionally breaks out into some extravagance.”<sup>185</sup>

Calhoun still loved the Union and resented the radicals’ efforts to undermine all he had helped build. Although he conceded that the tariff needed to be modified, Calhoun insisted that such changes must take place within the process of law. When it came to the most radical elements in South Carolina, Calhoun could only watch and hope “that they will not be provoked

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<sup>179</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 4.

<sup>180</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 145.

<sup>181</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 372.

<sup>182</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 250.

<sup>183</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 142.

<sup>184</sup> Adherents of Adam Smith’s philosophy, most Carolinians assumed that individuals would inevitably further the general welfare if left to their own devices. Government interference, they argued, impeded the process.

<sup>185</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 401.

to step beyond strict constitutional remedies.”<sup>186</sup> For him, disunion was not a viable solution to economic differences between sections. Calhoun urged South Carolina’s leading radicals to cool their inflammatory rhetoric, assuring them of his “belief that those now in power will be displaced shortly.”<sup>187</sup> John Quincy Adams was clearly not going to be reelected, though of course he would try. Many in the South assumed that Jackson would be more sympathetic to their plight than his predecessor. He was, after all, “the candidate of the people” and the upcoming election a case of “the many against the few, of equal rights against privileged orders, of democracy against aristocracy.”<sup>188</sup> With the tariff debates in full swing, Calhoun was explaining to Jackson “That your administration may be the means of restoring harmony to this distracted country and of averting the alarming crises before us.”<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 305.

<sup>187</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 397.

<sup>188</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 74.

<sup>189</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 397.

## Chapter V: Nullification

Rallying behind a slogan of “Jackson, Calhoun and Liberty,” the Democrats carried the day handily in the election of 1828.<sup>190</sup> Jackson won every state south of the Potomac and west of the Appalachians, plus New York and Pennsylvania.<sup>191</sup> The results were hardly surprising, although the harshness of the campaign itself was disturbing, even by the standards of the day. Despite the shrewd genius of Secretary of State Van Buren, Calhoun became the odds-on favorite to succeed Jackson. As he stood atop the East portico of the Capitol on March 4, 1829, Calhoun tried to decipher Jackson’s vague inaugural address. In the same breath, Jackson asserted that states’ rights must be respected, the Constitution upheld, and the Federal Union defended. Hermann Von Holst records that “In the South he had been sustained as a friend of ‘Southern interests,’ *i. e.*, as an anti-protectionist; while in New York, Pennsylvania, and the West he had been supported as the firm friend of the tariff and of internal improvements.”<sup>192</sup> America would have to wait for Jackson to show his true colors.

Calhoun had tried desperately to reassure the malcontents in South Carolina that things would change with Jackson’s election. Many of them were not convinced. Hamilton voiced his opinion that “He [Jackson] cannot repeal a law. The government of this country is not in the executive. It resides in a despotic sectional majority of both houses.”<sup>193</sup> Before long, leading South Carolinians had effectively strong-armed Calhoun into drafting a revolutionary document to help clarify their position. So it was that, over two weeks in November 1828, Calhoun put his thoughts on paper and sent them to the South Carolina legislature. The basic tenets were rewritten into a document fifty-six pages long that became known commonly as “The South

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<sup>190</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 138.

<sup>191</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 75.

<sup>192</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 83.

<sup>193</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 383-4.



Carolina Exposition and Protest.”<sup>194</sup> Five thousand copies were soon printed and distributed throughout the nation.<sup>195</sup> The work laid the foundation for the radical nullification movement in South Carolina, which Calhoun originally wanted nothing to do with. Concerning the document, Capers admits that “When Calhoun wrote it in 1828, it was certainly his hope and probably his expectation that the application of the doctrine would never become necessary.”<sup>196</sup> His complicity in the project, which among other things advocated a stand against the tariff by a united South, would not become public knowledge for some time. Calhoun knew that his work could very well result in political suicide. In time, the movement became more militant than he had ever intended. American historian William Peterfield Trent asserts that “Calhoun could not restrain his own disciples; for they did not love the Union as he did.”<sup>197</sup>

The doctrine of nullification made sense to men like Calhoun who did not accept that the Supreme Court was the final arbiter in matters of constitutionality. For him, the framers of the Constitution had constructed a delicate balance of power between the federal and state governments. “Our system,” he wrote, “consists of two distinct and independent ‘sovereignities’ or ‘governments.’”<sup>198</sup> The federal government had no right to interfere with those rights reserved explicitly for the states. Harkening back to the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, Calhoun argued that the individual states retained the right to “interpose” when the federal government exceeds its authority.<sup>199</sup> The logic the nullifiers followed was actually rather straightforward. Since state conventions had ratified the Constitution in the first place, it should fall to them to act as the final arbiters of that document. (The fact that thirteen of those states

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<sup>194</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 76.

<sup>195</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 389.

<sup>196</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 118.

<sup>197</sup> William Peterfield Trent, “John Caldwell Calhoun” in John L. Thomas, ed., *John C. Calhoun: A Profile* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968), 38.

<sup>198</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 150.

<sup>199</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 79.

predated the Constitution as independent sovereignties was not lost on Calhoun.) These state conventions should be empowered to declare an unconstitutional law null and void. If three-quarters of the states failed to revise the Constitution and legitimize the measure in question, then the aggrieved state retained the right to secede from the Union. It was Calhoun's hope that a process as democratic as nullification would ensure that secession never became a reality. Suffice it to say, Calhoun was playing a dangerous game in his dual role as vice president and chief architect of nullification.

The rising tide of sectionalism prompted numerous debates, none more famous than those between Robert Hayne and Daniel Webster. In January 1830, the two men tested both their resolve and their competing interpretations of the Union with a verbal confrontation lasting nine days. Hayne detailed the injurious measures that he figured must soon "involve the whole South in irretrievable ruin."<sup>200</sup> It was Webster, though, who ultimately carried the day--his beleaguered opponent would admit as much--and his "Second Reply to Hayne" would be recited by schoolchildren for generations. "Liberty and Union," Webster concluded, "now and forever, one and inseparable!"<sup>201</sup>

As the months passed, rumors surfaced concerning Calhoun's responsibility for the incendiary Exposition and Protest. All the while, Van Buren continued to endear himself to Jackson. In September 1829, Jackson confided to an old friend in Tennessee that Van Buren had become "everything that I could desire him to be, and believe him not only deserving *my* confidence, but the *confidence* of the *Nation*...I wish I could say as much for Mr. Calhoun."<sup>202</sup> The matter famously came to a head on April 13, 1830, when Washington's leading politicians gathered to commemorate the late Thomas Jefferson's eighty-seventh birthday. The nullifiers

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<sup>200</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 60.

<sup>201</sup> Heidler, *Henry Clay*, 228.

