REPUBLICAN IDEOLOGY IN JACKSONIAN OHIO:
THE RHETORIC OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ECONOMY,
1825-1850.

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by
Terence John Corps, B.A., Hons. (Dunelm)

The Ohio State University
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Approved by

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Department of History
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Arthur Schlesinger’s seminal work, *The Age of Jackson*, historical controversy has raged over the importance of the period in American history and over the sources of party political splits in the Jacksonian era. This has partly been the result of the wealth of incident which marks the era, with the awakening of the sectional controversy, major economic problems and the disagreement between parties over economic policy, the emergence of several important reform impulses, and the first feeling of the effects of a democratization in politics. As with the historians of most historical eras, those of the Jacksonian era brought to their work the influence of their own preconceptions and interests, and this too has contributed to the diversity of interpretations which have arisen to explain the ideas and success of the Jacksonian party. The stress placed by Schlesinger upon the influence in the Jacksonian party of working-class labor movements in the industrializing society of the Northeastern states, has been challenged by writers in the 1950s, who suggested there was little in the way of an organized working class in the 1830s, made up as it mainly was of women, blacks and immigrants; it was, rather, small craft groups, in Workingmen's Parties, who were prevalent, protesting against a more industrialized society, which threatened their particular skills.¹ Other historians suggested that the Jackson movement was fronted by the champions of laissez faire economics, who attacked monopolies and special privileges in efforts to open the economy to free market forces, and thereby to inspire
increased economic growth. This interpretation, based largely on an analysis of the Jacksonian attack on the second Bank of the United States, has also been challenged by a group of historians who deny the validity of that analysis, and who claim instead that the Jacksonians were hostile to banking and financial dealings in general. Other historians have chosen to look at different areas, whether the influence of institutional developments upon the formation of political parties, or the importance of cultural factors, such as ethnicity and religion, as opposed to economic factors. A further group, headed by William Shade, have chosen to accept the central importance of the banking issue and its impact in dividing Americans into two political parties, and use a combination of factors to explain this division; they perceive the importance of specific "political cultures," made up of cultural and economic factors, as well as political inheritance and personal experience.

One important effect of the latter school's interpretation has been to return Andrew Jackson to the center of the policy-making stage of the Democratic party. While the earlier working-men's theses and liberal consensus school had regarded Jackson as a figurehead, used by forces behind the scenes, in the accomplishment of their ends, these latest studies have shown Jackson largely in tune with the grass-root sources for his party, whether it be the old-school Republicans in the Eastern states, like Martin Van Buren, or Westerners, like Amos Kendall and Francis Preston Blair, acting in response to their experiences in the 1819 panic, experiences with which Jackson himself could identify, as his economic interests had also been hit at that time. However,
where all these interpretations agree is in the role played by the rhetoric used by Jackson and other Democratic leaders. Regardless of whether the party was being led by Jackson himself, for the sort of ends he desired, or by other groups after their own ends, Jackson's rhetoric against the Bank has been seen as an essential means by which electoral support was won. Appealing to older, Republican-style values of the Jeffersonian era, the Democrats won support for their efforts against the Bank, from groups which either genuinely believed in those values, or which, as one historian has suggested, saw the attack on the Bank as a way of comforting their guilty consciences, since they had already succumbed to behavior which ran counter to those values.7

However, such interpretations have been directed in the main to Democratic explanation of their anti-banking policies, while their attitude toward other economic policies, such as the Tariff or Internal Improvements, has been examined more in terms of their constitutional importance. Studies of the Republican ideology upon which Democrats drew for their rhetoric, have revealed much deeper importance for other elements of economic policy among the Jeffersonians. Indeed, since the publication of Meyers' *The Jacksonian Persuasion*, there has been a veritable "revolution" in the historical study of the impact of ideology upon the American Revolution, and the development of the new nation in its first four decades. Headed by Bernard Bailyn and Gordon Wood, this study has placed American political thought firmly in the context of its European antecedents, yet also noting how this thought was adapted in accordance with American conditions and the course of events.8 Among other areas of particular concern, such as the
political theory behind institutional and constitutional developments, that of the eighteenth-century moral science of "political economy" has been brought under focus, most especially by Drew McCoy. Examining the particular preferences of American leaders for different types of republican government, McCoy has demonstrated how this led to differing views on the sort of society required for the maintenance of people necessary for the success of these types. These views included diverging visions of the economic future of the United States, whether it be in the influence of financial and commercial activities within the new nation, in the need for "progress" in the form of internal improvements and manufacturing industry, or in the continued importance of agricultural pursuits for Americans. Two major schools of thought emerged on this issue, the Republicans and Federalists, each with their own program for ensuring the kind of future they desired, these differences reinforcing other factors behind the party split.

It is with the Democratic party's inheritance of this much broader concept of political economy that this study is concerned. While other works focussing on the Jacksonian appeal to Republican values as a means of winning political support, usually stress its importance for the attack on banking, while only suggesting that this reflected some vague desire for a return to a simple society on the lines of that proposed by the Jeffersonians, research reveals that the same sort of rhetoric was used to explain Democratic attitudes to other elements of economic policy. Indeed, John Ashworth has suggested that among leading Democrats it was such ideas that motivated their policy stances on these issues, as they initially adopted Republican policies
as they had developed during the 1810s and 1820s, and then adapted them in line with their own perception of the events occurring in the 1830s and 1840s.\textsuperscript{10}

While Ashworth’s study is national in its scope, research in the rhetoric of the Ohio Democratic press and party leaders, reveals a similar picture in that State, at least insofar as the rhetorical appeal to Republican ideas of political economy was used to explain Democratic policies on both a national and State level. Indeed, Ohio, a western State, displayed a particular brand of rhetoric, appealing to its own special position within the Democratic political economy. This, as had the Republican political economy before it, placed a premium on the value of the agricultural class for the type of society required for the success of the American republican experiment. Therefore, as the East coast, especially the Northeast, gave increasing signs of moving away from agricultural pursuits, the West became essential as an area in which the balance could be tipped toward a predominantly agricultural society, and which could be used as a safety-valve to offset the worst impact of the developing manufacturing industry in the East. Ohio Democrats perceived this role, and presented it in their rhetoric, as way of justifying their policies. They claimed to seek to prevent the development of similar circumstances as those seen in the East, within their own State, at least in the near future, and followed policies that would restrict the influence of banking operations and manufacturing industry to the East coast, while the West would be left to the farmer and the limited trade necessary to serve him.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


2The leading proponents of the "liberal consensus" school include: Joseph Dorfman, The Economic Mind in American Civilization (New York, 1946); Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition and the Men who made it (New York, 1958); and Bray Hammond, Banks and Politics in America from the Revolution to the Civil War (Princeton, 1957).


4Examples of the institutional interpretation include Richard P. McCormick, The Second American Party System (Chapel Hill, N.Ca., 1966), and in Ohio, Harry R. Stevens, The Early Jackson Party in Ohio (Durham, N.Ca., 1957); leaders in the ethno-cultural school are Lee Benson, The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case (Princeton, 1961), Ronald P. Formisano, The Birth of Mass Parties: Michigan 1827-

5William G. Shade, Banks or no banks: the Money Issue in Western Politics, 1832-1865 (Detroit, 1972); other examples include Daniel W. Howe, The Political Culture of the American Whigs (Chicago, 1979), and for Ohio, Donald J. Ratcliffe, "Politics in Jacksonian Ohio: Reflections on the Ethnocultural Interpretation," Ohio History 88 (1979): 5-36.


9Drew McCoy, The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America (Chapel Hill, 1980).

CHAPTER II
THE REPUBLICAN CONTEXT: JEFFERSON, MADISON
AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

The American Revolution occurred at the end of a century which had witnessed an extensive amount of political enquiry, and the events of the 1760s and 1770s reflect that enquiry both in their causes and in the problems which they brought into existence. While the economic and social effects of depression, taxation, and indebtedness of Southern planters to British factors had widespread importance in creating conditions favorable for revolution in the American colonies in the mid-Eighteenth century, the element of ideology is also essential for an understanding of why the colonists who revolted acted in the way they did. For many it was the perception of what was happening in the 1760s which was influential, a perception conditioned by a heritage of British and European thought, which would remain of importance for years to come after independence had been achieved, as Americans sought to establish a form of government and polices, which would best meet the expectations and needs of the American people.\(^1\)

The late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth centuries were among the most fruitful in the history of political thought, as thinkers struggled to come to terms with social and economic changes in Europe. Influenced by advances in science, most notably those achievements of Sir Isaac Newton, the hero of the Enlightenment, political thinkers strove to study society and government in similar terms, trying to apply "scientific" rules to these areas as Newton had to the physical world. Strictly speaking "political thought" is rather
too narrow a term for the work of writers like Locke, Hume, Rousseau and Montesquieu, since they made little distinction between the various elements of their thought, elements which nowadays tend to be pigeonholed under such titles as "politics," "economics" and "sociology." For eighteenth-century thinkers, "moral sciences" such as philosophy and psychology were an integral part of "political thought," since they dealt with such important matters as the behavior of man, the nature of which would be of great consequence for any political investigation. Just so, social conditions and economic policy were also seen as important elements in any study of politics, since it was acknowledged that certain political forms required certain qualities in mankind, and that occupational types and social condition were an important determinant of those qualities. So it was then that the "moral science" of "political economy" played an integral role in the political thought of the Enlightenment, and would remain important for the thinking of the American Founding Fathers and their descendants.2

The elaboration of a particular political economy depended on a variety of factors, ranging from the needs of the political form to be accommodated, through the perception of the nature of mankind, to changes in economic and social realities. Clearly a monarchy would require a different kind of citizenship from a republic, and it was felt that there could be a definite kind of political economy for both. Similarly, distinctions could (and would) be made between those who saw a lesser, and those who saw a greater role for the people at large in a republican form of government. What is more, social and economic conditions were never likely to remain stable, and therefore
modifications would have to be made to accommodate these changes. As Thomas Jefferson noted, "in so complicated a science as political economy, no one axiom can be laid down as wise and expedient for all times and circumstances, and for their contraries." James Madison followed a similar line of argument, in defending charges that Republicans had abandoned their cause and had followed policies once espoused by the Federalists: "It is true that under a great change of foreign circumstances, and with a doubled population, and more than doubled resources, the Republican party has been reconciled to certain measures and arrangements which may be as proper now as they were premature and suspicious when urged by the champions of federalism." Despite changing conditions, however, the basic concerns underlying the political economy of Jefferson and Madison remained the same, reflecting their desires for a successful republican government, and their perception of where the threat to such a success came from. These concerns would remain valid through the Jacksonian era as well, and would produce among the Democratic party something of a recurrence to those lines of political economy originally held by the Jeffersonian Republicans. Such were the influence and importance of Enlightenment thought for the early development of the United States.

The Declaration of Independence, and its ultimate achievement, confronted the revolutionaries with a whole new set of problems, such as the nature of the new government and the degree of centralized authority to be imposed upon individual states, as well as the more practical problems still of trade, finance and maintaining prosperity. However, despite the decade of problems which preceded the
ratification of the present Constitution, a decade which saw numerous attempts to found state governments and efforts to make the Articles of Confederation a successful umbrella government, one major question was answered fairly easily. While they might disagree on the institutions of government, on the degree of suffrage to be allowed, and on the powers to be granted to various bodies, the revolutionaries were nearly unanimous in their acceptance of republican forms of government for the United States.6 Classical political thought, as well as the revolutionaries' more immediate influences in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, had all agreed that the republic was the best form of government possible, seeing to the interests of the greatest number of people. What is more it seemed only logical that republican government should follow a successful overthrow of a "tyrannical" monarch, since this, after all, was perceived by many to have been the purpose of the revolution: to secure the rights and liberties of the people against a King and Parliament which had tried to tax them without due authority. For Madison a republic was better than both extremes of polity, pure Democracy and Monarchy. The former was dangerous, because it would always tend to lead to a potentially oppressive majority faction which would threaten personal property rights. A republic, especially the extended republic which he advocated with the new Constitution, would act against the creation of permanent majority factions, and therefore would be a better safeguard of personal rights.7 Showing his mistrust of political power in general, he noted that "wherever there is an interest and power to do wrong, wrong will generally be done and not less readily by a powerful
and interested party than by a powerful and interested prince." He made the following distinction however: "The difference, so far as it relates to the superiority of republics over monarchies, lies in the less degree of probability that interest may prompt abuses of power in the former than in the latter."8 It was to the success of republican forms of government that American revolutionaries channelled their energies in the 1780s, and for Madison it became an important motive for supporting moves for a new Constitution. Clearly aware of British feelings that the experiment in the United States would fail, Madison hoped that the people would "exert themselves in favor of such an organization of the Confederacy, as will perpetuate the Union, and redeem the honor of the Republican name."9 The new Constitution not only met Madison's hopes, but also enshrined the form of government which he favored: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government ...."10

Support for republican forms came from members of both future parties of the first party system, with men such as Alexander Hamilton just as committed to the form as were Jefferson and Madison.11 Where differences arose was in their perception of the kind of republican government suitable for the United States, the role of the people in government and the amount of centralized power. Differences on these issues came about as all Americans confronted problems which history and personal experience presented them, problems which seemed to threaten the very success of the experiment being conducted in the United States in the wake of the Revolution. Republics might have been the ideal form of government, but history had shown them to be
especially brittle forms as well, liable to decline and failure, with degeneration either to anarchy or monarchy. Studies by Enlightenment writers presented American readers with examples of various Greek republics, as well as that of Rome, and attempted to identify the causes for such developments so as to prevent their occurrence in any future republic. But uppermost in American minds was the example of the mother country from which they had just broken. While strictly a monarchy, the English balanced form of government established by the Glorious Revolution and by growth of Parliamentary power during wars against France from 1689 to 1698 and 1703 to 1714, had been regarded as the perfect system. Yet by the 1760s Americans portrayed the British government as tyrannical and oppressive, being backed in this view by a small group of English "radicals," who claimed for themselves the true inheritance of the Whig values of the days of the Glorious Revolution. This mixed group, combining "old Whig" views with the more extreme republican ideas derived from the "commonwealthmen" of the Interregnum period (1649–60), presented to the Americans a picture of the British government in decline, corrupted by high finance and ministerial influence since the days of Robert Walpole. This picture would provide part of the dynamic for the revolutionary fervor in the American colonies.12

For the critics of the British government as it had developed since the first decades of the Eighteenth century, men such as Trenchard and Gordon in the 1720s, the authors of Cato's Letters, and later John Wilkes, the causes for the decline were various. In the political arena it had been claimed that the essential balanced system
had been broken down by the monarchy, and especially by Cabinet-style
administration, which made use of patronage power and "placemen"
(members of parliament virtually chosen by the crown) to corrupt the
legislative system. Against these problems the eighteenth-century
commonwealthmen proposed reforms such as extended franchise, more
frequent elections, a redistribution of Parliamentary seats, rotation
in office, and a much stricter separation of the various elements of
government. A more fundamental reason for the decline of the English
polity seemed to be a prevailing corruption within English society as a
result of both changing social realities and government policy. The
"country" opposition in the early Eighteenth century objected to the
developments introduced by the financial revolution of the 1690s and
1700s, such as the creation of a sinking fund and the Bank of England.
These were seen as corrupting influences, creating a financial
aristocracy which would prey on other elements of the community, would
lead luxurious lives, and which would subordinate the public good to
their own interests, unlike the solid, independent landed gentry who
made up the basis of opposition to the "court" faction with English
government. What is more social conditions seemed to be becoming worse
under the influence of population growth, creating a landless, servile
manufacturing labor class within England upon whom the powerful,
corrupting elements could prey and exert influence.

