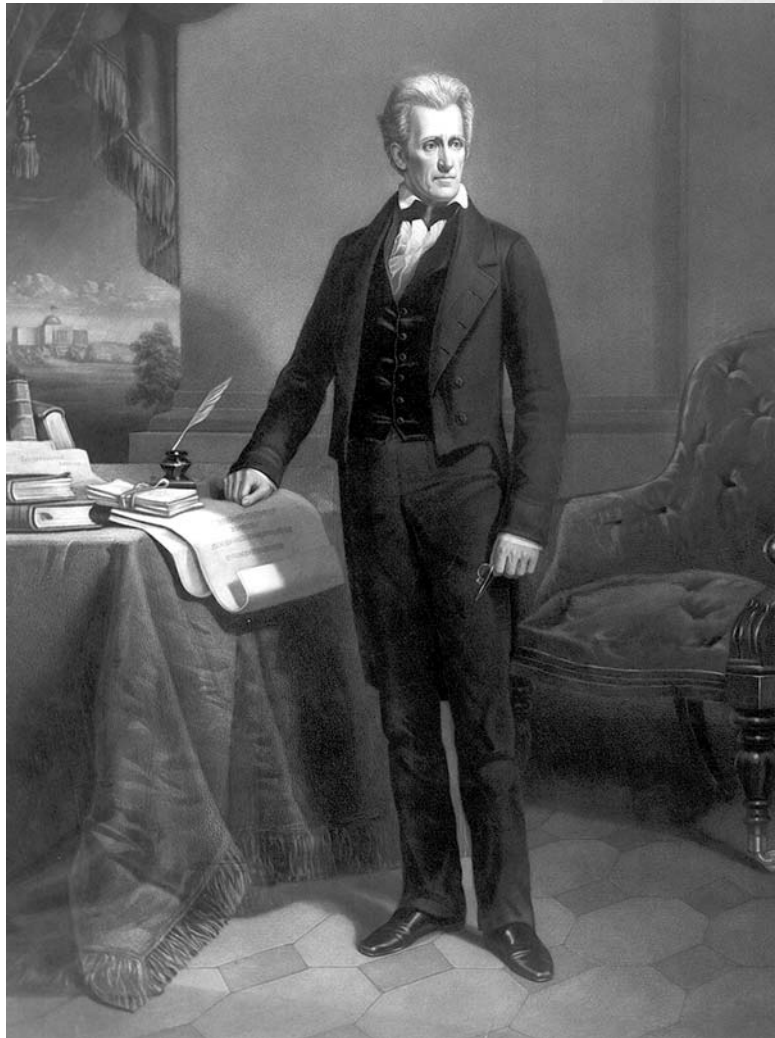




By the Kansas Historical Society

President Andrew Jackson's 1830 Speech to Congress

President Andrew Jackson gave the following speech on December 6, 1830. He informed Congress about the progress and benefits of Indian removal.



uncommitted to any other course than
line of constitutional duty; and
criticisms for this independence may
as strong as the nature of po
weakness of its professor will
I cannot too earnestly inve
attention to the propriety of promo
amendment of the constitution a
der him ineligible after one ter
p.
It gives me pleasure to announce
that the benevolent policy of
ment, steadily pursued for
nearly thirty years in relation to the removal

... The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. ... By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of the whites it will ... strengthen the southwestern frontier. It will relieve the whole State of Mississippi and the western part of Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power.

It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own ... institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their [Indian] habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community ...

... The tribes which occupied the countries now constituting the Eastern States were annihilated or have melted away to make room for the whites. The waves of population and civilization are rolling to the westward, and we now propose to acquire the countries occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to land where their existence may be prolonged ...

Doubtless it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but [is this not] what ... our ancestors did ... ? To better their condition in an unknown land our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects. Our children by thousands yearly leave the land of their birth to seek new homes in distant regions. ... [They move] ... thousands of miles at their own expense, purchase the lands they occupy, and support themselves at their new homes from the moment of their arrival. [Is] it cruel [for] this Government when ... the Indian is made discontented in his ancient home to purchase his lands, to give him a new and extensive territory, to pay the expense of his removal, and support him a year in his new abode?

How many thousands of our own people would gladly embrace the opportunity of removing to the West on such conditions! If the offers made to the Indians were extended to them, they would be hailed with gratitude and joy.



KANSAS HEALTH FOUNDATION