<sup>202</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 187.

were well represented, with the handsome, erudite Hayne acting as principal speaker. As president, it fell to Jackson to offer the dinner's first toast, but, as Harry Watson recounts, "the provocative rhetoric of the nullifiers had now obliged him to bless or condemn what they had said."<sup>203</sup> Jackson had always affirmed his belief in states' rights, so the nullifiers naturally expected him to echo their sentiments. Instead, Jackson lifted his glass and unequivocally declared: "Our Federal Union. It must be preserved."<sup>204</sup> Cautiously, Calhoun rose to offer his diluted rebuttal: "The Union. Next to our liberty, the most dear; may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the states and distributing equally the benefits and burdens of the Union."<sup>205</sup> Although Van Buren added a carefully crafted response to both men, stressing the need for "mutual forbearance and reciprocal concession,"<sup>206</sup> The President had officially thrown down the gauntlet. He was clearly not the fanatical states' righter that many in the South had taken him for.

Jackson took a no-nonsense approach in dealing with the nullifiers. "Disunion by armed force," he clarified, "is *treason*."<sup>207</sup> Wiltse records that, in the summer of 1831, "He [Jackson] had been informed that 'Calhoun is at the bottom of this thing,' and that apparently was enough to convince him that the Union was threatened."<sup>208</sup> Few doubted the President's sincerity when he vowed to travel to South Carolina and hang leading nullifiers himself, Calhoun included. In light of this, Bartlett suggests that Calhoun's election as vice president in 1828 was "perhaps the most unfortunate thing that could have happened to him."<sup>209</sup> The *Globe*, which served as the Jacksonians' official voice, took to repeating a well-known syllogism: "Disunion is treason;

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<sup>203</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 120.

<sup>204</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 120.

<sup>205</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 322.

<sup>206</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 71.

<sup>207</sup> Feller, *Jacksonian Promise*, 166.

<sup>208</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 113.

<sup>209</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 159.

nullification is disunion; Calhoun is the high priest of the Nullifiers.”<sup>210</sup> The break between president and vice president was officially complete, prompting former Postmaster General and loyal Jacksonian John McLean to lament that “Our friend Calhoun is gone, I fear, forever. Four years past he has been infatuated with his Southern doctrines.”<sup>211</sup> McLean and most other Americans clearly never appreciated the extent of Calhoun’s resistance to those same doctrines. Conversely, they overestimated his contributions to radicalism in South Carolina. Wiltse records that Calhoun’s opponents “called him the Duke of Pendleton and alleged that South Carolina sneezed when Calhoun took snuff. Yet he held no state office, had no patronage to dispense, and was not in a position of economic dominance.”<sup>212</sup>

Calhoun would not publicly espouse nullification until late in the summer of 1831 when, in Freehling’s words, “Hamilton and McDuffie forced him into the open.”<sup>213</sup> The *Columbia Telescope* openly avowed that “*if Mr. Calhoun...will go...with South Carolina, well and good; if not, South Carolina does not go with Mr. Calhoun.*”<sup>214</sup> To this point, however, Calhoun was a moderate nullifier. “Probably,” Capers argues, “he was actually busy trying to retard and at the same time to catch up with them.”<sup>215</sup> Men like Hammond never fully embraced Calhoun, complaining that he was “always buying over enemies and never looks after friends.”<sup>216</sup> Calhoun seemed far too obsessed with preserving the Union. Even in the volatile days of August 1831, he was still arguing that “as much time should be afforded as [is] possible, before the State & the Union should be called on to take sides *finally*. Nothing is more dangerous, than to make

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<sup>210</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 115.

<sup>211</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 227.

<sup>212</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 154.

<sup>213</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 155.

<sup>214</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 225.

<sup>215</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 107.

<sup>216</sup> Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, 75.

the issue too soon, with a growing cause, as I believe ours to be.”<sup>217</sup> Cooper, meanwhile, accused him of trying to negotiate on non-negotiable demands.<sup>218</sup> “Ironically,” Wilentz asserts, “one of the South Carolina nullifiers who was slow to rouse himself was the chief theorist, John C. Calhoun. Having completed his transition from nationalist to sectionalist, Calhoun was, nevertheless, oddly, a temperate force in state politics at the opening of the 1830s.”<sup>219</sup>

Leading nullifiers became increasingly devious in their efforts to win Calhoun’s complete devotion to nullification and sectionalism. On May 16, 1831, with the Nullification Crisis in full swing, a banquet was thrown in Calhoun’s honor. What he was not told, however, was that George McDuffie was invited to act as principal speaker and give one of his fiery sermons.<sup>220</sup> While Calhoun managed to circumvent this latest attempt by the nullifiers to force his hand, the stress they were putting on him was momentous. “As the nullifiers’ crusade grew more intense,” Freehling demonstrates, “the pressure on Calhoun became irresistible.”<sup>221</sup> Certainly there were men like Cooper who cared very little about Calhoun’s agenda. The vast majority of leading South Carolinians, however, continued to apply enormous pressure on him.

Although he was the principal architect of nullification, Calhoun could not bear the thought of ruining the Union he loved so dearly. He could only “regret to be forced” to publicly embrace the practice in the first place.<sup>222</sup> Calhoun worked tirelessly to bring South Carolina back into the fold, believing as he did that nullification and compromise were not mutually exclusive practices. In August 1827, Calhoun received a letter from Virginia Governor Littleton Tazewell, inquiring how a state could declare a law passed by Congress null and void when that

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<sup>217</sup> W. Edwin Hemphill, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume XI, 1829-1832* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1978), 445.

<sup>218</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 317.

<sup>219</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 376.

<sup>220</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 145.

<sup>221</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 225.

<sup>222</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 275

same power was reserved for the Supreme Court only. Assailed from both sides, Calhoun reluctantly admitted that “I do not see my way clearly.”<sup>223</sup> Wiltse recounts how Calhoun’s love of the Union precluded him from embracing the logic of South Carolina’s most hardened sectionalists:

In developing and advocating the State Rights doctrine in 1828, Calhoun was not turning from nationalism to a narrow sectional point of view, and he was not from motives of personal ambition seeking to destroy the Union. He was, in a very genuine sense, trying to save the Union in the only way it could be saved--by preserving the loyalty of its citizens....and in the unguarded talk of his fellow citizens Calhoun saw that loyalty slipping away.<sup>224</sup>

Calhoun’s rampant nationalism had already prevented him from recognizing the threat to slavery posed by the Missouri Controversy and subsequent debates. Throughout the 1820s, he tried hard to convince southerners that their way of life was not under attack. No administration, he assured them, could attack slavery and win. As long as the South stood “united as a man, the result need not be feared.”<sup>225</sup> Calhoun’s personal correspondence is a testament to his faith that compromise and cooperation would ultimately win the day. At some point near the end of the decade, however, Calhoun came to a startling realization. For years, leading southerners had tried to convince him that the tariff issue might be symptomatic of a much larger and divisive problem. What if northern aggression managed to manifest itself in another capacity? Calhoun had opposed tariffs before, but never because he feared that protectionism might be a smokescreen for antislavery agitation. A letter Calhoun wrote to Maxcy, dated September 11, 1830, is a singularly important piece of his correspondence. The letter itself represents the first real instance in which Calhoun publicly acknowledged that Northern aggression could not be permitted to continue unchecked:

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<sup>223</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 144

<sup>224</sup> Wiltse, *Nationalist*, 396-7.