Eighteenth-century thinkers incorporated such a view of
English decline into a well-defined theory of progress within human
civilizations: they identified an almost inevitable progress through
stages of civilization, driven by the force of population growth, from
savagery, through hunting, pastoral economy, agriculture (for most thinkers the best form of society) to a commercial and manufacturing society, when population size demanded some degree of specialization of function and division of the labor force. The latter development marked for these thinkers, especially those of the Scottish 'Common Sense' school, a step-down from the high-point of agriculture, since specialization of function signified the end of a society full of well-rounded, complete citizens who put self-interest behind the common good. It was with this sense of progress that American revolutionaries, and their successors had to deal, some incorporating it with open arms into their world views, such as the Federalists and Whigs, while the Jeffersonians and Democrats sought to stave off its impact on American people.\textsuperscript{13}

Indeed, it has been suggested by some historians\textsuperscript{14} that it was American acceptance of this theory which provided in part a dynamic for the revolution. Inspired by the ideals which the eighteenth-century commonwealthmen had kept alive for more than one hundred years, Americans looked across the Atlantic and saw only corruption and a threat of tyranny. "The sun of her glory is fast descending to the horizon," averred Jefferson in his \textit{Notes in Virginia}, and he continued: "Her philosophy has crossed the channel, her freedom the Atlantic, and herself seems passing to that awful dissolution whose issue is not given human foresight to scan." Earlier in the same work, he had presented a much rosier picture of the American people, who "in government, in oratory, in painting, in the plastic art," had given "hopeful proofs of genius, as well as of the nobler kinds, which arouse
the best feelings of man, which call him into action, which substantiate his freedom, and conduct him to happiness, as of the subordinate, which serve to amuse him only." It had been in part to preserve the latter conditions against the corruption present in England, that Americans had revolted against the mother country, a "moral reformation," as Gordon Wood has termed it, to ensure that America might remain a place of virtue where true English principles might be maintained and the people might enjoy the protection of their rights. It even led Jefferson to look less favorably on large-scale immigration: while rejoicing in the American principles of government, "a composition of the freest principles of the English Constitution, with others derived from natural right and natural reasons," immigrants might "bring with them the principles of the governments they leave . . . ." Even if they left their old principles behind, Jefferson feared that their arrival would lead to a heterogeneous society far inferior to a homogeneous society resulting from natural population increase.

In spite of this optimistic view of the American people, and the conditions which seemed likely to promote a successful republic, American fears did remain. Just as the "perfect" English government of 1688 had succumbed to corruption and tyranny, so it was feared that if the right safeguards were not created a similar fate might await the American experiment with republican government. This fear would lead to numerous attempts to secure a successful republican government, at first by seeking a viable form of government, and then by adopting policies to maintain the conditions necessary for its success. Affected by various attitudes towards popular government, the nature of
mankind, and economic realities, these efforts would produce a variety of solutions, in the nature of governments established, in the emphasis put upon the central as opposed to state governments, and in the type of society most suitable for a successful republic. 16

Initial institutional developments within the states reflected the ideological concerns of the fight against and eventual independence from what had been portrayed as a tyrannical British government, corrupted by the influence of executive power and cabinet-government. While certain states simply adopted their colonial charters as the basis for their new governments, where changes were made it was at first in the degree of importance accorded to the executive branch of government. This development reached its climax in the radically democratic constitution drawn up in Pennsylvania in 1776, which lodged all power in a unicameral legislative body, with frequent elections held under universal manhood suffrage. Other states might not have gone to such lengths, but their constitutions also reflected a desire to limit the power of the executive, by means of abolishing or limiting his veto, reducing his appointive powers to guard against the abuse of patronage, and ensuring that legislative bodies could not be influenced by a governor, by having frequent elections.

Developments in the late 1770s and 1780s were to produce a change in emphasis in these efforts, as many of the leading men in the states began to doubt the chances of success for the governments which they had established. The Revolution had been fought as an essentially conservative action, defending the English liberties, which Americans steeped in old Whig "country" ideas came to equate with property
rights; yet, now, more radical moves in the states seemed to pose just as dangerous a threat to those rights as had the British government. It has been seen above how Madison feared pure democracy since it tended towards oppression by the majority, an oppression that might entail extreme levelling tendencies. Noting that a new form of government would have to take account of an increased laboring population which would desire a more equal distribution of property, and that this population would gain power by "the equal laws of suffrage," Madison warned: "No agrarian attempts have yet been made in this Country, but symptoms, of a levelling spirit, as we have understood, have sufficiently appeared in a certain quarters to give notice of the future danger."17 Such fears brought attempts to realign the various branches of state governments, so as to guard against the abuses of all power, since as Madison warned again, "all men having power ought to be distrusted to a certain degree."18 A more balanced government was the solution so that the worst excesses of both the executive and legislative branches might be offset, and once again Madison sounded the alarm: "Experience had proved a tendency in our governments to throw all power into the legislative vortex. The Executives of the States are in general little more than Cyphers, the legislatures omnipotent. If no effectual check be devised for restraining the instability and encroachments of the latter a revolution of some kind or other would be inevitable."19

While Madison's warnings demonstrate the types of fears held by the leading politicians in the 1780s, fears which led efforts to produce more balanced governments, it is significant that he made his
points at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. For him and many others, state governments had failed to remedy the problems which he outlined. Government at local level produced factional splits which allowed oppressive majority rule of the type Madison feared, a fact made worse by the election of men who tended to be motivated more by self-interest, and who showed less "virtue" than earlier optimists about the purity of American society would have anticipated. The solution presented by the "federalists," those who supported the moves for a new constitution for the United States as a whole, was a larger degree of authority for the central government. While this would also meet economic problems, such as the need to have a more centralized control of trade regulations and western land policy, it fitted in with hopes that the republican form could be saved: first because it would limit the possibility of oppressive majorities gaining permanent control of the government; and second since it would ensure the election of wiser, more virtuous representatives, who would have a much better chance of discerning the true interests of the country.20 Within the new government the Senate would act to the same purpose, providing a "body . . . sufficiently respectable for its wisdom and virtue . . . ."21

Gordon Wood identified this trend as the end of classical politics in the United States, with a rejection of the view of the American people as an especially virtuous group, and its replacement by a new "American science of politics," which, while lodging ultimate sovereign power in the hands of the people, left government in the hands of a virtuous body of elected representatives, a natural elite
whose powers would be balanced to guard against the dangers of any one branch acquiring too much influence. However, the question of virtue of the majority of the people did remain one of importance for some Americans, most notably Jefferson, but also Madison. While the latter might have feared the effects of an oppressive majority, he feared the dangers of a minority even more, and saw the people and their virtue, especially that element of "independence," as essential safeguards against the efforts of a few corrupt, designing men to win control of the government for their own purposes. Together with Jefferson, Madison would pursue policies aimed at maintaining the conditions most suitable for an independent citizenry which could not be corrupted or influenced by the designing few. These attempts would in turn lead them to oppose those policies which Hamilton was pursuing in his efforts to create a strong, successful republic.

Alexander Hamilton seems best to fit Wood's contention that American politicians were moving away from the concept of basing republican government upon a virtuous citizenry, to one of balanced government. Having flirted briefly in 1776-7 with the idea that Americans might be particularly virtuous, as shown by their stand against Britain, Hamilton became convinced that man was by nature a passionate animal, following ambition and interest rather than the public good. Influenced by his own and his friends' position within society, he naturally saw the wealthy elite as the elements most suitable for the running of government. Not only did they have most at stake within society, and therefore would ensure a more stable form of government, but with their better upbringing and education, they would
be less prone to the more evil vices of mankind, and could formulate a better idea of the public's best interest. This group would be motivated by a sense of noblesse oblige and pride, to pursue the public good to the best of their ability. So it was then that Hamilton favored a government, which, while giving the people ultimate sovereignty (an essential part of any republic), took away the more direct running of affairs from the masses. This involved restrictions on suffrage, a favor for longer terms of office for elected politicians, with even the possibility of an elective monarchy. Similarly his financial plans were intended to tie the interests of the wealthier classes to the national government, in order to fulfill Hamilton's hopes that the elite would rule.  

Such views and the policies which they inspired were anathema to Jefferson and Madison. Familiar with the history of the British government since 1688, as explained to them by the "commonwealthmen," these two feared that balanced government alone was an insufficient safeguard against tyranny, and that ideas such as Hamilton's were likely to lead to a degeneration of the American republic. The tyranny they feared was one from the top, rather than from below, this fear reflecting a more positive view of human nature. Jefferson noted that "it is my principle that the will of the Majority should always prevail," and in his Notes on Virginia declared that the people were "the ultimate guardians of their own liberty." The latter was the case especially if the people were educated to their duties, which would instil into their minds "the first elements of morality," and would show them that their own greatest happiness "does not depend on the
condition of life in which chance has placed them, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits."24 Reviewing the party split of old from the 1820s, Madison explained the differences between the Republicans and Federalists in terms of the "confidence of the former, in the capacity of mankind for self Govt. and in a distrust of it by the other or by its leaders."25 Yet much nearer the time of the most heated party differences, Madison had shown a similar concern for the position of the people, hoping for a society which would "most favor health, virtue, intelligence and competency in the greatest number of citizens,"26 and proclaiming that he, and men like him, believed in "the doctrine that mankind are capable of governing themselves ... [and] are naturally offended at every public measure that does not appeal to the understanding and to the general interest of the community, or that is not strictly conformable to the principles, and conducive to the preservation of republican government."27

Along with expressions of faith in the virtue and intelligence of the people came denunciations of the policies and ideas espoused by those men who would later make up the Federalist party. Drawing on the language of conspiracy and corruption used by their British antecedents, Republicans portrayed measures of the opposing party as attempts to impose a monarchical form of government upon the United States. Once in power, after 1800, the Republicans could not conceive of loyal opposition as anything other than a threat to the republic, and so continued to view the Federalists as a danger to the success of the American experiment. Contrasting the opposing group's ideas with
those of his own, in an article entitled "A Candid State of Parties," Madison admitted that among those who had adopted the Constitution "the greater body were unquestionably friends to republican liberty," but also revealed his suspicions that "there were, no doubt, some who were openly or secretly attached to monarchy and aristocracy; and hoped to make the constitution a cradle for those hereditary establishments."

He elaborated, seeing the Federalists as:

those, who from particular interest, from a natural temper, or from the habits of life, are more partial to the opulent than to the other classes of society; and having debauched themselves into a persuasion that mankind are incapable of governing themselves, it follows with them, of course, that government can be carried on only by the pageantry of rank, the influence of money and emoluments, and the terror of military force. Men of these sentiments must naturally wish to point the measures of government less to the interest of the many than of a few, and less to the reason of the many than to their weaknesses; hoping perhaps in proportion to the aridor of their zeal, that by giving such a turn to the administration, the government itself may by degrees be removed into fewer hands, and approximated to an hereditary form. 28

The threat seemed to stem from various elements of Federalist policy. First of all the very type of society they advocated, with its encouragement of commercial and manufacturing activity, and with the development of financial institutions, was deemed as especially dangerous, as will be seen below. Also worrying was the degree of constitutional construction which such measures required, since it seemed to be consolidating powers in the central government, while robbing the state governments of theirs. This development reached its climax with the Alien and Seditions Acts, which produced widespread opposition, including a report by Madison, which suggested that "the
obvious tendency and inevitable result of a consolidation of the States into one sovereignty, would be to transform the republican system of the United States into a monarchy." This would be because consolidation of powers would enlarge the "sphere of discretion allotted to the Executive Magistrate," and would increase his patronage powers. "This disproportionate increase of prerogative and patronage, must, evidently, either enable the Chief Magistrate of the Union, by quiet means, to secure his re-election from time to time, and finally to regulate the succession as he might please or by giving so transcendant an importance to the office, would render the elections to it so violent and corrupt, that the public voice itself might call for an hereditary in place of an elective succession."29 That such suspicions still held currency after the Republicans had gained control of the government in 1800, is seen by their perception of opposition, first to the Embargo, and later to the war against Britain. Discussing New England opposition to the War of 1812, Jefferson noted his "reprobation of our merchants, priests, and lawyers, for their adherence to England and monarchy, in preference to their own country and its Constitution." Making a telling reference to two writers who had been among the most influential upon Hamilton's thinking, the ex-President continued: "In truth, Blackstone and Hume have made tories of all England, and are making tories of those young Americans whose native feelings of independence do not place them above the wily sophisticies of a Hume or a Blackstone."30

To counteract these dangerous elements, the Republicans, headed by Jefferson and Madison, put increased trust in the ability of the
people to rule themselves, but they also realized that conditions had to be maintained which would thwart the attempts at corruption. Partly this meant preventing the increase in power and in numbers of a predatory class, a concern which involved opposition to Hamilton's financial system. But also involved would be efforts to encourage those occupations which would best preserve the virtues of the people, most notably the elements of independence, so that the designing few could not exercise undue influence over them, and of industry, so that American citizens would not be sidetracked into the corrupting habits of speculation and luxury. Republican determination in this area led to the elaboration of a specific political economy, which, while being adapted in line with changing world conditions, and with recognition of certain characteristics of the American people, would be founded on the maintenance of a virtuous agricultural class, both independent and industrious, and essential for the well-being of the republic.

