

GROWTH AND REFORM**Viewpoints**

In 1833, the state of South Carolina declared an act of Congress to be null, or void, and threatened to secede from the United States if Congress tried to enforce the act. Although the dispute was resolved peacefully, Congress did pass the Force Bill, authorizing President Andrew Jackson to use military force to make South Carolina abide by federal law. This conflict shows how tension between sectionalism and nationalism threatened to break apart the nation. Sectionalism refers to the rights and powers of regions or states over those of the national government. Nationalism refers to the powers of the national government over those of its various regions or states. ♦ *As you read the excerpts below, consider what each senator says about a state's sovereignty. Sovereignty means control over one's own affairs. State sovereignty refers to the idea that each state is an independent political unit responsible for protecting its own interests and regulating its own matters. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.*

Sectionalism and Nationalism**Speech, January 26, 1830, by
Massachusetts Senator Daniel
Webster**

"It is, sir, the people's Constitution, the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the supreme law. We must either admit [the supremacy of the Constitution] or dispute [the people's] authority. The states are, unquestionably, sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this supreme law. But the state legislatures, as political bodies, however sovereign, are yet not sovereign over the people."

Source: The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster, Boston, 1903, Vol. VI, pp. 3-75, as published in The Annals of America, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Volume 5, 1968, pp. 347-355. Available online at <http://www.usa-patriotism.com/tribute/speeches/dwebster1.htm>.

**Speech, February 15, 1833, by
South Carolina Senator John
C. Calhoun**

"... [N]either the Senator from Delaware (Mr. Clayton), nor any other who has spoken on the same side, has directly and fairly met the great question at issue: Is this a federal union? [A] union of states, as distinct from that of individuals? Is the sovereignty in the several states, or in the American people [as a whole]? The very language which we are compelled to use when speaking of our political institutions affords proof conclusive as to its real character. The terms union, federal, united, all imply a combination of sovereignties, a confederation of states. They never apply to an association of individuals."

Source: Available online at <http://sciway3.net/2001/john-c-calhoun/SRemarks.htm>.

Questions to Think About

1. According to Webster, who or what is the final authority in the United States government? To whom is that authority and government answerable?
2. According to Calhoun, who or what is the final authority? From what does that authority get its power?
3. **Detect Point of View** Which speaker supports sectionalism? Which speaker supports nationalism? Explain your answer.