<sup>225</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, X, 253.

I consider the Tariff act as the occasion, rather than the real cause of the present unhappy state of things. The truth can no longer be disguised, that the peculiar domestick [*sic.*] institution of the Southern States, and the consequent direction, which that and her soil and climate have given to her industry, has placed them in regard to taxation and appropriations in opposite relation to the majority of the Union, against the danger of which, if there be no protective power in the reserved rights of the States, they must in the end be forced to rebel, or submit it to have their paramount interests sacraficed [*sic.*], their domestick institutions subordinated by Colonization and other schemes, and themselves & children reduced to wretchedness.<sup>226</sup>

On July 26, 1831, Calhoun read publicly from what became known as his Fort Hill Address. Among other things, Calhoun's two-hour-long sermon confirmed his authorship of the Exposition and Protest, which many had long since figured. The Vice President reiterated that there was nothing unconstitutional or inherently revolutionary about nullification. He also gave considerable attention to the nature of state versus federal power. "Stripped of all its covering," Calhoun declared, "the naked question is, whether ours if a federal or a consolidated government; a constitutional or an absolute one; a government resting ultimately on the solid basis of the sovereignty of the States, or the unrestrained will of a majority."<sup>227</sup> Calhoun's speech on that day was also an important event given that many biographers, Capers included, point to it as the moment when Calhoun "officially committed himself to nullification."<sup>228</sup>

Calhoun's theory of the concurrent majority, which he clarified at Fort Hill, was essentially government by the whole community. If every major social interest in America could occupy at least one state and each state had to concur in matters of government, then all interests would concur.<sup>229</sup> His scheme never got off the ground because minority veto is no practical way to run a government. What Calhoun seemed to forget in his later years, Von Holst asserts, was

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<sup>226</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XI, 229.

<sup>227</sup> Lence, *Union and Liberty*, 367.

<sup>228</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 116.

<sup>229</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 258.

“that the majority also had rights, and, above all other, the right to rule.”<sup>230</sup> What would the point be of having a federal government if one dissenting vote could paralyze the whole legislative process? Moreover, in attempting to rally a southern majority, Calhoun would later deny the necessity or practicality of minority veto.<sup>231</sup>

South Carolina would be forced to go it alone during the Nullification Crisis even though she implored other southern states to unite and join her. Most southerners could not understand the nullifiers’ jumbled political jargon and as yet had little or no interest in secession, which they perceived to be inextricably linked to nullification. For his part, Jackson countered South Carolina’s efforts by getting a Force Bill passed through Congress which would compel tariff collection in that state. Leading nullifiers condemned Jackson’s efforts, with Calhoun comparing the Force Bill to “the bloody edicts of Nero and Caligula.”<sup>232</sup> (Calhoun resigned his position as Vice President on December 28, 1832, convinced that he and Jackson had nothing left to say to one another. Earlier that month, the South Carolina legislature had elected him the U.S. Senate, while Hayne was elected governor.) Tensions were high when the South Carolina legislature set February 1, 1833 as the deadline for abolishing the tariff. State officers, meanwhile, were required to take a “test oath” to obey the ordinance.<sup>233</sup> When the “Fateful First” came at last, South Carolina decided to give reconciliation one final chance. No less than Henry Clay--the Great Compromiser--introduced a new tariff proposal as a substitute for the earlier attempt at gradual reduction proposed by Congressman Gulian C. Verplanck of New York. Calhoun had the honor of rising to announce that South Carolina accepted the terms. For the time being, South Carolinians would reluctantly doff their caps and accept that protectionism was “the

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<sup>230</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 22.

<sup>231</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 259.

<sup>232</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 72.

<sup>233</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 152.



settled policy of the country.”<sup>234</sup> Simultaneously, Jackson signed both the Force Bill and the revised tariff into law on March 2. South Carolina’s constituent assembly duly repealed the ordinance nullifying the tariff law and, in a purely symbolic act, adopted another nullifying the Force Bill.

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<sup>234</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 97.

## Chapter VI: A New Brand of Radicalism

Shortly after completion of the Compromise Tariff, the enemies of Andrew Jackson came together to form the Whig Party. Originally, the only common denominator among the amorphous Whigs--whose name hearkened back to Great Britain's traditional opponents of monarchy--was their opposition to Jackson. The majority of former nullifiers followed Calhoun in deserting the party of Jackson. Calhoun found himself working next to his old friend Clay, spearheading the opposition to "King Andrew I" and his efforts to broaden the powers of the executive. From his seat in the Senate, Calhoun and his fellow Whigs succeeded in making the final years of Jackson's presidency a living nightmare. They fought hard to prevent him from getting any of his legislation passed and, in April 1834, even succeeded in censuring Jackson for exceeding his authority in defeating the Bank of the United States.<sup>235</sup>

Reaction to Calhoun was now mixed in Washington, owing to the stigma of radicalism attached to any South Carolinian. However unfairly, his name was being bandied about with those of George McDuffie, James Hamilton Jr., and Thomas Cooper. After her arrival in Washington, the wife of James Henry Hammond could only regret that "We Carolinians are in such bad odor here" that she never saw "a friendly smile."<sup>236</sup> It was most unfortunate that Calhoun's name had become a byword for sectionalism when, in fact, he had fought hard to offset the influence of the most prominent radicals. Nevertheless, Wiltse concludes, "It was easier...for the Jacksonians everywhere to argue that nullification meant rebellion when so many of the nullifiers seemed to think do themselves."<sup>237</sup> It is safe to say that those South Carolinians

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<sup>235</sup> Although it was a purely a symbolic gesture, the censure's ratification was no small matter. When it came to matters of defending his honor, Andrew Jackson was the archetypal Southerner. The Whigs' motion was a direct affront to that honor. Not until January 1837, in his last major act as president, did Jackson succeed in getting this one great blemish on his record expunged.

<sup>236</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 215-6.

<sup>237</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 143.

had failed in their attempts to win Calhoun's complete devotion to their cause. Yet, while the crisis was running its course, a new breed of radicals were preparing to leave an indelible mark on American history. In the process, they would accomplish something the radicals of South Carolina could not--convincing Calhoun to wholeheartedly embrace states' rights and sectionalism as the South's only means of survival. Radical abolitionists were about to hand the South the sort of galvanizing moment the nullifiers had been hoping for all along. Indeed, Calhoun need not have been distraught over his tarnished reputation, for, as Bartlett puts it, he "had already discovered new dragons at the gate."<sup>238</sup>

Southerners soon recognized that a new crisis needed to be addressed immediately. As if the growth of radicalism in his home state was not enough to contend with, Calhoun was soon confronted by the specter of unabashed northern radicalism in the form of abolitionism. Constituting nothing more than a fringe movement in the 1820s, abolitionism morphed into an undeniable force in the 1830s. First, in 1829, a free Negro in Boston named David Walker had published his "Appeal...to the Colored Citizens of the World."<sup>239</sup> Walker's pamphlet had the effect of rousing both northern principles and Southern anxiety. The following year saw an incomparable religious revival that swept through much of the northern and mid-Atlantic states. With its emphasis on morality and reform, the movement effectively set northern antislavery activists and Southern proslavery advocates on a collision course.