"I think our government will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural,"31 Jefferson wrote to Madison in 1787, outlining what he regarded to be the best kind of occupation for Americans. Such a choice was not surprising for a new nation which in the late Eighteenth century (and indeed as late as the 1850s) was primarily agricultural in nature. "The great mass of our people are agricultural," noted Jefferson in 1803, and a decade earlier he had described agriculture as "that branch of industry which gives food, clothing and comfort to the great mass of the inhabitants of these States."32 However, there was more to support for agricultural pursuits than a recognition of their current importance to the country.
Centuries of thought had produced a view of the farmer as indispensable for the success or prosperity of any country. "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds." Madison also emphasized the importance of agriculture, by comparing civilized with wretched nations: "Civilization is never seen without agriculture; nor has agriculture ever prevailed where the civilized arts did not make their appearance." The importance given to agriculture derived from a combination of practical and theoretical considerations. Economic thinkers of the Eighteenth century, concerned with the best ways of improving the wealth of nations, but also with seeing to the welfare of the people, came to recognize agriculture as the best form of economic occupation. Headed by the Physiocrats in France and Adam Smith in Britain, these thinkers saw wealth derived from the soil as the only true wealth, coming as it did straight from nature, and giving prosperity and happiness to the greatest number of people. Jefferson followed this line of thought, avowing that "to the labor of the husbandman a vast addition is made by the spontaneous energies of the earth on which it is employed: for one grain of wheat committed to the earth, she renders twenty, thirty, or even fifty fold, whereas to the labor of the manufacturer nothing is added." The latter reference revealed his opinion that all wealth stemmed ultimately from the earth and that manufacturing only added value by exploiting the labor of workers, a process much less satisfactory in terms of human welfare. Not only was
the latter process considered cruel, but it was felt that it tended to lead to too great an inequality of wealth. Agricultural pursuits on the other hand secured a more equitable distribution of wealth, with an accompanying degree of satisfaction with economic position: farmers with an adequate degree of prosperity were regarded as much less likely to put the public interest behind their own self-interest, a view which Jefferson seemed to recognize, avowing that "small landholders are the most precious part of a state."37

However, of more importance still for men concerned with securing the republic against the wiles of a potentially corrupting minority, was the degree of independence imparted by the agricultural lifestyle. In this view Jefferson and Madison were clearly influenced by their perception of English history in the Eighteenth century, where the "country" opposition composed of independent, landholding gentry, had attempted to uphold English liberties against the designs of a new financial and commercial aristocracy, an attempt which failed as English society began to experience a greater division of labor into specialized fields. A society based on small land-holding farmers would safeguard against these dangers in the United States, providing a class of men who would not be susceptible to the corrupting influence of finance, and who would not be directly dependent on employers for their well-being. "Of all occupations those are the least desirable in a free state, which produce the most servile dependence of one class of citizens on another class," warned Madison, who continued by expressing his hopes for his own nation: "What a contrast is here to the independent situation and manly sentiments of American citizens, who
live on their own soil, or whose labor is necessary to its cultivation, or who were occupied in supplying wants, which being founded in solid utility, in comfortable accommodation, or in settled habits, produce a reciprocity of dependence, at once ensuring subsistence, and inspiring a dignified sense of social rights. Jefferson also saw agriculture in this light, referring to the "numerous examples of persons setting out in life with no other possession than skill in agriculture, and speedily, by its sole exercise, acquire wealth and independence." He even suggested that farmers were free of the dangers of the financial system, since "farmers ... have no command of money. Our necessaries are all supplied, either from farms, or a neighboring store. Our produce, at the end of the year, is delivered to the merchant, and thus the business of the year is done by barter, without the intervention of scarcely a dollar."

This fondness for an agricultural way of life was accompanied by a suspicion and condemnation of other occupations, whether those which tended to corrupt, or those which allowed corruption and dependence to thrive. While the produce of agriculture was good "honest" wealth, that wealth "acquired by speculation and plunder [was] fugacious in its nature," and tended to fill society with a "spirit of gambling." Such a view led both Jefferson and Madison to oppose speculation and the pursuit of "wealth" by means of banking operations, such as the issue of paper money. Jefferson described those groups who exploited such measures as like a "lazy lounging, valuing himself on his family, too proud to work, and drawing out a miserable existence, by eating on that surplus of other men's labor which is the sacred fund of the
helpless poor." Madison saw in paper money the dangers of a depreciated currency, since as the "value of money consists in the uses it will serve," and as paper could "not serve one of the essential uses of specie," it only made sense that "paper therefore will be less valuable than specie." Rather more sinister, however, was their fear that the moneyed classes were engaged in a conspiracy to subvert the republic, and would use their influence to achieve their goal. In 1792 Jefferson wrote to President Washington about these dangers, warning that all capital employed in paper speculation is barren and useless, producing, like that on a gaming table, no accession to itself, and is withdrawn from commerce and agriculture where it would have produced addition to the common mass: That it nourishes in our citizens habits of vice and idleness instead of industry and morality: That it has furnished effectual means of corrupting such a portion of the legislature, as turns the balance between the honest voters which ever way it is directed: That this corrupt squadron, deciding the voice of the legislature, have manifested their dispositions to get rid of the limitations imposed by the constitution on the general legislature . . . . That the ultimate object of all this is to prepare the way for a change, from the present republican form of government, to that of a monarchy, of which the English constitution is to be the model.

Madison expressed similar fears when Federalists attempted to win support for Jay's Treaty in 1795-6, by means of a disruption of the economy: under such circumstances, "a Bank Director is like a highwayman with a pistol, demanding the purse." Both men also showed their concern to avoid the conditions which they felt were more likely to permit these corrupt efforts to succeed, most notably that of dependence, which would allow otherwise virtuous citizens to be corrupted. Madison's dislike of a servile dependence of one class upon another has already been mentioned above, and Jefferson
also recognized the dangers of such a development: "I consider the class of artificers as the panders of vice and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned." Concerned especially to avoid the problem which had arisen in Europe as population growth had dictated a division of labor, Jefferson warned against the creation of a body of manufacturers like those of the cities of the "old countries," "with whom the want of food and clothing necessary to sustain life, had begotten a depravity of morals, a dependence and corruption, which renders them an unsound accession to a country whose morals are sound." So it was then that the desire to maintain a society predominantly made up of a virtuous class of farmers, and to avoid the creation of a dependent, servile manufacturing labor force, was an important part of the political thought of Jefferson and Madison, among other early statesmen of the United States. Concerned with the threat to the republic posed by a conspiring minority of wealth and vile habits, a concern given extra realism by the view of history presented to them by earlier writers of the Eighteenth century, these statesmen sought to promote those conditions most likely to thwart such a conspiracy. That for both Jefferson and Madison, an independent, agricultural class aided those conditions, is best left to their own words: "The life of the husbandman is pre-eminently suited to the comfort and happiness of the individual," wrote Madison in an article discussing the best form of society for a republic. He continued by highlighting four crucial areas: "Health the first of blessings in an appurtenance of his property and his employment. Virtue, the health of
the soul, is another part of his patrimony, and no less favored by his situation. Intelligence may be cultivated in this as well as in any other walk of life.... Competency is more universally the lot of those who dwell in the country, when liberty is at the same time their lot." He concluded by painting a contrasting picture of city life: "The extremes of both want and of waste have other abodes. 'Tis not the country that peoples either the Bridewells or the Bedlams. These mansions of wretchedness are tenanted from the distresses and vices of overgrown cities."48 Jefferson's much-quoted passage in his Notes on Virginia ties together the whole argument:

Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people, whose breasts. He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. ... Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example. It is the mark set on those, who, not looking up to heaven, to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman, for their subsistence, depend for it on casualties and caprice of customers. Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition.

Developing the latter point of the potential political threat, Jefferson averred that the "mob of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body. It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigor. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution."49

At first the nature of American society, and the availability of land, seemed to make the fulfillment of this desired political economy an easy task, and Jefferson in particular had high hopes. Comparing
America with Europe, where land was either already under cultivation or barred from use by hereditary ownership, the result being a forced specialization of the labor force, he noted that "we have an immensity of land coveting the industry of the husbandman," and it seemed logical to him therefore that Americans should only have to pursue agricultural occupations.50 He even suggested that the availability of land would make the development of manufactures near impossible, because of the higher labor costs which could be demanded. However, even Jefferson recognized that eventually things might change, as population increased, and he saw a danger (admittedly not yet for centuries to come) that when Americans "get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt, as in Europe."51 This view, influenced by the theory that all civilizations progressed through various stages of society, ending in corruption, was clearly understood by Madison as well, who admitted that the "general policy of America is at present pointed at the encouragement of Agriculture, and the importation of the objects of consumption," but then predicted a time when lands would become settled, and "spare hands for manufactures and navigation" would multiply.52 This realization was strengthened as American society gave increased signs of already being attracted toward occupations other than agriculture, especially as Hamilton's financial system seemed to accelerate this process. However, Jefferson and Madison maintained their hopes, and committed themselves to opposing Hamilton's system, while adapting their political economy to meet the developments which were already occurring: they attempted to forestall for as long as possible the worst effects of a division of society into
various occupations, in the process incorporating into their theoretical political economy an element of commerce, initially, and later even a degree of manufacturing.

Hamilton’s financial plans, as put forward in the early years of government under the new Constitution, reflected his own concerns for the success of the republic. Desiring to see the United States become a great and respected nation in world circles, he saw the strengthening of the American economy as the way to achieve his goal. At first this led him to propose giving bounties to American manufacturers, but later he was forced to seek closer (but temporary) connections with Britain to attract the capital necessary to develop the American economy.53 His vision of a commercial and manufacturing future for the United States, with a National Debt and National Bank to improve confidence in the nation’s financial well-being, ran directly counter to the sort of future desired by Jefferson and Madison, and appeared to them as a startling reminder of the same sort of developments which had brought about corruption and degeneration in England in the 1690s and 1700s. It was not surprising, therefore, that Madison and Jefferson began to describe Hamilton in terms similar to those used by the English "country" opposition against Robert Walpole, who had been regarded as the central figure in the British conspiracy of financial aristocrats. They also opposed Hamilton’s policies which seemed to encourage the creation of institutions which would strengthen the influence of moneyed men within government. The National Bank was portrayed as both unnecessary for the execution of the enumerated powers of the Constitution (and therefore unconstitutional), and unfair in the way in
which it would favor those public creditors who lived closest to Philadelphia. After it had been created, Jefferson complained that "we are completely saddled and bridled, and... the bank is so firmly mounted on us that we must go where they will guide." However, Jefferson made clear in 1802 that it was all banks, and not just a national bank, which provided the designating few with an opportunity to pursue their corrupt aims: "The monopoly of a single bank is certainly an evil. The multiplication of them was intended to cure it, but it multiplied an influence of the same character with the first..." Opposition to the assumption of the state debts into a national debt, and to plans to give full credit to current bondholders, even though they had in many cases bought those bonds for much less than full value, was also based on a fear of a moneyed aristocracy which would pursue its own interests through the government. Madison felt it was clear that it was men of this kind who held the debt, and who would try to use its influence to govern the people of the United States. What was worse was the blatant corruption which he saw taking place: "Of all the shameful circumstances of this business, it is among the greatest to see the members of the Legislature who were most active in pushing this Jobb, openly grasping its emoluments." The future was clear: "The stock-jobbers will become the pretorian band of the Government—at once its tool and its tyrant; bribed by its largess, and overlooking it, by clamors and combinations."

While arguments also broke out over Hamilton's "Report on Manufacturers," which presented a view of a diversified American economy, directly antagonistic to the sort of political economy hoped
for by Jefferson and Madison, the failure of Hamilton's plans to produce large-scale manufacturing in the United States calmed for a while Republican fears of the creation of a servile manufacturing class. That failure had been in part because of the unreadiness of American society for the development of manufacturing, just as Jefferson had hoped, with poor management skills, the lack of an adequately trained labor force and the easy availability of land. But it had also been because of international conditions in the 1790s which encouraged American commercial activity instead. Forced to recognize the attachment of Americans to commerce, and the success they made of it, Republicans fitted it into their framework for a political economy, as a necessary adjunct of a primarily agricultural economy.

Ironically, efforts to defend commerce as the "handmaid" of agriculture, by securing overseas markets for American surpluses, would lead to the development within America of a certain degree of manufacturing, first under measures of commercial retaliation, and then during the war against Britain.

Initially, in the 1770s and 1780s Jefferson and Madison had been less than happy with signs of commercial development in the United States. Not only did these signs seem to represent a move away from a strictly agricultural society, but it also threatened to involve the nation in the muddy waters of international politics and trade rivalries. In 1783, Madison had warned that wherever "commerce prevails there will be an inequality of wealth, and wherever the latter does a simplicity of manners must decline."58 Jefferson elaborated on this line of argument: "Were I to indulge my own theory I should wish
them [Americans] to practice neither commerce nor navigation, but to stand with respect to Europe precisely on the footing of China. We should thus avoid wars, and all our citizens would be husbandmen.” However, he went on to acknowledge that his theory was already being outdated by the existing pursuits of Americans: “Our people have a decided taste for navigation and commerce. They take this from their mother country.”

Preferring commercial occupations to manufacturing, Jefferson was glad to find his preference in theory backed up by fact, as Americans were “decided in the opinion that it is necessary... to take a share in the occupation of the ocean, and their established habits induce them to require that the sea be kept open to them.”

The desire to keep open commercial outlets for the American people reflected not only a desire to accommodate the merchant classes, but also a concern with the maintenance of an agricultural economy. America’s bountiful land was both a blessing and bane to the republican dream, since although it provided ample opportunity for the American people to pursue an agricultural occupation, its productive nature made it likely that American farms would require only a minimum of effort to produce a subsistence-level crop. Such a situation threatened one of the essential virtues of the farmer, that of industry, since if a man was left with time on his hands, he might be tempted to engage in pursuits less acceptable to the republican ideal. It was with some irony then, that Jefferson and Madison were forced to appeal to the self-interest of mankind in order to preserve his virtue of industry, by providing farmers with a profitable market, so that
they might be encouraged to grow agricultural surpluses. It was such a
market which overseas trade seemed best suited to provide, with
European nations and their colonies in the western hemisphere being
targeted as potential consumers of American agricultural goods. In
exchange Europe would provide the limited manufacturing needs of
Americans, and so forestall the need for development of manufactures on
American soil. As early as 1778 Jefferson looked forward to future
close relations with the countries of South Europe, which would provide
"important markets for our great commodities of fish... wheat,
tobacco, and rice."61 Madison looked forward to a successful crop of
wheat in 1784, and predicted that it would "afford plentiful supplies
for the W. India Islands if their European Masters will no longer deny
themselves the benefit of such a trade with us."62 In his Notes on
Virginia Jefferson explained how it would be better to transport raw
materials to Europe to manufacture, "the loss by the transportation of
commodities across the Atlantic" being "made up in happiness and
permanence of government," but he was also firm in limiting commerce to
a subsidiary role only: "We have no occasion for more commerce than to
take off our superfluous produce."63

While the necessity of exporting agricultural surplus allowed
commerce to be fitted into the theoretical framework of Jefferson's and
Madison's political economy, Madison's doubts about the compliance of
European nations reveal that they realized their hopes might be
thwarted. The logic of their arguments caused them to hold hopes for
as wide markets as possible, a goal which would be met by making
international trade as free from restrictions as possible. As American
ships went "to exchange the surplus of one produce which we can spare, for the surplusses of other kinds which they can spare and we want," Jefferson thought it only just that Americans should "have a right to judge for ourselves what market best suits us," and that other nations should have no right "to forbid to us the enjoyment of the necessaries and comforts which we may obtain from any other independent country."64 While American negotiators were successful in securing reciprocal trade agreements which opened markets in some European nations to American goods, these attempts failed to reach an agreement with Britain for access for American goods in American ships to West Indian markets. What is more the Republicans suspected Federalists of trying to sacrifice these goals for the sake of better relations with Britain, as in 1789 when Madison accused the Senate of abolishing duties which discriminated against those countries which did not have a treaty with the United States, so that "Britain will be quieted in the enjoyment of our trade as she may please to regulate it ...."65 The failure of the Jay Treaty of 1795 to secure the West Indies trade, this clause having been rejected by the Senate because of the conditions attached to it, only frustrated further Republican hopes for an improved access to those markets. In the face of continued British refusals to modify her mercantilist system, and also the hazardous shipping conditions which existed in a time of war between France and much of the rest of Europe in the wake of the French Revolution, Republicans turned to policies of commercial retaliation, in efforts to force upon European countries, and Britain in particular, a greater degree of freedom in international trade.
Madison's favoring of a national government in the mid-1780s owed much to his desire to find a better way to sort out the commercial problems of the United States. Although he espoused a "perfect freedom" of trade, he recognized that such freedom would be impossible without the concurrence of all nations. "Whilst any one of these imposes on our Vessels, seamen & c. in their ports, clogs from which they exempt their own, we must either retort the distinction, or renounce not merely a just profit, but our only defense against the danger which may most easily beset us." For Madison a national government with power to impose retaliatory commercial regulations was the answer, and he would carry this conviction with him into the first meetings of Congress under the new Constitution. In a series of speeches calling for regulations, he stressed the importance of trade for agriculture, since "by encouraging the means of transporting our productions with facility, we encourage the raising them." Focussing his attention especially upon Britain, which in his opinion had too great a share of American commerce, he warned that "as long . . . as we do not protect ourselves and endeavor to restore the stream of commerce to its natural channel, we shall find no relaxation on the part of Britain, the same obnoxious policy will be pursued while we submissively bear the oppression." Britain had to be taught that some sort of commercial agreement would be worthwhile, and what was more retaliation was regarded as almost certain to succeed, since the "produce of this country is more necessary to the rest of the world than that of other countries is to America." Jefferson supported such proposals, again stating that if commerce were relieved of its
"piles of regulating laws, duties and prohibitions," then "the greatest mass possible could then be produced of those things which contribute to human life and human happiness." If, however, certain countries were not prepared to accept American exports under reciprocal conditions of free trade, then "free commerce and navigation are not to be given in exchange for restrictions and vexations."68