The year 1831 constituted a watershed moment for slavery debates in America. In fact, according to Wiltse, "it was probably in 1831 that the South began to assume toward its peculiar institution an attitude that was a mixture of panic and resignation, and toward the free states an

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<sup>238</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 216.

<sup>239</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 119.

attitude compounded of resentment and distrust.”<sup>240</sup> The first issue of journalist William Lloyd Garrison’s newspaper, the *Liberator*, appeared in Boston on New Year’s Day. His message was more unmistakably clear than anything that had preceded it, calling for immediate and uncompensated emancipation of all slaves living in the United States. Garrison’s rhetoric, Current writes, struck “a new note of urgency and extremism in the antislavery movement.”<sup>241</sup> Garrison continued by establishing the New England Antislavery Society and, in 1833, the American Antislavery Society. Men like Calhoun had never really questioned the institution itself. Slavery was a part of the South’s moral fabric and everyday life. Just as God had ordained that the North function under a free system of labor, so too had the South been designed to operate with slavery. Suddenly, however, a persuasive defense of the South’s prized institution seemed urgent. In this way, Capers asserts, “Many Southerners by a natural process became ardent instead of apologetic defenders of their peculiar institution.”<sup>242</sup> Southerners understood that this particular brand of antislavery agitation was the first of its kind. Seven months after the birth of the *Liberator*, their worst fears came to pass.

In the early morning hours of August 22, 1831, a slave in southeastern Virginia climbed through the window of his master’s house and, with the help of six accomplices, brutally murdered Joseph and Sally Travis, their son, and an apprentice boy.<sup>243</sup> For two full days, Turner and his band cut a bloody swath through Southampton County, leaving some fifty-seven white men, women, and children dead. A terrifying story in and of itself, the significance of Nat Turner’s Revolt transcended events in tidewater Virginia. Although Turner was eventually captured and hanged, many southerners saw a direct correlation between his revolt and the

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<sup>240</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 117.

<sup>241</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 19.

<sup>242</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 181.

<sup>243</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 323.

increased agitation of abolitionists like Garrison. Many blamed the *Liberator* for blatantly encouraging Negro insurrections. Southerners of all stripes agreed that Turner's efforts indicated that whites and free blacks could never live peaceably side by side. Later in the decade, Calhoun took the lead in confirming that antislavery activists did not appreciate "the impossibility of abolishing it, without disasters unexampled in the history of the world."<sup>244</sup>

Calhoun's primary focus in that year was still the nullification movement. Daniel Walker Howe believes that, in the aftermath Nat Turner's insurrection, "A new Calhoun, devoted to slavery and state rights, had replaced the old one."<sup>245</sup> Howe's assessment, while not incorrect, is somewhat of an overstatement. Throughout the decade of the 1830s, Calhoun would revise his political economy, refining his argument as he went along. His personal correspondence in the early part of the decade, however, makes no mention whatsoever of Nat Turner or, for that matter, William Lloyd Garrison. It seems reasonable then to suggest that Calhoun did not abandon nationalism for southern radicalism in response to a singular event. By the time a Compromise Tariff was decided upon in 1833, Calhoun had an abundance of reasons to fear northern abolitionists: slave insurrections, the proliferation of abolitionist newspapers and organizations, the birth of the American Colonization Society, and the influx of abolitionist petitions flooding Congress daily. It is difficult to say that Calhoun's move away from nationalism was the result of any one of these developments in particular, for each of them constituted a distinct, urgent threat to the South.

Reaction to Turner's rebellion bordered on hysteria in the South, and South Carolina was no exception. Vigilante mobs roamed the countryside trying to preserve order. Abolitionists

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<sup>244</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 63.

<sup>245</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 323.

were bullied out of the state and religious services for slaves banned on many plantations.<sup>246</sup> In Charleston, a proslavery mob, led by none other than Hayne, destroyed abolitionist literature before it was delivered.<sup>247</sup> Postmaster General Amos Kendall avowed that the federal mails would be unavailable for any “incendiary” materials banned by state law.<sup>248</sup> Nullifiers and Unionists came together for the first time, their differences suddenly seeming quite trivial. “Enemies of yesterday,” Wiltse asserts, “made common cause today if both held slaves.”<sup>249</sup>

Abolitionism struck at the very heart of the South by assaulting the one thing it needed to exist. In so doing, it became the catalyst for a united bloc the likes of which leading nullifiers had tried, and failed, to create. “The net result of the antislavery crusade,” Wiltse argues, “was the unite the South and inevitably to give new impulse to the separatist spirit that had never been far beneath the surface.”<sup>250</sup> Calhoun could tolerate discussion on banks, tariffs, and internal improvements, but protecting slavery was an entirely different matter. By March 1833, he was preaching that “It is time the South should overlook all minor difference, and unite as one man in defense of their liberty. Old differences must cease, and he who would keep them up is not a friend to the South.”<sup>251</sup> Later, in January 1834, he wrote to Francis Pickens, another prominent political figure in South Carolina, that “This is no time for discord in our ranks. The period is eminently perilous.”<sup>252</sup> Back in South Carolina, Calhoun relayed his optimism concerning Southern unification to Duff Green:

Since you passed through the South the excitement in relation to Northern fanaticks [*sic.*] has very greatly increased. The indications are, that the South will be unanimous in their resistance, and that the resistance will be of the most determined character, even to the

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<sup>246</sup> Niven, *Price of Union*, 183.

<sup>247</sup> Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, 141.

<sup>248</sup> Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 203.

<sup>249</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 280.

<sup>250</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 364.

<sup>251</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 147.

<sup>252</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 197.

extent of disunion, if that should be necessary to arrest the evil. I trust, however, it may be arrested far short of such extremity.<sup>253</sup>

Calhoun's presidential ambitions had been frustrated to this point, but he saw an opening to become the voice of an aggrieved minority. Few of his southern contemporaries in Congress could boast of being more experienced than he was in politics: a former representative, secretary of war, and vice president. It followed that they now looked to Calhoun for leadership. Calhoun determined that the first objective of the South must be self-preservation. Any thoughts of maintaining the Union must be regarded as secondary to the wellbeing of their home section and states.<sup>254</sup> How odd it must have been for Calhoun, once a paragon of nationalist thought and rhetoric, to now be championing the twin causes of states' rights and sectionalism.

Calhoun was determined from the outset to head abolitionism off at the pass, convinced as he was that "we are reposing on a volcano."<sup>255</sup> The man who had refused to wholeheartedly embrace the most radical elements in the South was prepared to do just that. It is no small irony, then, that a group of northern radicals became the compelling force that finally drove Calhoun to adopt the kind of radicalism that men like Cooper, McDuffie, and Hamilton had espoused for years. Calhoun's role as one of the most visible members of the proslavery camp guaranteed that abolitionists would have plenty to say about him specifically. The radical antislavery activist Wendell Phillips once referred to Calhoun as "the pure, manly, uncompromising advocate of slavery; the Hector of a Troy fated to fall."<sup>256</sup> Much like his southern contemporaries, however, Calhoun refused to countenance any attack aimed directly at slavery. In his mind, the master-

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<sup>253</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 547.