These efforts proved largely without success, however, as European war, and continued British adherence to her mercantilist policies ensured that wider markets for American agricultural surpluses remained closed. While American commercial prosperity did improve as a result of the possibilities afforded by neutral shipping with both France and Britain, there were also the dangers of both sides trying to block American trade with each others' colonial possessions. The same problems emerged with the recurrence of war in Europe in the first decade of the Nineteenth century, while Madison, as Secretary of State, was still concerned with the chances of opening new markets. Discussing a possible commercial treaty with Britain, he stressed that "as related to the West Indies and North American Colonies it must be a permanent object of the United States, to have intercourse with them made as free as that with Europe," and that "the minimum which should be accepted in relation to the intercourse with the West Indies, will be the admission of our vessels laden solely with Articles of our growth, produce or manufacture, the importation of which [in] British vessels is not prohibited, on the same terms as British vessels . . . shall be admitted in our ports . . ."69 Yet still no success was to be found, even with the imposition of first the Non-Intecourse Acts and
then the Embargo of December 1807. The continued resistance of Britain, as well as the growing furor over the violation of neutral shipping rights, developed to crisis proportions, and led ultimately to war with Britain in 1812, a war which Drew McCoy sees as fought by Americans "to vindicate the promise of a republican political economy." Faced with the prospect of no markets for their surplus overseas, Republicans either had to force open such markets, or allow the United States to succumb to the creation of large-scale manufacturing, the latter view being too much for most to stomach. As Madison charged in his declaration of war, "the great staples of our country have been cut off from their legitimate markets, and a destructive blow aimed at our agricultural and maritime interests."70

War failed to bring the desired opening of British colonial markets, and indeed it would be another fifteen years until this object was finally achieved under the auspices of the diplomatic efforts of Andrew Jackson's administration.71 What added to the irony of this situation, though, was the effect which war, and indeed earlier efforts at commercial retaliation, had had upon the American economy. Manufacturing was given a much greater impetus by the stoppage of trade with Britain, and then by the needs of war, even if incidentally, than it had received from Hamilton's earlier deliberate attempts to foster the economic development of the United States. However, even for Republicans such developments of manufacturing could be reconciled, as providing a degree of independence from European decisions, while not yet endangering the virtue of the republic. Initially it was hoped that manufactures would be pursued mainly in the homes of farmers,
without the creation of a large-scale labor force, but even when the latter became more likely to occur, it was justified on the grounds that it would provide a home market for agricultural surpluses, to make up for the failure to secure overseas markets. Republicans still hoped to maintain agriculture in its dominant position, and had to offset the worst effects of larger-scale manufactures by providing easy access to western lands, so that the labor forces would not become "enslaved" by their employers.

Early anticipation that commercial freedom might not be attained, drove Madison and Jefferson to realize the potential outcome. "[I]mpediments thrown in the way of our agriculture must lead us to confine that to our own consumption and turn our superfluous labor to manufactures, so as to be independent as much as possible on the fluctuating councils of other countries," wrote Jefferson as early as 1791, and in another letter the same day, he restated his commitment to agriculture, but admitted that the "risk of hanging our prosperity on the fluctuating councils and caprices of others renders it wise in us to turn seriously to manufactures; and if Europe will not let us carry our provisions to their manufacturers we must endeavor to bring their manufacturers to our provisions." After nearly twenty years of fruitless attempts to secure open trade, Madison gave indications that Jefferson's predictions were coming true.

In a cultivation of the materials and the extension of useful manufactures, more especially in the general application to household fabrics, we behold a rapid diminution of our dependence on foreign supplies. Nor is it unworthy of reflection that this revolution in our pursuits and habits is in no slight degree a consequence of those impolitic and arbitrary edicts by which the contending nations,
in endeavoring each of them to obstruct our trade
with the other, have so far abridged our means of
procuring the productions and manufactures of
which our own are now taking the place.\footnote{73}

What is more Republicans now seemed to regard this as a positive
development. "We must now place the manufacturer by the side of the
agriculturist," intoned Jefferson after the experience of the War of
1812 had convinced him of the benefits of a more self-sufficient
economy. "Shall we make our own comforts, or go without them, at the
will of a foreign nation? He, therefore, who is now against domestic
manufactures, must be for reducing us either to dependence on that
foreign nation, or to be clothed in skins, and to live like wild beasts
in dens and caverns. I am not one of these; experience has taught me
that manufactures are now necessary to our independence as to our
comfort."\footnote{74}

That Jefferson and Madison could accept such a development was
helped by their perception of the type of manufactures which were being
pursued. These were not large-scale factory establishments, growing as
a result of population growth and creating a servile labor force, but
rather they consisted mainly of "household manufactures" performed
within farmers' homes, or of crafts pursued by professional mechanics.
Noting that most manufactured goods used by Americans tended to be
fabrics, Madison was cheered by the fact that these "can be prepared in
every family," and therefore constituted "the natural ally of
agriculture."\footnote{75} He reaffirmed his belief that the development was safe
by asserting that manufactures in the United States were "the combined
product of professional occupations and of household industry."\footnote{76}
Jefferson also noted that the coarser goods required by Americans were
now "made in our families," and that this gave to America a great advantage and independence which they should not relinquish.77

However, Republican arguments in support of a development of manufactures were not always consistent with each other. While stressing that the main body of manufactures was carried out on a household level, they also claimed that the manufacturing population would provide a market for agricultural surpluses of American farmers, thereby meeting the problem of closed overseas markets. Jefferson noted in 1809 the "advantages . . . of planting the consumer in our own soil by the side of the grower of produce," and in 1817 Madison supported the encouragement of American manufactures on the grounds that they would afford "a more certain source of supply for every class," but also because they would provide "a more certain market for the surplus products of the agricultural class."78 Unless they inferred that professional artisans would provide this market, it seems only likely that they foresaw the growth of much larger-scale manufacturing in the United States. At first both men would be able to live with the consequences of this development, but as Jefferson retired from the official circles of the Presidency his view diverged increasingly from that of his colleague, who was still constrained by the requirements of office. Jefferson continued to adhere to a dream of a society consisting almost entirely of small farmers and professional mechanics, while seeing abundant lands in the West as a safeguard against dangerous levels of dependence among the laboring classes. Madison recognized increasingly the need for diversification of the American economy, even to the point of encouraging manufactures,
and of questioning the desirability of cheap lands, which tended to attract men to agriculture, glutting the market with farm products, an imbalance which a greater degree of manufacturing would have remedied.

Westward expansion, to postpone a temporal progress through the agricultural stage of civilization to the manufacturing stage, by means of a spatial progress, provided one solution to the problem of a developing manufacturing industry. Not only would expansion ensure that farming remained the preponderant interest of the nation, but it would also guard against the worst dangers of a manufacturing class. As opposed to Europe where population growth had forced a division of labor when land resources were insufficient to cater for increased numbers of people, in the United States a similar division would only be voluntary, with land providing an outlet, should manufacturing conditions approach servitude or too great a degree of dependence. Jefferson wrote in 1805 that "as yet our manufacturers are as much at their ease, as independent and moral as our agricultural inhabitants, and they will continue to as long as there are vacant lands for them to resort to; because, whenever it shall be attempted by the other classes to reduce them to the minimum of subsistence, they will quit their trades and go to laboring the earth."79 Such an analysis helps to explain the great optimism expressed for the republic's future, two years earlier, on the occasion of the Louisiana Purchase, which provided an almost inconceivably large amount of land with which to secure a virtuous farming people. Madison described it as a "truly noble acquisition," which would contribute greatly to "favoring liberty;"80 while Jefferson saw it as a "widespread field for the
blessings of freedom and equal laws."  

Jefferson's hopes for the maintenance of liberty in the West extended into his own particular section of the nation as well, and a careful reading of his words reveals how it was in the North-east, where population was greatest and commercial activity already most advanced, that he envisioned the development of larger-scale manufacturing. While admitting that manufacture of "necessities" was pursued throughout the United States, mainly in farmers' households, Jefferson considered the attempts at "fine goods" as likely to prove abortive. These were "undertaken by company establishments, and chiefly in the towns," and would have "little success and short continuance in a country where the charms of agriculture attract every being who can engage in it." Yet his view of a self-sufficient farming community is rather reminiscent of the eighteenth-century Southern plantation, and that Jefferson meant that "fine goods" were unlikely to succeed in his own "country" of Virginia, not in the nation as a whole, is revealed by a later letter to John Adams in 1812: "Here we do little in the fine way, but in coarse and middling goods a great deal. Every family in the country is a manufactory within itself, and is very generally able to make within itself all the stricter and middling stuffs for its own clothing and household use." In conclusion, Jefferson noted that for "fine stuff we shall depend on your northern manufactories." Of these "company establishments," Virginia had none. Madison's much later opinion on Virginia showed the degree to which his views had diverged from Jefferson's, although at heart his basic concern to avoid a servile manufacturing class
remained. In a memorandum of 1833 Madison averred that "Virginia must soon become manufacturing as well as agricultural, and be divided into these two great interests ...." He went on to note how agriculture would only continue as long as domestic and foreign markets provided a demand for its products, and stated that the point had been reached when demand was at most equal to supply. The need for change did not necessarily endanger the virtue of Virginians, however, since Madison's memo proceeded to reveal that it was an increase in slave labor which was to make necessary a diversification of the economy in the State, even taking into account the "emigration to the West and S. West" of large numbers of the "laboring population."84

While Madison's analysis of the change needed for Virginia's economy concerned itself mainly with the State's slave economy and a surplus of labor-intensive crops, and therefore might not have presented such a threat to the republican dream, his earlier opinions on the future of the United States as a whole also revealed a much greater acceptance of the development of manufacturing industry than he had himself once before espoused, and certainly more than Jefferson would have contemplated. Aware of the changes which had occurred before the war of 1812, and which had been given extra impetus by the War, and now convinced of the failure of an overseas market to consume a sufficient amount of the agricultural surplus, Madison came to advocate a greater degree of economic diversification. In his message to Congress in 1815, he suggested that there might be a need for a degree of protection to safeguard against future British competition those fledgling industries which had arisen during the War: "Under
circumstances giving a powerful impulse to manufacturing industry, it has made among us a progress and exhibited an efficiency which justify the belief that with a protection not more than is due to the enterprising citizens whose interests are now at stake it will become at an early day not only safe against occasional competitions from abroad, but a source of domestic wealth and even of external commerce." While recognizing that defense industries merited the most important consideration, he also suggested protection for the "primary wants of individuals," a rather ambiguous phrase which seemed to open up the possibility for protection of any article. He concluded by recommending in particular those manufactures "where the materials for them are extensively drawn from our agriculture, and consequently impart and insure to that fund of national prosperity and independence an encouragement which can not fail to be rewarded." Madison explicitly stated the reasons for diversification in two letters: first to Richard Rush, he wrote that if "agricultural nations cannot sell her [Britain] the products of their soil, they cannot buy the products of her looms. They must plough less and manufacture more;" then he reminded Tench Coxe of his "anticipation of a decreasing market for all our great staples for exportation, and of the consequent necessity of directing our labor to other objects."87

So it was then that the end of Madison's term of office witnessed moves toward policies which two or three decades earlier would have aroused vigorous opposition from him and others like him. The Tariff of 1816 which passed with his signature, had for its avowed goal protection of manufacturers, as well as the raising of revenue for the
federal government after the War of 1812. The war had also presented
the nation with widespread financial problems, with small banks seeing
to their own interests over the public good, and the government being
heavily indebted. Madison signed a bill creating a new National Bank,
which would aid in efforts to get banks to resume payment of notes, and
to put the nation back on healthy financial foundations again.
Seemingly forgotten was his earlier hostility to a national bank as an
unconstitutional, dangerous moneyed body, hostility which had allowed
the first Bank to lapse after its charter expired in 1811. Now Madison
proclaimed the Bank's constitutionality, as confirmed by the public
acceptance of it over time, and as economic necessity dictated that a
stronger influence be exerted over the nation's banking operations.
Jefferson was not so happy at the creation of a new centralized banking
institution: discussing the proposals for such a body in 1813, he had
warned that it would create a bank oligarchy, which would try "to
direct and control the politics of the nation."68 Indeed, Jefferson
had lost none of his hostility to all banks, which he saw as raising up
"a moneyed aristocracy in our country which has already set the
government at defiance..."89

Also among the measures which came to prominence after the War
were internal improvements, which brought with them the worrying
problem of constitutional propriety: could Congress appropriate money
for projects of a local nature, or was it only allowed for that body to
do so in cases of national interest? Like most others Madison regarded
improvements as an indispensable part of the new republic, and had
foreseen their importance in the 1780s. In discussing diplomatic moves
toward Spain, Madison demanded that continuous pressure be exerted to secure for the United States rights to the navigation of the Mississippi river and the right of deposit at the port of New Orleans, both of which were deemed essential for the welfare of Americans west of the Allegheny mountains. Not only would they provide cheap and effective outlets for the agricultural surplus of the region, but it would also ward off the threat (and one which must have seemed very likely at the time), that those western elements might be lured into the allegiance of a European power if their interests were not seen to by the United States government. In his message of 1815 Madison again called for support for roads and canals "which can be best executed under the national authority."90 Less than fourteen months later, however, he had vetoed improvements bills on the lines he had advocated, on constitutional grounds. But this did not dampen his enthusiasm for improvements in principle, and, free of the responsibilities of the Presidential office, he expressed his anxious wish that "Congress may institute the constitutional process for removing all obstacles" to the application of federal funds for improvements.91 Even without such a measure he could still take pleasure in the improvements initiated by several states in the 1820s: "No Country more than ours admits of improvements by artificial roads and canals; nor can it be doubted, either, that the cost of them, in their fullest extent, is within the compass of public resources, or that it will be incalculably overbalanced in the account of profit and loss; not to speak of the happy tendency of such works to strengthen the bond of our Union ...."92
Clearly Madison's vision of the future of the United States had changed considerably by the 1820s, affected as it had been by the changes in American society and by the experience of war. However, even though manufacturing now played a much larger role in his political economy, agriculture was still an important consideration, as was revealed above, by his particular favor for protection of manufacturers making use of the products of agriculture. Indeed by 1824 he was showing less sign of favor for the principle of protection, except in the case of vital defense needs and temporary aid to support young industries. Otherwise he felt it only right that market forces determine when more or less capital be invested in manufacturing activity.93 Nor had he lost any of his fear of the attempts of designing speculators and bankers, even if financial distress had led him to approve the creation of a new national bank. The results of the Panic of 1819 confirmed his view that banks were a "real nuisance," and he claimed that they encouraged people to buy luxury goods from abroad, and therefore to tip the balance of trade against the United States.94 Eight years later in a time of relative financial stability, he would still denounce incorporated companies and banks, the advantages and convenience of the latter being "outweighed by the excesses of their proper emissions, and by the partialities and corruption with which they are administered."95

"An equilibrium of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, is certainly become essential to our independence. Manufactures, sufficient for our own consumption, of what we raise the raw material (and no more). Commerce, sufficient to carry the surplus produce of
agriculture, beyond our own consumption, to a market for exchanging it for articles we cannot raise (and no more). These are the true limits of manufactures and commerce. To go beyond them is to increase our dependence on foreign nations, and our liability to war." 96 Apart from placing slightly more stress on the need for manufactures, it is unlikely that Madison would have disagreed with Jefferson's dictum of 1809, even in the years after the War of 1812. Agriculture still provided the class of independent and (if circumstances were right) industrious citizens, which was essential to ward off the dangers of a potentially corrupting moneyed aristocracy, which Republicans perceived as a threat to the success of the Republic. Their methods may have changed, as would only be expected in an age when the United States (and indeed Europe as well) was only just waking up to the importance of manufacturing industry, but their basic concern to maintain a republic of virtue survived. This aim would be transferred to the ideological heirs of the Republicans, the Jacksonian Democrats, who in turn would shape their own political economy as conditions and events worked together to produce a new set of perceived threats. At first adopting measures similar to those espoused by the "national Republicans" and Madison in the latter stages of his career, the Democrats' policy would gradually shift back to more original lines of Republican political economy, with the major focus on agriculture, western expansion, and overseas trade. It is to the presentation of this shift in Ohio Democratic rhetoric that this study will now turn.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II.


6Wood, Creation discusses the preference for a republican form of government.


McCoy, Elusive Republic, pp. 17-32.


"Notes on Virginia," Lipscomb, Writings, 2: 96, 95, 120.

The influence of ideological concerns upon institutional developments is best covered in Wood, Creation, passim.


"Apportionment of Representatives in the Legislature," 11 July
1787, Hutchinson, Papers, 10: 98.


21"Term of Senate," Ibid., 10: 77.

22Wood, Creation, pp. 593-615, especially 606-15.

23Stourzh, Alexander Hamilton, pp. 67-73, 81-94.


26"Republican Distribution of Citizens," 3 March 1792, Hutchinson, Papers, 14: 245.


28Ibid.


30Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, 17 March 1814, Lipscomb, Writings, 14: 120; for the importance of Blackstone and Hume for Hamilton see Stourzh, Alexander Hamilton, pp. 14, 65.

31Jefferson to James Madison, 20 December 1787, Boyd, Papers, 12: 442.

32Jefferson to Mr. Pictet, 5 February 1803, Lipscomb, Writings, 10: 356; Jefferson to Thomas Pinckney, 7 September 1793, Ibid., 9: 223.

33Jefferson to John Jay, 23 August 1785, Boyd, Papers, 8: 426.


36Jefferson to Benjamin Austin, 9 January 1816, Lipscomb Writings, 14: 390.

37Jefferson to James Madison, 28 October 1785, Boyd, Papers, 8: 682.

38"Fashion," 20 March 1792, Hutchinson, Papers, 14: 258.

39"Scheme for a System of Agricultural Societies," March 1811, Lipscomb, Writings, 17: 405-6.


41Jefferson to George Washington, 14 August 1787, Boyd, Papers, 12: 38.

42"Reply," 22 June 1786, Lipscomb, Writings, 17: 91.

43Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 12 August 1786, Hutchinson, Papers, 9: 95.


45Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 23 April 1796, Letters, 2: 98.

46Jefferson to John Jay, 23 August 1785, Boyd, Papers, 8: 426.

47Jefferson to Mr. Lithson, 4 January 1805, Lipscomb, Writings, 11: 55.
48 "Republican Distribution of Citizens," Hutchinson, Papers, 14: 245.


50 Ibid., 2: 228-9.

51 Jefferson to James Madison, 20 December 1787, Boyd, Papers, 12: 442.

52 Madison to Edmund Randolph, 20 May 1783, Hutchinson, Papers, 7: 59-60.

53 See Stourzh, Alexander Hamilton, for details of the motivation for Hamilton's financial plans.


55 Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, 19 June 1802, Ibid., 10: 323.

56 Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 10 July 1791, Hutchinson, Papers, 14: 43.

57 Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 8 August 1791, Ibid., 14: 69; Banning, Jeffersonian Persuasion is particularly good on the Republican opposition to Hamilton's financial plans.

58 Madison to Edmund Randolph, 30 September 1783, Hutchinson, Papers, 7: 363.

59 Jefferson to G. K. van Hogendorp, 13 October 1785, Boyd, Papers, 8: 633.

60 Jefferson to John Jay, 23 August 1785, Ibid., 8: 426.


64Jefferson to Thomas Pinckney, 7 September 1793, Lipscomb, Writings, 9: 223.

65Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 27 May 1789, Hutchinson, Papers, 12: 185.

66Madison to James Monroe, 7 August 1785, Hunt, Writings, 2: 156-7.


70McCoy, The Elusive Republic, pp. 234-5; "Special Message," 1 June 1812, Hunt, Writings, 8: 194.

71See below, Chapter 5.


73"1st Annual Message," 29 November 1809, Hunt, Writings, 8: 84.

74Jefferson to Benjamin Austin, 9 January 1816, Lipscomb, Writings, 14: 391-2.

75"Republican Distribution of Citizens," Hutchinson, Papers, 14: 246.

76"2nd Annual Message," 5 December 1810, Hunt Writings, 8: 126.

77Jefferson to Duport de Nemours, 28 June 1809, Lipscomb, Writings, 12: 294.
78Ibid., p. 293: Madison to D. Lynch, 27 June 1817, Hunt, Writings, 8: 393.

79Jefferson to Mr. Lithson, 4 January 1803, Lipscomb, Writings.

80Madison to James Monroe, 30 July 1803, Hunt, Writings, 7: 60 n.


82Jefferson to Dupont de Nemours, 15 April 1811, Ibid., 13: 38.


88Jefferson to John W. Eppes, 6 November 1813, Lipscomb, Writings, 13: 406.

89Jefferson to Josephus B. Stuart, 10 May 1817, Ibid., 15: 112.

90"7th Annual Message," Hunt, Writings, 8: 342.


92Madison to Matthew Carey, 12 May 1823, Ibid., 3: 490.


94Madison to Richard Rush, 10 May 1819, Ibid., 8: 436.

95Madison to J. K. Paulding, 10 March 1827, Ibid., 9: 282.

CHAPTER III

OHIO DEMOCRATS AND THE THREAT TO THE REPUBLIC

Just as it is wrong to view American political thought of the revolutionary, Federalist and Jeffersonian eras in a vacuum, so it is necessary to examine Jacksonian political thought in the context of American thought that had preceded it. Both political parties of the Jacksonian era, the Jacksonian Democrats and the Whigs, drew heavily upon a common body of ideas, both European and American in origin, ideas which represented a combination of both Republican and Federalist thought and policy, since the Republicans had changed their stance in the course of the first two decades of the Nineteenth century. Both parties in the era of Jackson claimed to belong to the tradition of the Republican party, as symbolized by their initial names, the Democratic Republicans, tracing themselves from Jeffersonian, old Republican ideas, and the National Republicans (many of whom would become Whigs) following on from the Madison school of "national Republicans" of post-War of 1812 America. Indeed, one historian has taken the continuity further, by naming Madison as the "patron saint of Whiggery."¹ As seen in Chapter 2 above, the basic assumptions underlying Jeffersonian and Madisonian thought were not radically different, and their positions could be distinguished best by their acceptance of the need for a change in policy in the face of reality: Jefferson was less willing to see policies encouraging manufactures and a commercial society than was Madison, but the basic aim of both men, that of securing the republic by maintaining a predominantly agricultural society, was the same. It is not surprising, therefore to find a similar statement of the same
basic principles, notably that of securing the republic, by both parties at the start of the Jacksonian era. However, the familiar problems of the level of involvement of the people in government and the importance of virtue remained, and intensified as party battles in the 1830s produced a greater definition of party ideas. A noticeable distinction did emerge between the Democrats and Whigs on matters involving virtue, popular participation in, and the role of the "better sort" in government. More importantly for this study, both parties made use of rhetorical attacks on these differences as means of winning political support.

The Democratic party, looking back on half a century of government since the achievement of independence, proclaimed the success of the United States to be the result of the perpetuation of her republican form of government. "It is no longer a question," rejoiced Jackson on his departure from the White House, "whether this great country can remain happily united and flourish under our present forms of government. Experience, the unerring test of all human undertakings, has shown the wisdom and foresight of those who formed it, and has proved that in the union of these States there is a sure foundation for the brightest hopes of freedom and for the happiness of the people." And referring no doubt to the major sectional crisis of his term in office, the Nullification effort by South Carolina, he warned: "At every hazard and by every sacrifice this Union must be preserved."

Ohio Democrats put forward similar praise of the republican form of government, announcing its genius and crediting the Founding Fathers for its creation. The rosy picture painted by the Georgetown
Castigator in 1835 was a common representation of the results of the republican form: "Every section of our widely extended and highly diversified land, teems with plenty, and the hand of industry is amply rewarded in every part under the government of the Republic. Blessed as we are with honest hearts and wise heads to watch over and rule the destinies of the state and nation,—we above all other people, have reason to rejoice in our happy condition, and to hope for a continuance of plenty—the equal distribution of justice, and the wholesome administration of our state and national governments."3 As Americans," Ohioans were exhorted to feel a "deep and lively interest in the perpetuity of our Republican institutions."4 Comparing American institutions with those "evils and oppressions which the mass of the people endure under the aristocratic and monarchical governments of the old world," Americans were to prize their Republic. "It is founded upon the free and enlightened principles of pure democracy, and if it be as well appreciated and maintained hereafter as it has been heretofore, it will make this country a garden of liberty, the home of a happy people, and a model for all enlightened nations as long as the world exists."5

Just as studies of the Federalists of the Jeffersonian era have revealed that that party were as committed to the republican form of government as were the Republicans, so studies of the Whigs in the Jacksonian era have revealed a similar commitment to that form.6 The Democrats, however, did not hesitate to suggest differences in the Whig position on the importance of the republic, some realistic, others exaggerated to the point of falsehood. The Democratic Standard at
least conceded that on the whole the Whig party was not influenced by "bad or anti-republican motives," and that "a portion of them (and perhaps a majority) desire... the good of the country and the perpetuity of our republican institutions." However, the Standard still accused that majority of following leading Whigs, who had "always believed that the people were incapable of self-government..."7 The Committee of the Democratic Party convention in Ohio in 1842 was less charitable, and while admitting that their own claims to support the principle of power deriving from the people was a declaration which "very few will openly controvert," they denounced as "the revilers and haters of democracy" those Whigs who also made such professions. They might covet the form of democracy, "but to claim for themselves the honor of wearing her mantle would be vain."8

The charge that the Whigs were less in tune with the popular will, and indeed that they doubted the very validity of a government based upon the people, was one which pervaded Democratic rhetoric of the Jacksonian era. Equating their own views with those of the Jeffersonian Republicans, the Democrats would stress that power derived from the people and that trust could be placed in the peoples' hands, while supporting universal suffrage (at least for males) and the right of instruction of legislative representatives. The editor of the Ohio Monitor praised Jackson for being "disposed to exercise his delegated power for the benefit of those, who conferred it," and for recognizing that "this power is not conferred by wealth or intelligence, but by numbers; in other words by rich and poor people alike...."9 For the Democrats the Jacksonian era was one of a great reformation, a
return to the principles of the Jefferson school, by which the people would "enforce a more strict accountability among their servants." The people would "expect every one to do his duty, and will reward the faithful, who shall be true to correct principles and firm and untiring to the purpose of the people." Moses Dawson, editor of the Cincinnati Advertiser, professed that power derived from the people, and that they should, therefore, have the right of instruction over their representatives.

The Whigs, on the other hand, were judged to have "no confidence in the integrity and right judgment of the people," and they considered Democratic victories as "the suffrage of an uninformed undiscriminating mob!" Again in 1842 a Democratic editor accused the Whigs of having a mean opinion of the reason and sagacity of the people, "and a contempt of popular intelligence," and the same editor a year later concluded that this led the Whigs to be forever opposed to the uncontrolled right of suffrage.