<sup>254</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 369-70.

<sup>255</sup> Clyde N. Wilson, ed., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun: Volume XIV, 1837-1839* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981), 61.

<sup>256</sup> James B. Stewart, "Heroes, Villains, Liberty, And License: The Abolitionist Vision of Wendell Phillips" in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman eds., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 187.

slave relationship was necessary given the contrast between the two races. Any other arrangement could easily lead to open warfare between competing sides. Calhoun most famously articulated his opinions in his iconic speech before the senate on February 6, 1837:

I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slave-holding States between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good--a positive good. . . . I hold then, that there never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labor of the other.<sup>257</sup>

The crusade waged by Calhoun and his contemporaries on abolitionism manifested itself in the form of a so-called “gag rule” that sought to prevent the discussion of antislavery pamphlets anywhere in the United States, including the District of Columbia.<sup>258</sup> Spurred on by the sudden rebirth of religious fervor, abolitionists assailed the South with antislavery pamphlets, including crude pictures to reach slaves who could not read.<sup>259</sup> Slaveholders vowed to counter the efforts of abolitionists just as fanatically. In 1835, Calhoun attended a meeting of outraged friends and neighbors near Fort Hill. The message was simple: South Carolinians would do their part to keep all “incendiary publications” out of their community and swiftly bring to justice anyone caught disseminating them.<sup>260</sup> It was expected that men like Calhoun would reciprocate in Washington. Communities across the South quickly seized on the Carolinians’ practice of dismissing all talk of abolition from their presence.

Denied their mass mailings to southern addresses, abolitionists turned their efforts to circulating antislavery petitions in Congress. Predictably, southern congressmen protested vehemently, arguing that Congress should not be used as a venue to promote such extreme,

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<sup>257</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 395-6.

<sup>258</sup> The practice was given its name by John Quincy Adams, the gag rule’s fiercest opponent in Congress. Adams explained that he was not defending the opinions of abolitionists, but rather their constitutional right of petition. Adams himself advocated the less-radical measure of gradual emancipation.

<sup>259</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 270.

<sup>260</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 222.



subversive language. Continually frustrating abolitionist attempts to sway public opinion, they used the gag rule to prevent Congress from receiving any such petitions. The rationale was simple: rather than receive and deny the petitions, Congress should refuse to receive them in the first place.<sup>261</sup> “The onus,” Calhoun reasoned, “ought to be on those who presented the petitions to show that they were worthy of reception.”<sup>262</sup> Sectional antagonisms had indeed reached an all-time high. “The moral power of the world is against us,” South Carolina’s Andrew Pickens warned his Southern counterparts. “England has [in 1833] emancipated her West Indies islands. France is moving in the same direction.”<sup>263</sup> Worse, the number of antislavery societies seemed to be growing daily in the North.

The good news for proslavery advocates was the conventional wisdom that Congress would not be able to abolish slavery in the states without a constitutional amendment. Naturally, any such proposal would fail miserably in its attempt to garner the necessary congressional support needed for ratification. Antislavery activists thus fixed their gaze on the District of Columbia, rendering it the site of a proxy war between the two sides. According to Niven, the abolitionists argued that “Congress had plenary powers of government over the District of Columbia as it had over the territories and therefore controlled its domestic institutions, including slavery.”<sup>264</sup> Proslavery forces retorted that the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed that no person could be deprived of property without due process of law.<sup>265</sup> Since in they regarded slaves as property, Congress had no right to deprive a man of his chattel anywhere in the Union. Furthermore, as Calhoun articulated, “this Government as a common agent of the States, has no right, in any of its acts, either in this District or elsewhere, to discriminate between

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<sup>261</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 4.

<sup>262</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 387.

<sup>263</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 512.

<sup>264</sup> Niven, *Price of Union*, 201.

<sup>265</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 25.

the domestic institutions of the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States, by favoring one, and opposing the other.”<sup>266</sup> The prospect of emancipation, even in so small an area, terrified slaveholders to no end. If successful, such measures might constitute the first step in a much larger crusade.<sup>267</sup> Southerners like Calhoun determined to oppose emancipation in the District from the outset:

Such a move, should it be made, as it is certainly contemplated, can only be considered, as the commencement of the work of immediate emancipation over the whole [of] the South, to which it will certainly lead, if not promptly met by the entire slave holding States, with the fixed determination to resist at any hazard.<sup>268</sup>

With the issue still unresolved in 1838, Calhoun took the opportunity to remind his Southern brethren in the Senate of the inevitable result of abolition in the capital:

We will be told that there are but two thousand slaves in the District, and if we yield to so small a request, all will be quiet. If that be conceded, we will be next told, we must yield to the abolition in the Territories, and then to the abolition of what they call the slave trade between the States, and, finally, to the abolition in the States. At every step they would become stronger, and we weaker.<sup>269</sup>

Slaveholders may have been worried about their way of life, but there was nothing constitutional about stifling another group’s freedom of speech or its ability to “petition the government for a redress of grievances.”<sup>270</sup> Such liberties, of course, were guaranteed under the Bill of Rights. Regardless of the tenor of their petitions, it must be said that the abolitionists were certainly not doing anything illegal. Indeed, Niven argues, “The substance of such petitions...was well within constitutional limitations.”<sup>271</sup> James H. Hammond and the rest of South Carolina’s congressional hotheads were thus unable to prevent Congress from receiving

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<sup>266</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 86.

<sup>267</sup> Slavery in the District of Columbia would not be abolished until April 16, 1862, a full year into the Civil War. Eight months later, President Abraham Lincoln would issue his Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all slaves living in states formally in a state of rebellion against the Union.

<sup>268</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 197.

<sup>269</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 75-6.

<sup>270</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 512.

<sup>271</sup> Niven, *Price of Union*, 201.

abolitionist mail. In response, Southern congressmen developed an informal practice to prevent antislavery agitation in Congress. As soon as a senator introduced an abolitionist petition, another would propose to have the issue tabled. The motion would carry, rendering the petition dead on arrival. This practice continued successfully from 1836 to 1850.<sup>272</sup>

Throughout the decade, slaveholders watched in horror as abolitionism made deeper and deeper inroads into the moral fabric of northern society. Spurred on by religious revivals and European emancipation projects in the Caribbean, antislavery activism continued to gain momentum. “From all I can learn,” Calhoun reluctantly admitted to Tazewell in January 1836, “the abolition party are making rapid advances in the Northern States.”<sup>273</sup> Later, in August, Calhoun took time to write an assembly of troubled citizens in Athens, Georgia: “Of all questions, which have been agitated under our government [,] abolition is that which we of the South have the have the deepest concern. It strikes directly and fatally, not only at our prosperity, but at our existence as a people.” Calhoun had clearly reevaluated his political theory over the preceding years. For a man who had always tolerated healthy debates on tariffs, banks, and internal improvements, what he declared next was especially profound. “It [slavery] is a question,” he wrote, “that admits neither concession, nor compromise.”<sup>274</sup> Calhoun later echoed these sentiments in a February 1837 speech before Congress, in which he avowed that “I do not belong to the school which holds that aggression is to be met by concession.”<sup>275</sup> It is readily apparent, then, that it was the radicals of the North, not the South, that drove Calhoun to become the most ardent defender of his state and section.