Time and again the Democrats charged that the Whigs were less than receptive to the real interests of the people. The opposition built their political creed upon "the ignorance and vicious character of the great mass. They look upon the rich and 'well born' as those for whom alone Government was instituted, and that the people can not be trusted. Hence one of the leading characteristics of that party is a disposition to keep the power of the Government as far as possible, from the reach of the people." Meanwhile Democracy was "founded upon the principle that man is capable of self-government—that . . . republican institutions are based upon equal rights—upon persons, and
not on property—that the poorest and weakest member of society is entitled to equal protection with the richest and strongest." In conclusion, Democracy did not "rely for its support upon the smiles of the wealthy, but upon the general intelligence, virtue and patriotism of the people." The Ohio Eagle concurred, seeing the Democrats as having "unlimited confidence in the good sense and integrity of the people and their ability to distinguish right from wrong," while the Whigs had "no confidence in the ability of the mass of the people to choose their government policy," and doubted the "capacity of the men generally to judge for themselves as to the truth of a question." Such attacks were undoubtedly exaggerated, for the purpose of throwing a bad light upon the Whigs, and to win for the Democrats the support of the people, but studies have shown that Democratic charges were not so far wide of the mark. Daniel Walker Howe has revealed that the Whigs were imbued with opinions of the nature of man similar to those held by Federalists such as Alexander Hamilton. Fearful of the lengths to which the unbridled passions of Americans might lead (as revealed in their accusations of levelling tendencies against the Democrats), the Whigs adopted a paternal attitude toward the people, seeing it as their duty as a responsible elite to see to the moral welfare of the people by means of education. As such Whigs came to accept patterns of social inequality and deference, which enabled them to enforce their cultural code upon society and to ensure that the people were taught the value of order and responsibility. As a further safeguard economic progress would be encouraged to produce prosperity throughout all levels of society, in order to keep all people
relatively satisfied with their lot.16 John Ashworth has summed up this Whig view succinctly: "Although dedicated to republican ideals most Whigs could not concede the extreme Democratic claims for the virtue, wisdom and self-sufficiency of the ordinary citizen. Instead they strove to find order, on the one hand by emphasising the transcendental power of government and the laws, and on the other hand, by attempting to secure recognition and respect for the natural aristocracy."17

The perception of this divergence between Democrats and Whigs helps to explain further elements of political difference between the two parties, and how these could affect their views on economic policy and the development of a more modern commercial society. Most important was the fear held by both parties that the views held by their opponents were dangerous to the very form of government that they cherished, the republic that had seemingly secured so many benefits for all Americans. Such a concern for the security of the republic was manifested in many ways, against many different targets. Richard Latner has suggested that it was such a view that led Andrew Jackson to take the stand he adopted against the Nullifiers of South Carolina, convinced that their main aim was to destroy the republic and to set up their own form of government.18 Similarly the opposing political parties saw in their rivals seeds of political danger which threatened the safety of the American republic. Howe has noted that the "fear of various kinds of conspiracies against the commonweal was both pervasive and genuine among Americans during this period." It drew upon a respectable history of similar thought, taking in Burr's plot,
the Hartford Convention, and other, more subtle forms of danger, and was really a natural part of the political thought of parties influenced by their American predecessors and their English forerunners before that. "The fear of conspiracy," concludes Howe, "was the final elaboration of the concept of corruption and declension in a republic that had first taken shape in classical antiquity and had been transmitted to the Americans by the commonwealths."\(^{19}\)

The two parties of the Jacksonian era drew upon this "country" tradition in different ways, adopting two of its major strands. For the Whigs, with their distrust of the ability of the people to control their passions, the main threat was from a demagogic executive, who would appeal to the lower natures of the people to sweep away all that was well-ordered in American society. Described by Whigs as the "American Caesar," Andrew Jackson appeared ideally cast for this role, with his military background and largely popular appeal. His actions only seemed to reinforce Whig fears, and they accused him of stirring upon the worst passions in human nature by means of his message vetoing the renewal of the charter of the Bank of the United States. His other vetoes, and the manner in which he oversaw the operation removing future government deposits from the care of the Bank, only seemed to confirm Jackson as an overpowerful, dangerous executive, whose actions would bring about anarchy and eventually a monarchy.

That Ohio Democrats also perceived a threat to their republican institutions can be seen in their warnings to be vigilant and to reinforce the better elements of this government while possible. As early as 1824 the \textit{Cincinnati Advertiser} warned that it was "corruption
alone that people have to fear," and that the people would have to
watch its progress by "slow and secret means" with a "greater degree of
circumspection." Denying the open attempts to subvert the government
would be successful, the Advertiser predicted that "the secret workings
of corruption will effect those purposes with a greater degree of
certainty, and is the only mode by which designing, ambitious or
avaricious men, under a republican government, can effect them."20 "A
prudent foresight and vigilant regard for the causes of humanity,"

stated acting governor Thomas Bartley, "teach us the importance of
availing ourselves of the opportunity afforded, at a time of peace and
poverty, to strengthen and fortify the foundations upon which the
fabric of our liberties rests, and to erect barriers against those
evils which may at any time in future endanger the purity or
permanency of our free institutions."21

The source of these "evils," as perceived by the Democrats, was
consistent with their view of the importance of the people in
government. Viewing humanity as essentially virtuous, and the only
possible danger lurking in a vicious minority, their fear was that
minority would subvert the republic for its own ends. Governor Robert
Lucas warned that "history furnishes us with abundant proof of the
tendency of Governments to withdraw power from the many, and to
concentrate it in a few, and by this operation many of the ancient
governments, that were the most liberal in their origin, finally
terminated in monarchy."22 Calling Democrats to their State nominating
convention, the Democratic Standard reminded them to remember "that
'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'—that it requires a watchful eye and concert of action to maintain that power, which, without our jealous guard, would be consistently stealing from the many to the few."23 The Ohio Eagle, recalling the memory of Jackson and his efforts against this evil, called on Democrats to keep up his work: "Now that the hoary headed veteran has retired to the Hermitage, will you slack your efforts, and suffer the enemy to conquer and rule over you? If you do, bitter will be the galling chain of tyranny the aristocracy will forge for your necks; and loud and deep will be the lamentations of your children over the day when their fathers so disregarded their civil liberty, from which nothing short of a Revolution requiring the spirit and sacrifices of '76 will ever extricate them."24

The term "aristocracy" had an especially evocative ring for Democrats of the Jacksonian party. It did not mean so much an aristocracy of wealth or of inheritance, but rather it denoted the manner in which the status "aristocrat" was attained. Moses Dawson put it succinctly when he noted that "it is not wealth that makes the aristocrat." Rather, no capitalist with riches was an aristocrat unless "he had some exclusive privilege granted to him by the legislature."25 In other words, monopoly rights as granted in bank charters and improvements contracts, as well as the aid given to manufacturers by a protective tariff, were deemed as creating an aristocracy, something which would explain in part the hostility of the Democrats to such measures. Van Buren denounced such grants as against the very principles of republican government: "It [the Constitution]
was established to give security to us all in our lawful and honorable pursuits, under the lasting safeguard of republican institutions. It was not intended to confer special favors on individuals or on any classes of them, to create systems of agriculture, manufactures, or trade, or to engage in them either separately or in connection with individual citizens or organized associations."26

Part of the horror of such developments was the harmful effect that it could have on the people, both in material terms and in terms of their civil freedom. The Whigs were branded as the party which verged "toward a government strong in the hands of a few at the expense of the many—in favor of monopolies and all other exclusive privileges," while the Democrats saw themselves as the "honest laboring class of the country," opposing measures leading to distinctions in society.27 Examples of the results of such dangerous developments in the past were put forward as a warning to Ohioans: "Monopoly and privilege are the constituents of Tyranny. They are as faithful in a Republic as a Monarchy. Already we have so much of both as to produce some evil and threaten more. Monopoly and privilege have given England a luxurious aristocracy and a starving people.—The same causes will produce the same effects here..."28

However, perhaps more urgent in Democratic warnings was the potential danger posed by an aristocracy of privilege to the workings of republican government. The editor of the Democratic Standard signed with relief at Democratic victories in local elections in 1841 since it brought to an end domination of the government by a "privileged aristocracy of bankers," who "had set themselves above all laws, and
set an example of swindling and dishonesty which threatened to displace all principles of honesty and virtue, and to involve the country in a state of anarchy."29 Referring specifically to plans to charter another national bank, the State convention of 1844 declared such an institution to be "contrary to the spirit and design of our whole system of government." Not only did it confer exclusive privileges upon a few, but it transferred management of the government revenues to hands not amenable to the people, thereby "virtually conveying away the control of the government itself through its finances, from those to whose charge it was committed by the Constitution, to others not known to the Constitution nor responsible to the people." In effect a national bank was a "government within a government, well calculated to obtain command over and thus to supersede the government of the Constitution established by the states and the people."30 The Ohio Eagle was even more pessimistic, proclaiming that the continuation of the Whig administration would terminate "in an unconquerable MONARCHY."31

It became standard Democratic practice to portray the first half century of American history in terms of this struggle between groups attempting to overthrow the Republic for the benefit of a privileged aristocracy, and those committed to prevent such a development. Van Buren, in his Inquiry into the Origin and Course of Political Parties in the United States, saw a conflict between the broad schools of the Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian traditions, the first represented in the Republican party and its ideological successors the Jacksonian Democrats, the second in the Federalists, National Republicans and Whigs.32 In his "Autobiography" also, Van Buren portrayed a similar
struggle: while the "majority of the People... had again and again, and on every occasion since those differences of opinion [between Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian lines of thought] had been distinctly disclosed, decided them in favor of the Republican creed," problems had occurred when the United States came under the "criminal influence" of the Bank. Such had been that "influence" that James Monroe, a Virginian President, had approved of measures requiring broad construction of the Constitution, "one of the most ultra, and in practice, likely to be one of the most dangerous principles ever advocated by Alexander Hamilton." However, not even the "selfish schemes and intrigues and immoral influences... which could be set in motion and brought to bear under the auspices of the Money Powers of both Countries [U.S. & G.B.] could resist the wide spread and deep seated popularity of Jackson." Jackson had arrived as the candidate of a Democratic party which spoke in terms of a body of constitutional and republican principles "identical with that zealously insisted upon by the early republicans..."33

Ohio Democrats saw a similar continuity in the struggle between the forces of privilege and the people of the United States, and recognized their role in the fight to secure the eventual victory of the latter group. Moses Dawson pointed to the National Republicans in 1832 as the successors of the Federalists, who wanted a monarchy or at the very least a stronger central government of "assumed and constructive powers." Two years later he pushed the analogy even further back, tracing the Whigs back through the National Republicans, the Federalists, the Tories, to the Loyalists of the revolutionary era.
They were the "party in this country who have always been hostile to the very principles of civil liberty, and who are monarchists in heart, give every opposition in their power to the democratic principles of our Government."34 The Democrats on the other hand were the "great mass of the people--farmers, mechanics and laboring men.... They are the original republicans—the friends of democratic government, as contra-distinguished from those who have always aimed to wrest it for their own personal aggrandizement."35 Robert Lucas, accepting the nomination of his party for the gubernatorial election of 1834, stated most clearly the continuity of purpose: "My motto has ever been, principles, measures and men that will carry principles and measures into effect—and you may rest assured, that whatever may be my station or situation in life, you will always find me in the ranks of Democracy, supporting the principles and measures, that were professed and acted upon in the administration of a Jefferson, a Madison, and a Jackson, and such men as will carry their principles and measures into effect."36

Apart from maintaining a vigilant eye on the progress of corruption and the advance of privileged aristocracy, what were those measures and principles available to the Democrats in their struggle to maintain the republic against the dangers they saw confronting it? Obviously conditions had to be guaranteed to prevent the possibility of a vicious minority coming to attain an undue influence in American politics. The spearhead of this effort would clearly be in the various legislative bodies which granted charters to banks and other incorporated bodies, and which on the national level secured a
protective tariff for the benefit of manufacturers. But such was the power of the opposition already that it was feared their corrupt activities would outweigh the peoples' virtue and bring government bodies under the management of the very "aristocracy" the Democrats were trying to beat down. So it was then that popular virtue and its maintenance against the efforts of a vicious minority to corrupt it became a primary focus of Democratic concern. Such an approach was hardly surprising in light of the Democrats' devotion to the place of the people in government. It would lead them into stances in favor of education and a particular form of economic development favorable to the maintenance of a virtuous majority, just as the Republican party of old had had its distinctive political economy.

On March 4, 1837 the outgoing President and his successor both noted the importance of the people and the maintenance of their principles to the continued success and security of the American form of government. Jackson warned that "no free government can stand without virtue in the people and a lofty spirit of patriotism," and that "if the sordid feelings of mere selfishness shall usurp the place which ought to be filled by public spirit, the legislation of Congress will soon be converted into a scramble for personal and sectional advantages." Van Buren put a similar stress on the importance of the people to the perpetuity of American institutions. That perpetuity depended on "ourselves; . . . if we maintain the principles on which they were established, they are destined to confer their benefits on countless generations yet to come, and . . . America will present to every friend of mankind the cheering proof that a popular government,
wisely formed, is wanting in no element of endurance or strength.\textsuperscript{39}

Once again Ohio Democrats had been expressing similar faith in the virtue of the people for some time. Calling on Ohioans to overturn the "corrupt" administration of John Quincy Adams in 1828's presidential election, the \textit{Western Telegraph} of Hamilton rejoiced in the fact that the "American people are noble in their principles, disinterested in their feelings, wise in the affairs of their government, and conscientiously scrupulous that they be governed by virtue, and their rulers by the strictest integrity in their acts."\textsuperscript{40} Twelve years later Governor Wilson Shannon expressed similar views, asserting that "our free institutions can only be preserved and perpetuated by a virtuous, intelligent and uncorrupted people,"\textsuperscript{41} and in so doing he outlined two of the major areas of concern for Democratic policy, educating the people, and ensuring that virtue was maintained against corrupt forces.

Education was an area which both Whigs and Democrats alike wished to stress, especially in claims to improve the moral character of the people. However, Democrats, in appealing for improvements in education, did refer specifically to their hopes that it would improve the chances of a citizenry suitable for the maintenance of the republic. In calling for an establishment in which to train teachers, the \textit{Cincinnati Advertiser} made a telling juxtaposition of the two themes: with education a moral revolution would be effected and "ignorance [would] be banished, and our glorious republican institutions perpetuated."\textsuperscript{42} The \textit{Western Telegraph} was even more specific in its linking of the need for education and the danger to liberty: "Our Government being founded upon the virtue and
intelligence of the people, it is absolutely necessary in order to perpetuate it, that the benefits of education should be extended to all. An unlearned, uneducated people never can be free—their own ignorance forged their fetters." And once more, Governor Shannon put the problem into the context of what he perceived to be the party battle of the 1830s: "If we expect to avoid the fate of other republics in times past, and preserve our free institutions from the inroads of despotism and the selfish ambition of the designing few, we must foster and cherish the means of general instruction."44

However, the Democrats considered education as neither a sole nor a sure means to attaining the virtuous citizenry which would uphold the principles and security of the republic. Not only was it conceded that an uneducated people were likely to fall prey to the corrupt designs of the vicious minority, but there was also a chance that even educated people could still be "enslaved" by the nature of their economic occupation. So it was then the Democrats, like the Republicans before them, sought to encourage those occupations that they considered most conducive to the maintenance of virtue, and, again like the Republicans, it was to the rural lifestyle of the farmer that they turned. As Jackson stated in his first annual message: "The agricultural interest of our country is so essentially connected with every other and so superior in importance to them all that it is scarcely necessary to invite it your particular attention." Manufactures and commerce were worthy of encouragement, principally because they tended to "increase the value of agricultural productions and to extend their application to the wants and comforts of society."
Van Buren reiterated the practical theme that farming was the basis of all society, since it produced the means of subsistence: "No means of individual comfort is more certain and no source of national prosperity is so sure. Nothing can compensate a people for a dependence upon others for the bread they eat, and that cheerful abundance on which the happiness of everyone so much depends is to be looked for nowhere with such reliance as in the industry of the agriculturalist and the bounties of the earth." But it was Jackson, hoping for a land policy allowing quick settlement of western lands, who stressed the importance of the farmer to the republic. "The wealth and strength of a country are its population, and the best part of that population are the cultivators of the soil. Independent farmers are everywhere the basis of society and the true friends of liberty."

Democratic rhetoric in Ohio reveals similar explanations of the prime importance of agriculture for the security of the American republic. Following lines of thought traceable to the Physiocrats and Adam Smith, agriculture was described as the "foundation of wealth." While the sea did produce some bounty," the earth presents to skill and industry richer and infinitely varied contributions." Manufacturing and commerce might flourish, but it was only because they dealt in the products of agriculture, and to a large extent also the government relied for its revenues upon the fruits of farmers. In other words, "agriculture only can be considered the creator of wealth. The merchant, the manufacturer, the sailor, the various artisans perform their part in making the products of agriculture more valuable; ... but agriculture alone produces."
The position of agriculture as the only natural source of wealth was also described by two articles which cleverly used terms of a less favored occupation to explain their points. Under the headings "BANKS the Democratic Standard asserted that "the best bank ever yet known is a bank of earth—it never refuses to discount to honest labor; and the best share is the plough-share, on which dividends are always liberal."49 The Ohio Eagle celebrated an abundant crop being reaped from "the great Mother Bank—the Earth," and ventured to predict that "this old institution will soon show herself to be the best and the only safe regulator of the currency and exchanges that can be relied upon," whereas other banks made dividends to only one part of the community, while robbing the rest, the earth was a "bank whose dividends are disposed to all agreeable to their several necessities."50

But it was not just as the producer of natural wealth on which all other classes depended for their subsistence, that agriculture was decreed so important. The occupation itself, if pursued with strict attention, allowed the farmer to "live more independent than any other person. For he can raise all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life within his own dominions."51 It was this independence which was deemed so important a part of the farmer's lifestyle by the Democrats, as it had been by the Republicans before them, because an independent people was just what was needed to counter the efforts of a privileged aristocracy to gain undue influence within the community. "FARMERS!—what a world of independence there is in the word itself!"

The Ohio Eagle continued: "They are neither to be coerced into
submission nor beggared into servility by the rag barons! . . . The machinery of political traffickers is powerless to turn them from the honest course of their prosperity and their principles.—Oppressed and injured for a season they may be, but tarnished in spirit and moulded to the evil designs of the oppressor—never!" In conclusion, the paper noted that farmers were the "stay of the country in war—its support in peace—its spring, soul, and strength at all times."52

Alongside favor for the agricultural class came hostility to those elements in society which contributed less real wealth. The old contempt for speculators, bankers and beneficiaries of public debts had not worn off since the Jeffersonian era, and such classes came to be equated with the "privileged aristocracy" in opposition to which the Democrats had portrayed themselves. What is more, Democrats feared that the spirit of speculation was catching, and would divert the rest of society from its true pursuits. Once again both Jackson and Van Buren gave a firm lead, the former denouncing the "spirit of speculation" as "injurious to the habits and character of the people." This spirit threatened "to pervade all classes of society and to withdraw their attention from the sober pursuits of honest industry."53 Van Buren repeated the point in his message to the Special Session of Congress in 1837, convened to deal with increasing financial distress: speculation had the effect of causing a "rapid growth among all classes, and especially in our great commercial towns, of luxurious habits founded too often on merely fancied wealth, and detrimental alike to the industry, the resources, and the morals of our people."54

Ohio Democrats' rhetoric reflected this unsympathetic picture of
the man who lived off financial transactions. Money itself was a major problem, in that it did not represent a real form of wealth, and therefore was not productive in nature. Instead "money, coupled with power and influence, has a corrupting and demoralizing tendency on the human mind...."55 As a result men involved in banking and other financial affairs could hardly avoid the labels applied to their type, such as "rag barons" and "shavers." The Little Magician, the campaign newspaper produced by the editor of the Ohio Eagle, dubbed the bank director as "a drunken, debauched, villainous or depraved gambler... who is destitute of property, of moral character, common honesty and common decency."56 The Eagle itself, several years later, noted that living on the profits of "Bank paper making" was "grossly immoral in its causes and effects." Modern banking was described as "fraud"; it "lives on fraud—begets and prospers fraud—and ends in fraud."

Part of the immorality implicit in banking was the effect it had on other elements of the community. Given that nothing could add to the nation's wealth other than labor, if the rich, who in Democratic eyes did not "labor," got richer, then it had to be "by reaping the benefit of the labor of others." The Eagle concluded that it would be more proper to say that the "rich got richer by the labor of the poor."57 Nor was the immorality of this the only cause for concern for Democrats, as they saw it as a sign of a dangerous degree of influence being exercised by the few over the many, an influence increased by the effects of speculation. The boom in paper money in the 1830s was to blame for "thousands of the well doing class of the community" being "seduced from their regular associations, which yielded a certain and
abundant reward to labor and economy—to embark in ruinous and uncertain speculations only calculated to delude, to demoralize and yield a harvest of disappointment, of bankruptcy, and of blighted hopes." Bankruptcy was a form of influence and, it was feared, would be used as a means of political pressure on those who labored under its effects.58

If bankruptcy represented one of the ways in which privileged few might gain undue influence over the virtuous citizenry, thereby constituting a potential threat to republican principles and government, then manufacturing labor was seen as an even more dangerous trend towards dependency. However, just as Democratic possession of views favoring the farmer over other forms of economic occupation was second-hand, so they inherited their opinions of manufacturing labor from their Jeffersonian antecedents. The Jeffersonian Republican view of manufacturing labor, as mentioned above,59 had been adapted under the pressure of economic reality and the failure to secure certain overseas markets for agricultural surpluses. It would be this adapted view that Jacksonian Democrats would inherit, but they in turn would modify it, as manufacturing employers came to be associated in the minds of Democrats with the "privileged aristocracy," and as the conditions of manufacturing labor seemed to reach the level unacceptable to a party concerned with maintaining an independent producing class. While leaving an analysis of how this change of view affected Democratic attitudes toward a protective tariff, especially in the 1840s, to a later chapter,60 it will be helpful at this stage to show the general terms in which they viewed manufacturing labor and its
role within a virtuous republic

Ohio Democratic rhetoric at first followed the modified Republican view of manufacturing labor, seeing not only farmers but all industrious workers as important producers of wealth and bastions of free institutions. Robert Lucas noted the importance of "the skill, and enterprise" of American people: "as a general rule, we may always estimate the prosperity of a country by the condition of the working or productive class, which is the bone and sinew of community. When this class is oppressed, improvement languishes, when prosperous, the country will flourish, and every other class of community will partake of their prosperity."61 For Moses Dawson, "the cultivator of the soil and the manufacturer [were] the only producers of real wealth," and he saw in the very process of their work much to be praised: "Honest labor is honorable—Among the encouraging prospects that our nation is destined to lasting prosperity, and to the perpetual enjoyment of liberty and independence, is increasing honor attached to domestic industry."62 The Castigator would have agreed, asserting that "in no point of science, moral virtue, and even practical politeness, the operative mechanics of the United States of America are second to no class of people."63

The virtue of the producing classes had great implications for the Democratic struggle against the "privileged few" and for the success of the republican form of government. "Farmers and Mechanics . . . are the grand pillars of the nation—th3y support themselves and government by the industry of their own hands." But more importantly they were "unacquainted with the chicanery of politics," and they
wished not for "titles or distinctions," pitying the slaves of tyranny, and detesting monarchs of every description.64 The farmers and industrious laborers "cannot be seduced by the promises of a corrupt aristocracy," an essential quality if they were to help withstand the dangers of the "privileged few" to the government.65 As such the producing classes were "at once the very cradle of liberty, and the nourishment of freedom," and therefore could be relied upon for the preservation of free institutions.66

However, while praising the producing classes for their virtue, Ohio Democrats recognized the danger of their position and, in the 1840s especially, realized that conditions were conspiring to produce a situation fraught with problems for the chances of a republic based upon a virtuous laboring class. Concern over this development would manifest itself in attempts to protect the laboring classes and to prevent their employers from winning unfair privileges by means of the protective tariff. The history of the English working class seemed to point out the dangers of manufacturing labor most explicitly. Concerned to free American labor from the "oppressive exactions of concentrated capital, and incorporated monopoly," the Ohio Eagle explained how the "condition of the laborers of England and some parts of this country, admonish us that the slavery of poverty, which is the effect of unjust legislation, is the most degrading servitude known to man."67 And conditions seemed likely to gravitate toward a similar development in the rest of the United States, unless great care was taken. Acting Governor Thomas Bartley warned that in future, "when overburdened by a dense population," it would be "far more difficult,
if not utterly impracticable" to "stay the inroads of corruption, and provide securities against the dangerous devices and machinations of ambition and cupidity."68 For the Ohio Eagle, the political implications of this were clear as early as the 1840 election. Referring to "the tyranny of employers over the laboring classes," the Eagle warned that a "COMBINATION among monied men, merchants and other employees... of the Federal party, exists,... the intention and effect of which is to deprive every Democratic laborer of employment, and reduce him to poverty and starvation, unless he will barter away his principles."69 It was just such influence over the American people that the Democrats feared would subvert their ideal Republic, as a privileged group seemed likely to force their way into power and use the government for their own corrupt purposes.

It can be seen, therefore, that in their rhetoric the Democrats drew heavily on theories inherited from the Jeffersonian Republicans, appealing to the people to safeguard their republican institutions against the encroachments of a corrupt and corrupting "privileged aristocracy," which was seeking to subvert the Republic for its own material ends. To counter this threat the Democrats placed their trust in a virtuous, intelligent citizenry, while charging that their opponents were far removed from the interests of the American people. Not surprisingly for a party steeped in Jeffersonian views on virtue, and on the primacy of the agricultural class as the upholders of this virtue, the Democrats appealed in particular to the need to maintain a viable farming class. While inheriting a similar faith in the virtue of other producing classes, the Democrats recognized the same potential
dangers of manufacturing as the Jeffersonian Republicans, especially as
the conditions liable to realize those dangers seemed closer to
fulfillment. As the population grew, the balance between agricultural
and manufacturing labor seemed in jeopardy, with the result that a
servile laboring class, dependent on their employers for their
livelihood, might emerge, a class that threatened the very basis of
republican institutions, in Democratic eyes.

In stating the above view, it is not to be suggested that National
Republicans and Whigs could not share in some of their features, and
this would be foolish in light of their common inheritance from the
Republican party. The "American System" of protective tariffs and
internal improvements was indeed intended to create a mixed economy,
aiding Western farmers as well as Eastern manufacturers, and important
Whigs could express similar sympathies with the position of the farmer
as a custodian of moral values and with small town life, both being
preferable to overcrowded, corrupt cities. Indeed Nicholas Biddle,
later regarded as the arch-enemy of the Democrats and as the leader of
the privileged few, in 1822 spoke in these terms, to the Philadelphia
Agricultural Society:

The American farmer is the exclusive, absolute,
uncontrolled proprietor of the soil. His tenure
is from the government; the government derives its
power from him... His pursuits, which no person
can render injurious to any, are directed to the
common benefit of all.... His character assumes
a loftier interest by its influence over the public
liberty. It may not be foretold to what dangers
this country is destined, when its swelling population,
its expanding territory, its daily complicating
interests, shall awaken the latent passions of men
and reveal the vulnerable point of institutions. But
whenever these perils come, its most steadfast security,
its unfailing reliance will be on that column of landed
proprietors—standing aloof from the passions which influence denser communities—well educated, brave and independent—the friends of the government, without soliciting its favors.71

However, it can not be denied that Whigs were more able to reconcile their views with economic development and the growth in technology. Indeed, Howe has noted that industrial capitalism "was the high point of civilization from the Whig point of view."72 Not only did it show the triumph of progress, but it also served to reinforce the social hierarchy which they regarded as necessary to enforce their cultural and moral order.

Such a view of the world and its "progress" was unlikely to be shared by the Democrats, especially if the Whigs attempted to promote it by methods of exclusive privileges. Democratic rhetoric is filled with a harking back to simpler, less developed times, with farming as the best way to happiness. "Agriculture has justly been styled the natural employment of men, and happy would it be for the community, if more would in this respect, as in every other, follow nature, the unerring guide of truth." The Monitor continued: "Then, instead of cities being crowded with melancholy and disappointed speculators, every part of the country would smile under the hand of industry, and be filled with a healthful and happy population."73 In denying the need for exclusive privileges, the Newark Advocate expressed similar feelings: "It is to mother Earth that we must look for sustenance and support. All we have to do is cultivate her good will and she will do more for us than all the office-holders in the world can. Let us all .

.. return to the simple and economical habits of our revolutionary
ancestors, and take stock in the Bank of Earth, and all will be
well."74 Seeing dangers in economic developments in the 1830s the

Western Telegraph noted that

in proportion to our population, too many leave the
occupation of the agriculturist for other employment.
If this arise from its being considered that the
employment of the farmer is not respectable, it is
a great mistake.... This is an employment
instituted by God himself, and by him particularly
owned and blest. It is that on which everything
depends. True it is laborious; but then labor
brings health, is the foundation of the farmer, is
the condition of independence, his little dominion
is his own, his comforts are his own and he is not
at the mercy of the public whim and caprice.75

How far the logic of this rhetoric was carried into practical policies,
and how the rhetoric of the threat to the republic was maintained in
justifying those policies, will now be examined.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III


2"Farewell Address," James D. Richardson (Comp.), Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 20 vols. (New York, 1897), 4: 1513.

3Georgetown Castigator, 5 January 1835.

4Hamilton Telegraph, 12 July 1838.

5Georgetown Democratic Standard, 25 February 1845.


7Democratic Standard, 27 August 1840.

8Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention, · · · including an Address to the People of Ohio (Columbus, 1842), p. 6.

9Columbus Ohio Monitor, 1 December 1827.

10Ibid., 12 November 1828.

11Cincinnati Advertiser, 9 July 1836.

12Lancaster Ohio Eagle, 17 November 1838.

13Democratic Standard, 15 November 1842, 24 October 1843.

14Hamilton Western Telegraph, 26 January 1838.

15Ohio Eagle, 16 June 1842.

16Howe, American Whigs, especially p. 23-42.


19Howe, American Whigs, p. 79.
20Cincinnati Advertiser, 28 January 1824.

21"Message," 3 December 1844, Ohio Executive Documents, Reports, including Messages and other Communications made to the General Assembly of the State of Ohio (Columbus, 1836- ), 9 (1844): Document No. 1, p. 7.


23Democratic Standard, 28 December 1841.

24Ohio Eagle, 5 June 1841.

25Cincinnati Advertiser, 19 January 1839.

26"Special Session Message," 4 September 1837, Richardson, Messages and Papers, 4: 1561.

27Georgetown Castigator, 16 November 1835.

28Democratic Standard, 16 November 1841.

29Ibid., 26 October 1841.


31Ohio Eagle, 9 May 1841.


34Cincinnati Advertiser, 7 January 1832, 30 April 1834.
35Ohio Eagle, 22 June 1839.


37See Chapters 4 and 5 for Democratic comment on these efforts.

38"Farewell Address," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 4: 1517.


40Western Telegraph, 31 October 1828.

41"2nd Annual Message," Ohio Executive Documents, 5 (1840):

Document No. 1, p. 7.

42Cincinnati Advertiser, 27 July 1833.

43Western Telegraph, 26 January 1839.

44"1st Annual Message," Ohio Executive Documents, 4 (1839):

Document No. 1, p. 4.


48West Union Adams County Democrat, 10 May 1840.

49Democratic Standard, 20 October 1840.

50Ohio Eagle, 7 July 1842.

51Ohio Monitor, 11 May 1822.

52Ohio Eagle, 21 July 1838.

53"Farewell Address," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 4: 1521.

54"Special Session Message," Ibid., 4: 1543.


56Lancaster Little Magician, 15 July 1840.
Ohio Eagle, 24 June 1847.

Hillsborough Gazette, 11 November 1842.

See Chapter 2.

See Chapter 5.


Cincinnati Advertiser, 4 March 1839, 12 April 1823.