The attempt by southern slaveholders to stifle abolitionist pamphlets had some rather

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<sup>272</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 513.

<sup>273</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 50.

<sup>274</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 263.

<sup>275</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 392.

unintended consequences. Questions concerning the practice's constitutionality attracted attention on both sides. In many ways, the petition campaign represented a brilliant stroke by the abolitionists for, in Ashworth's words, "It showed the South willing to sacrifice the right of petition on the altar of slavery."<sup>276</sup> In the North, the press succeeded in arousing widespread sympathy for abolitionist efforts, further inflaming the situation. Congress was flooded with a record number of antislavery petitions, bearing tens of thousands of signatures. Slaveholders refused to recognize any distinctions between abolitionists and less militant antislavery groups.<sup>277</sup> The abolitionists were, Calhoun told the Senate in January 1834, "the fanatics and madmen of the North, who are waging war against the domestic institutions of the South, under the plea of promoting the general welfare."<sup>278</sup> Calhoun's disdain for abolitionists only swelled over time. On April 12 1836, in an impassioned speech before the Senate, Calhoun outlined how the abolitionist movement had developed over the previous two decades:

It is no longer in the hands of quiet and peaceful, but I cannot add harmless Quakers. It is now under the control of ferocious zealots, blinded by fanaticism, and in the pursuit of their object, regardless of the obligations of religion or morality. They are organized throughout every section of the non-slaveholding States; they have the disposition of almost unlimited funds, and are in possession of a powerful press, which, for the first time, is enlisted in the cause of abolition, and turned against the domestic institutions and the peace and security of the South.

For the first time in his life, the potential for disunion did not seem to bother Calhoun. Although hardly preferable, he was prepared to embrace a permanent schism between the two sections if antislavery agitation continued. By September 1835, Calhoun was happily informing his son that "Unionism is extinct in our State. I think, I see my way clearly on the slave question and I do not fear an entire triumph on our own conditions."<sup>279</sup> To a friend, Calhoun stressed both

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<sup>276</sup> Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, 143.

<sup>277</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 21.

<sup>278</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 205.

<sup>279</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XII, 555.

his confidence as well as the need for continued vigilance: "We stand stronger than we ever did on the same question....But we must not relax. The abolitionists are numerous, Zealous & active."<sup>280</sup> Never before had he advocated disunion--not during the Missouri debates; not over the tariff issue; not even as the most visible figure of nullification. Although he still hated the thought, Calhoun had come to the realization that, if abolitionism continued unabated, the South would have little recourse. To fellow South Carolinian Francis Pickens, he confirmed:

I, on my part, am not prepared to say, that the gover[n]ment & country can be regenerated, or that the Union can be preserved under the baneful influence of the abolition spirit [*sic.*] at the North. I hold it rash to form a definitive opinion either way; and that the wise course is to act on the supposition, that the country & gover[n]ment may be regenerated and the Union saved; but at the same time to adopt the most effectual constitutional measure to arrest the progress of usurpation & corruption, and abolitionism, even tho' [*sic.*] disunion should be the consequence.<sup>281</sup>

Fears of disunion and what it entailed had been a guiding force since his first days in Congress two decades earlier. None of the leading nullifiers had convinced Calhoun that disunion might be necessary, if not desirable. He had worked hard to counteract the treasonous rhetoric of Cooper and McDuffie. It was only when northern radicals had increased their attacks, both in volume and intensity, that Calhoun began enthusiastically advocating states' rights and sectionalism. If necessary to the future of slavery, he was even prepared to advocate disunion, though it was hardly what he wanted. For most of his life, he had worked tirelessly to increase national efficiency and security. He would not abandon this vision until circumstances compelled him to. On January 25, 1838, Calhoun penned a letter to his daughter Anna Maria, in which he explained that a permanent North-South divide must only be thought of as a last resort for their aggrieved section:

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<sup>280</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 250.

<sup>281</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 279.

I[n] speaking of abolition, you say it is better to part peaceably at once, than to live in the state of irritation we do. That is a natural part and common conclusion, but those, who make it, do not think of the difficulty involved in the word; how many bleeding pours [sic.] must be taken up in passing the knife of separation through a body politi[c]k, which has been so long bou[n]d together by so many ties, political, social and commercial. We cannot and ought not to love together as we are at present, exposed to the continued attacks and assaults of the other portion of the Union; but we must act throughout on the defensive, resort to every probable means of arresting the evil, and only act, when all has been done, that can be, and when we shall stand justified before God and man in taking the final step.... We must remember, it is the most difficult process in the world to make two people of one; and that there is no example of it, if we except the Jews; I mean by interior cause of complaint, as in our case, tho [sic.] I do not doubt, if the evil be not arrested at the North, we shall add another example.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 107-8.

## Chapter VII: The Later Years

When Martin Van Buren won the election of 1836, Calhoun faced a major predicament. Over its short tenure, the Whig Party had swung increasingly toward the abolitionists. Though they may have stood against Jackson, Calhoun reminded Duff Green, the Whigs also stood against states' rights.<sup>283</sup> Calhoun considered rejoining the Democratic fold, but doing so also entailed some sort of rapprochement with Van Buren--the conniving Red Fox that had helped turn Jackson against him. Yet, despite his New York origins, it turned out that Van Buren was decidedly against antislavery agitation. The President's stance came as a relief to slaveholders. Cooper could hardly contain himself, assuring Van Buren that "Your pledges on the abolition question are felt and approved...they will tell greatly in your favor in the South."<sup>284</sup>

Calhoun's political odyssey had carried him far indeed. Far from the nationalist of old, he was now prepared to retaliate against Whig efforts to expand the federal government's authority. To that end, Calhoun cooperated with the Van Buren in his efforts to establish an Independent Treasury to house government funds. The paradoxical nature of Calhoun's involvement in such an endeavor was certainly not lost on either man. Two decades earlier, in 1816, Calhoun had voted for the nation's first real protective tariff and had sponsored the Second Bank of the United States. Calhoun's efforts to undo so much of what he had worked for, however, were more a sign of the times than a mark of inconsistency. "In actuality," Howe argues, "defending slavery trumped economic policy for the South Carolinian."<sup>285</sup> Calhoun had only rejoined the Democratic fold after northern antislavery agitation had reached a fever pitch and the Whig party had assumed the mantle of both aristocracy and abolitionism. Antebellum historian Lacy K. Ford records that, in fact, "Calhoun saw Whiggery as simply an attempt to

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<sup>283</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 234-5.

<sup>284</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 509.

<sup>285</sup> Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 509.

outfit the old Court-model Hamiltonian program with more modern trappings.”<sup>286</sup> When political opponents called him out for his desertion, Calhoun replied that he had never been a Whig nor anything else but “an honest nullifier.” In effect, Wiltse, records, “he lost no opportunity to drive home the fact that the [Van Buren] administration had come to his ground rather than he to theirs.”<sup>287</sup>

Although he was willing to aid Van Buren in other matters, Calhoun’s primary concern in the late 1830s--indeed, for the rest of his life--was the defense of slavery against the abolitionist onslaught. On December 27, 1837, he introduced a series of resolutions on the Senate floor designed to protect the institution in the South by limiting outside interference. His proposals served as a test “to ascertain whether there was any one common ground, on which all that were opposed to abolition might be rallied.”<sup>288</sup> By mid-January, Calhoun’s triumph was apparent. Only one resolution met with defeat while another had been amended to stress the unpleasantness rather than the unconstitutionality of ruling on slavery in the District of Columbia and the territories.<sup>289</sup>

Congressional debates over the reception of abolitionist petitions continued throughout the 1830s. To this was added the first questions concerning annexation of the newly independent republic of Texas to the Union. Late in 1836, Congress began receiving dispatches avowing that the Texan Congress had voted to join the United States. With its slavery-driven economy, the Texas annexation question lingered for the better part of a decade. By the latter half of the decade, the hostilities between North and South had become so profound that Texas itself

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<sup>286</sup> Lacy K. Ford, “Republican Ideology in a Slave Society: The Political Economy of John C. Calhoun,” *The Journal of Southern History* 54, no. 3 (Aug., 1988): 415.

<sup>287</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 355.

<sup>288</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 36.

<sup>289</sup> Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography*, 240-1.



withdrew its petition to be annexed.<sup>290</sup> Although Calhoun later played an integral role in bringing Texas into the fold, that was still a long way off in 1837 when, on November 7, abolitionist editor Elijah P. Lovejoy fell victim to a proslavery mob in Alton, Illinois. As if the battle lines had not already solidified, Lovejoy's murder only further intensified sectional antagonisms. With the decade coming to a close, however, Calhoun seemed optimistic about the decline of abolitionism. In March 1839, he assured a friend that "I think, I cannot be mistaken, when I say that abolition is on the decline."<sup>291</sup> He surely hoped that antislavery agitation would continue to regress in the coming decade, thus preserving the Union he still loved. If that did not happen, Calhoun could at the very least rejoice that the South appeared more unified than ever.

In his last years, Calhoun continued to oppose any attempts to consolidate federal power or attack slavery. Against Calhoun's wishes, the North-South divide seemed to grow perpetually wider. Calhoun temporarily left his Senate seat in March 1844 to serve a one year term as President John Tyler's Secretary of State.<sup>292</sup> In this capacity, he helped bring about the annexation of Texas to the Union. His letter to Richard Pakenham, British minister in Washington, enraged antislavery activists by advocating Texas annexation on proslavery grounds. It was Calhoun's belief that the West was the key to preserving the balance of the sections. Texas would be admitted to the Union in 1845 as a slave state. Calhoun also continued work on his final two treatises, a *Disquisition on Government* and a *Discourse on the Constitution and Government of the United States*. While his *Disquisition* justified the practice of nullification, Calhoun's *Discourse*, among other things, called for two presidents, one southern, one northern. Both documents stretched the limits of what the Constitution's wording

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<sup>290</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 388.

<sup>291</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 591.

<sup>292</sup> His predecessor, Abel P. Upshur had met a most unfortunate end when a long gun exploded upon the USS *Princeton* on February 28, 1844. Five others were killed in the blast besides Upshur, including Secretary of the Navy Thomas Gilmer.

could permit, but Calhoun's fears of disunion were that intense. If radical antislavery activity continued unchecked, Calhoun was convinced that it would "make two people of one."<sup>293</sup>

Weakened by pneumonia, Calhoun had a friend and colleague read his last remarks in the Senate on March 4, 1850. After commenting on the admission of California, with its antislavery constitution, to the Union, Calhoun outlined for the last time his solution for preserving the balance of power between the sections. A few weeks later, on March 31, Calhoun's troubled soul finally found peace. Many of the nation's leaders mourned the passing of such a great, albeit controversial, man. For the majority of his life, Calhoun had been the consummate nationalist, promoting tariffs, internal improvements, and a national bank. Yet, by the time of his death, his name had become a byword for states' rights and sectionalism.

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<sup>293</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 60.

## Conclusion

One would be hard pressed to find another example of such an abrupt transformation in American politics. Capers confirms that, “never did an apostle recant his early faith more completely.”<sup>294</sup> Many of Calhoun’s former allies treated him as unkindly as some present-day historians have. Adams himself declared that “his career as a statesman has been marked with a series of the most flagrant inconsistencies.”<sup>295</sup> To be sure, politicians frequently modify their positions, but Calhoun’s transition represented a complete turnaround. “One would never guess from Calhoun’s syllogisms of oppression,” Wilentz records, “that he had supported not only the Missouri Compromise but also, early on and emphatically, the kinds of tariff and improvement legislation he now denounced as evil.”<sup>296</sup>

Until the day he died, however, Calhoun fought hard to prevent the dissolution of the Union. Even Freehling is forced to admit that leading radicals “loathed Calhoun’s non-secessionist scenarios.”<sup>297</sup> Meanwhile, men like Thomas Cooper and George McDuffie considered all efforts to save the Union futile and, what is more, contrary to the interests of South Carolina and the entire slaveholding South. For Wiltse, thoughts of a break in the Union continued to plague Calhoun even in his last days:

Before the end, even Calhoun acknowledged that a Southern confederacy might prove to be the only solution, if sectional differences were actually incapable of reconciliation. But never did he advocate it, never did he wish it, never did he turn a finger to bring it about. He stood, indeed, as the great barrier between the South and secession from 1830 on until his death.<sup>298</sup>

Calhoun felt that, at some point, the federal government had been overrun by northerners and those willing to bestow favors on the North at the expense of the South. His ultimate goal

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<sup>294</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 56.

<sup>295</sup> Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun*, 74.

<sup>296</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 639.

<sup>297</sup> Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 305.

<sup>298</sup> Wiltse, *Nullifier*, 199.

was not for the South to secede, but to see Washington purged of abolitionists and the federal government restored to its original purity. His dreams, however, would not come to fruition. Although his death on March 31, 1850 preceded the American Civil War by more than a decade, the push for secession would continue to garner support in the South. Radicals in both sections had ruined any chance for compromise or reconciliation. As intelligent a man as Calhoun was, he could see the writing on the wall. Only days before his passing, Calhoun remarkably predicted the break-up of his beloved Union within three presidential terms.<sup>299</sup>

Calhoun's presidential ambitions had little impact upon his decision to leave his former agenda in the past. Many of his own colleagues--Adams, Clay, and Webster not included--remarked that he seemed to be above such petty concerns. In May 1820, he explained to Charles Tait that "I feel conscious that I can never be swayed, to any considerable extent, by motives of ambition....I would despise myself, if I were to change this noble object for the mean one of personal aggrandizement."<sup>300</sup> Four years later, he confided in Lewis Cass that "Personally, I have but little ambition, and am not anxious to bear the immense responsibility of conducting the destinies of this great country."<sup>301</sup> Although Calhoun may have overstated his disinterestedness, the desire to serve as president was hardly the greatest driving force in his life. Although he certainly is no Calhoun apologist, Freehling does demonstrate quite well that the South Carolinian's presidential aspirations were not motivated simply by a need to satisfy his ego:

Calhoun's passion for the presidency, and consequently his reluctance to announce his commitment to minority veto, was not entirely a matter of personal ambition. The Vice President clearly hoped he could use his power as heir apparent in the Jackson administration, and later as President in his own right, to gain a lower tariff without resorting to nullification....The Vice President had reason to believe that he could best serve the nullifiers' cause by remaining apart from their crusade.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, 456.

<sup>300</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, V, 132.

<sup>301</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, IX, 50.

<sup>302</sup> Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, 157.

Calhoun's true intentions seem lost on some of his less-favorable biographers, who have noted his constant pursuit of the presidency. In his scathing biography of the South Carolinian, Capers takes numerous opportunities to remind readers that Calhoun was "Always striving for his own elevation to the presidency," at one point adding a parenthetical "(at least unconsciously)."<sup>303</sup> John C. Calhoun, however, was far too complex and privy to the major debates of the day to act so narrow-mindedly. Wilentz is correct that, in the 1830s, Calhoun "subordinated his personal ambitions to defenses of slavery and nullifier doctrines."<sup>304</sup> He remained willing to set aside his Presidential aspirations to maintain the welfare of, in the 1820s, the Union and, in the 1830s, the South. "Calhoun," Spain asserts, "should be viewed rather as an unusually able and high-minded politician, one having ambitions but also virtues....He changed his views a few times, but he always had excellent reasons for doing so."<sup>305</sup>

His patriotic zeal guided Calhoun and made him turn a blind eye to the earliest assaults on slavery. He refused to believe that the Missouri Controversy was a concerted attack by a northern faction against his own. Not until the 1830s did Calhoun begin monitoring the work of abolitionists in the North.<sup>306</sup> In the 1820s, however, he had no such misgivings about the dangers slavery faced. Anyone who relates the first attacks on slavery with Calhoun's move away from nationalism is sorely mistaken. The slavery question dominated the last years of Calhoun's life even though, according to Ashworth, "he was still searching for a way of making the Union safe for slavery and the South."<sup>307</sup> Although he became an advocate of southern rights in his later years, Calhoun was nowhere near the most extreme example of that group.

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<sup>303</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 58-9, 78-9, 119.

<sup>304</sup> Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 460-1.

<sup>305</sup> Spain, *Political Theory*, 32.

<sup>306</sup> Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, 133.

<sup>307</sup> Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, 413.

By the end of the 1820s, Calhoun was no longer at liberty to define his own political economy. Even Capers admits that “Not until it was obvious that the nullifiers would be victorious in the state did he join them openly, and then only because they forced his hand.”<sup>308</sup> Calhoun had to adapt his thinking or face political extinction. Spain records that, in antebellum America, “It was one of the virtues of statesmanship to take into account changed circumstances and shape one’s course accordingly.”<sup>309</sup> By the latter-half of the 1820s, circumstances had indeed changed dramatically in South Carolina. “Since 1865,” asserts Yale University’s Ralph Gabriel, “Calhoun’s thought almost always has been studied by Americans only against the background of sectional conflict.”<sup>310</sup> This, however, is a prime example of the pratfalls of reading history backwards. No southerner worked harder than Calhoun to prevent the Civil War he did not live to see, but believed to be inevitable under the current arrangement.

In his own time, Calhoun was a part of a Great Triumvirate along with Daniel Webster and Henry Clay. Yet Webster and Clay are regarded as ardent patriots, while Calhoun’s name seems inextricably linked with states’ rights and sectionalism. Historians like Freehling, meanwhile, condemn his political philosophy as “hopelessly inconsistent.”<sup>311</sup> Yet Webster changed his own stance on tariffs just as severely as Calhoun did, albeit in the reverse order. Originally an opponent of protection, Webster was soon voting in favor of the most significant tariffs of the day. He also seriously revised his opinions on social and constitutional theory.<sup>312</sup> Leading historians, it seems, have no snide remarks to make about Webster’s flip-flopping.

Throughout the 1820s, Calhoun largely resisted the overtures from radicals in South Carolina, who never succeeded on their own in winning his devotion to their cause. In his

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<sup>308</sup> Capers, *Opportunist*, 117.

<sup>309</sup> Spain, *Political Theory*, 31.

<sup>310</sup> Ralph Gabriel, “A Footnote on John C. Calhoun” in Thomas, 50.

<sup>311</sup> William W. Freehling, “Spoilsmen and Interests in the Thought and Career of John C. Calhoun” in Thomas, 172.

<sup>312</sup> Current, *John C. Calhoun*, 119.

career, Calhoun revised his position on everything from banks to tariffs. It was no exaggeration, however, when he assured Hammond in 1837 that, concerning slavery itself, “I have ever had but one opinion on the subject.”<sup>313</sup> The following year, he wrote a letter from Fort Hill to “General” Robert Hayne, emphasizing that “We are all in the same ship, and must share alike in the good or bad fortunes of the State; and, let me add, in conclusion, you cannot possibly feel more pain in differing from me, than I do in differing from you”<sup>314</sup> In a bitter twist of fate, then, it was the alarming growth of northern radicalism in the form of abolitionism that prompted Calhoun to finally abandon his nationalist leanings and join the radicals in his home state. Those same men must have felt some degree of vindication, as if they had been right all along. Calhoun’s love for the Union prevented him from adopting Southern radicalism in the 1820s. Paradoxically, it even prevented him from wholeheartedly embracing nullification, even though he was that doctrine’s chief architect. He remained certain, however, that “the movements of the abolitionists, if not arrested, would end in the dissolution of the Union, and that they were diametrically opposed to the entire fabric of our political system.”<sup>315</sup> Spain is correct in his assertion that “He was torn between two loyalties, had to place one above the other, but strove mightily to reconcile them.”<sup>316</sup> In the final analysis, however, there was no real choice at all. Caught between the Scylla of southern sectionalism and Charybdis of northern abolitionism, Calhoun pursued the only course available to him. And so it came to pass that, in the 1830s, a group radical northerners effectively drove John C. Calhoun into the arms of a group of radical southerners that had been trying to bring him into their camp for well over a decade.

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<sup>313</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIII, 443.

<sup>314</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 467.

<sup>315</sup> *Calhoun Papers*, XIV, 47.

<sup>316</sup> Spain, *Political Theory*, 33.

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