Georgetown Castigator, 23 February 1835.

Marietta and Washington County Pilot, 11 October 1828.

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See Howe, American Whigs, on Henry Carey and other Whigs, pp. 115-6.

Cited in Newark Advocate, 12 September 1822.

Howe, American Whigs, p. 102.

Ohio Monitor, 6 January 1831.

Newark Advocate, 27 August 1842.

Western Telegraph, 16 March 1838.
CHAPTER IV
OHIO DEMOCRATS AND THE BANK WAR

The central importance of the banking issue for the politics of the Jacksonian era would now hardly be denied. Even taking account of the problems of the Nullification Crisis and the re-awakening of the slavery question, the problem of Indian removal, and the emergence of various reform efforts in the period, the banking question stands as the major issue between parties in the 1830s and 1840s, both on national and state levels. Even those historians who do not regard the banking issue among other economic problems as the major determinant of party lines, are forced to recognize the importance of the Bank War within the context of their own interpretations. Hence, Arthur Schlesinger, writing in the fiercely anti-business atmosphere of the New Deal era, saw the attack on the Bank as inspired by eastern labor groups striving to correct the worst excesses of an industrial society being promoted by the business elite of their day, using the rhetoric of the Jeffersonian Republicans in the process. Other historians have seen the growth of presidential power as the most important development of the Jacksonian era, yet they too see the attack on the Bank as an essential part in the build-up of this power. Certainly Whig fears of the danger of an over-powerful executive, and their reaction to Jackson's use of the veto power and the manner in which he executed the removal of the deposits, gives some credence to such a view. Even the ethnocultural historians, while usually denying the real importance of economic issues to the formation of party lines, have been forced to accommodate the Bank War in their interpretations. Notable among these
has been Stephen Fox, who, seeing party divisions as a response to ideas of "political reform," identifies the rise of the Whig party as that of men committed to "anti-party" ideals, who frowned on Jackson's use of the bank issue as a party determinant and means of enforcing party regularity.\footnote{3}

While other historians agree on placing the bank question at the very heart of the party battles of the 1830s and 1840s, there has continued to be disagreement as to the sources of that split. The liberal consensus school, headed by Joseph Dorfman and Richard Hofstadter, saw in Jackson's attack on the Bank the victory of liberal capitalist economics, with the triumph of laissez-faire theories. While admitting that Jackson's politics "chiefly resembled agrarian Republicanism of the old school," Hofstadter stresses that the Jacksonian movement "grew out of expanding opportunities and a common desire to enlarge these opportunities still further by removing restrictions and privileges that had their origin in acts of government." In effect, "it was essentially a movement of laissez-faire, an attempt to divorce government and business."\footnote{4} Dealing specifically with the problem of banking, Bray Hammond added a degree of sophistication to this view, by suggesting that while Jackson himself was firmly in the tradition of the Jeffersonian Republican school, hostile to banks and commercial development, others made use of his leadership and rhetoric to promote causes that were "not peculiarly agrarian". Indeed Jackson, while being manipulated, mainly by Van Buren, the representative of New York city bankers anxious to break the monopoly of the Bank of the United States, "did not understand what was happening." In conclusion Hammond
saw the Jacksonian revolution as "the conquest of the economy by . . . self-made men," while the attack on the Bank was produced by their intolerance of restraint upon their use of bank credit.\textsuperscript{5}

This view has been challenged both in its overall concept and on the fine points of detail. While it has been suggested that laissez-faire policies were just what rational American businessmen did not want in the first half of the Nineteenth century, government aid being seen as essential for the development of a viable commercial economy, the work of John McFaul and Frank Gatell has revealed evidence which undermines Hammond's argument. Jackson was not a president to be manipulated by others, and even if he had been Van Buren was not among his closest advisers in the period leading up to the initial attack on the Bank. What is more, Van Buren was not the representative of the New York city bankers, but rather came from upcountry New York, where very different attitudes toward banking existed.\textsuperscript{6} McFaul reveals that after the Bank Veto, state banks showed much more enthusiasm for a recharter of the Bank, or for a new institution completely, than for a maintenance of freedom from BUS regulation, especially as Democratic administrations became more hostile to banks in general in the later 1830s.\textsuperscript{7} He paints a much more straightforward picture of the party division, Whigs being in favor of banking in all its forms, from a national bank to a state bank, while Democrats were generally hostile to banks, although the policies resulting from this hostility might differ from Democrat to Democrat: "soft" Democrats tended to call for regulation of banks, or free banking, divorcing banking from government agencies completely; "hards" attempted to abolish banking altogether.
For McFaul the Democratic attack on banks represented part of a moral crusade, as they sensed that "the quickened tempo of economic change somehow violated Calvinist loyalties to hard work, thrift and duty."8

Recent studies utilizing impressionistic evidence and more sophisticated roll-call analysis have strengthened this view of a dichotomy between the Whigs and Democrats on the banking issue, and this has been shown to be the case for the State of Ohio as well. Indeed, most works suggest that it was in the Northwest that the banking issue produced party conflict of the most virulent and long-lasting nature, with party lines being pretty firmly maintained, especially as the banking issue became more strictly defined in the course of the 1830s. Therefore while Ohio Democrats in Congress supported the 1832 Bank recharter, by 1833 they were giving their support to Jackson's attack on the Bank and his removal of the deposits. Again, in 1832-3 some Democrats suggested a state bank to replace the BUS as a regulating force over local banks, and to forestall calls for a renewal of the BUS, yet by the end of the 1830s such an institution had been rejected as a potentially dangerous body, and Democrats could unite in their condemnation of the Whig-inspired system of state banking of 1845. On the question of local banks it tended to be Whigs who pushed for incorporation of new ones, while Democrats attempted to block these efforts and to enforce reforms on those already in existence. These attempts culminated in the Latham Law of 1842 which was so restrictive in its terms that it would effectively prohibit banking in the state, foreshadowing the later Democratic attempt to prohibit all banking at the Constitutional Convention of 1850. James Sharp has concluded that
in Ohio the Democratic party "viewed itself as basically anti-bank or
hard money, and this became the test of party regularity."9

Having established that the banking issue was indeed the one which
caus[ed] party division in the Jacksonian era, between groups generally
in favor of banking and those hostile to it, this does not help to
explain the sources of Democratic party hostility to banks in general.
To understand why Democrats won the support they did, would require
knowledge of party motivation beyond our reach. However, attempts can
and have been made to assess what appeal Democratic rhetoric had for
the electorate, these efforts being headed by Marvin Meyers. While
other interpretations saw rhetoric as a cover for less obvious sources
of the attack on the Bank, Meyers saw in the rhetoric itself something
of special appeal. Accepting a view of American society as essentially
entrepreneurial in nature, with men seeking economic success and
influenced by motives of greed, extravagance and self-interest, Meyers
suggests that many Americans felt their activities incompatible with
earlier ideals of the Republic, most notably the Jeffersonian worship
of pure, simple agrarian values. Jackson's veto message, utilizing
language influenced by Jeffersonian thought, presented the Bank as a
scapegoat for guilty American consciences. The Jacksonians "blamed the
Bank for the transgressions committed by the people of their era
against the political, social, and economic values of the Old
Republic." The anti-bank movement was "a way to damn the unfamiliar,
threatening, sometimes punishing elements in the changing order by
fixing guilt upon a single protean agent." Challenging the liberal
capitalist view that Jacksonian rhetoric was consciously laissez-faire
in its message, Meyers states that the "liberalism of Jackson's message did not communicate a liberating purpose; there was no vision of a fresh creation at the western edge of civilization, certainly no dream of enterprise unbound. The rule of equal liberty served to condemn the aristocracy of privilege for sapping republican political institutions."\textsuperscript{10}

However, such an interpretation has been questioned as failing to establish why two parties emerged, other than implying that some elements might not have such guilty consciences as others. It has been left to other historians to suggest a more material basis for the division into parties more or less affected by Jacksonian rhetoric. Some suggest that those areas most commercially developed, where property values were higher and which were better served by improvement projects, were more likely to be Whig in political stance, while areas apart from the mainstream economic life, involved in basic subsistence agriculture and a barter-style of trade (therefore having less need for banking facilities) tended to be Democratic.\textsuperscript{11} William Shade and Donald Ratcliffe have suggested that political affiliations need not depend directly upon present-day economic interests and lifestyle, but might rather reflect a "political culture," determined by social and economic position, ethnic and moral concerns, and personal experience.\textsuperscript{12} It is in this light that the Panic of 1819 can be seen to be of crucial importance for the formation of attitudes toward monetary institutions in general and the HS in particular. Its influence of the 1824 election has been revealed, with Clay's candidacy being harmed in areas such as Cincinnati and its surrounds where
economic hardship had been extreme, because Clay had defended the Bank in legal cases against state legislation attempting to tax it.\textsuperscript{13} That such influence might have been transferred to the later Jacksonian attack on the Bank is suggested by the importance of Amos Kendall and Francis Blair as advisers to the President, both of whom had played important roles on behalf of those affected by the Panic, in the Kentucky relief war and "court battle."\textsuperscript{14}

Granted the importance of recognizing that the rhetorical appeal of political parties might not reflect accurately or even shape the behavior of voters, many of whom would never have been able to read the newspapers or have heard speeches of potential candidates or nominating committees, it is suggested that another element, that of the threat to the republic, might in itself have been an important motivating force in Jacksonian politics, as a conscious reaction to a perceived threat, not just a sub-conscious relief of guilt, as Meyers contends. While Democratic rhetoric on the banking issue did not shy from appealing to the more material interests of the voter, such as the effects of paper money and unlimited banking on the economy and prices, considerable room was given to evoking the dangers of a privileged aristocracy, in their influence on the people at large and on the workings of republican government. In the context of Democratic attitudes toward republican government and the place of the people in it, and also of the Democratic presentation of the Whig view of such elements, it might not be unrealistic to regard such rhetoric in itself as a motivating force behind Democratic voters, appealing to strongly-held beliefs as part of their political culture.
Jackson's message accompanying his veto of the bill rechartering the Bank of the United States is the most logical place to start an analysis of Democratic anti-bank rhetoric. While latent hostility to the Bank and banks in general did exist in Ohio before 1832, it was really Jackson's veto which put the issue before the American people, and which started the process by which the two main parties' opinions became more sharply defined on the question of banking.

Jackson's earliest statements on the Bank revealed a mixture of dislike and gratitude. In 1829, while pointing out that the "constitutionality and the expediency of the law creating this bank are well questioned by a large population of our fellow-citizens," and proclaiming that "it has failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency," Jackson at the same time could praise the Bank for its "judicious arrangements" in helping to pay off the latest installment of the national debt. In his second message, Jackson again noted the unconstitutional nature of the Bank, proposing an alternative as an agency of the Treasury, with no stockholders, and "no means to operate on the hopes, fears, or interests of large masses of the community." However, it was in the Bank veto message itself that the President first came out strongly against the Bank, and in so doing laid down the lines of argument for opposing any such institution in future. Noting that the proposed charter would produce an institution "subversive of the rights of the States, and dangerous to the liberties of the people," Jackson proceeded to point out the dangerous and political implications of the Bank. Economically, he pointed to the manner in which Bank notes drained from the West to the East, in the
process indebted the western people to the Eastern and foreign stockholders, this constituting a "burden upon their industry and a drain of the currency." What is more the institution was seen as likely to indebted Americans in general to men across the Atlantic in British banking houses, a situation undesirable in economic terms, but also entailing a dangerous degree of political dependence.

Potential dependence on British stockholders was not the only political danger which the Bank charter seemed to represent. For a start it constituted a monopoly, providing a limited few with the bounty of government at the expense of the American people, a circumstance which went against one of the most important of republican principles. To Jackson the preponderance of foreign stockholders was dangerous, not only because of their potential influence over the American economy, but also because, as non-voters, they left control of the Bank in the hands of a few American stockholders, too great a concentration of power for Jackson's liking. This power could be used for political gain or for their more material purposes, and Jackson concluded by pointing out the danger of giving exclusive privileges:

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuitues, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society—the farmers, mechanics, and laborers—who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government.
Throughout Democratic anti-banking rhetoric the dual themes of upsetting economic influence, accompanied by the creation of material dependence, and the threat of a privileged aristocracy, would be combined in the portrayal of a threat to the republican government. Perhaps the most common charge against the Bank, and indeed banking in general, was that it led to speculation, fired by large amounts of paper money. Such "excessive issue of paper" led to "fluctuations in the standard of value which render uncertain the rewards of labor." Speculation was especially dangerous, as it led to dependence on banks, and such was the nature of the financial system that any new bank set up in a remote village was regarded as placing "the business of that village within the influence of the money power in England." What is more it was clear to Jacksonians how this influence would manifest itself: "We deceive ourselves if we suppose that it will ever be found asserting and supporting the rights of the community at large in opposition to the claims of the few." In treating the Bank's political influence Jacksonian rhetoric could be backed up with both evidence from the opposition, and charges of abuses of Bank power. In warning against a failure to re-charter the BUS, its President Nicholas Biddle had boasted of its importance by claiming that it could exert great influence on all other banking institutions and the economy at large. Not surprisingly then, when the economy did take a downturn, most notably in the winter of 1833-34, as Bank officers tried to arouse support against Jackson's removal of the deposits, Democrats cried out against the dangerous influence of the Bank. In justifying his removal policy, Jackson told his Cabinet that
the Bank had been "converted into a vast electioneering engine, which means to embroil the country in deadly feuds, and, under cover of expenditures in themselves improper, extend its corruption through all the ramifications of society." The president saw it as his duty to act against such an influence in politics, "to preserve the morals of the people, the freedom of the press, and the purity of the elective franchise, without which all will unite in saying that the blood and treasure expended by our forefathers in the establishment of our happy system of government will have been vain and fruitless." 21 Four months later Jackson defended his removal policy to Congress, stating that "the question is distinctly presented whether the people of the United States are to govern through representatives chosen by their unbiased suffrages or whether the money and power of a great corporation are to be secretly exerted to influence their judgment and control their decisions." It had to be determined "whether the bank is to have its candidates for all offices in the country, from the highest to the lowest, or whether candidates on both sides of political questions shall be brought forward as heretofore and supplied by the usual means." 22

The final link in the Democratic argument was that connecting the Bank with the idea of a threat to republican government. That such a threat was perceived, or at least was suggested to the people, was clear. While comparing the danger of the political influence of the Bank with whatever economic benefits it might have provided, Jackson desired that "considerations of temporary convenience should be thrown out of the question," and that men "should be influenced by such
motives only as look to the honor and preservation of the republican system."23 The Bank was just one part of a "system at war with the genius of all our institutions—a system founded upon a political creed the fundamental principle of which is a distrust of the popular will as a safe regulator of political power, and whose great ultimate object and inevitable result, should it prevail, is the consolidation of all power in our system in one central government."24 Yet, even in the safe knowledge that the BUS was gone, its charter expired, Jackson still took time in his Farewell address to note the evil consequences which could have occurred, had the people not conquered the Bank: "the Government would have passed from the hands of the many to the hands of the few, and this organized money power from its secret conclave would have dictated the choice of your highest officers and compelled you to make peace or war, as best suited to their own wishes. The forms of your Government might have for a time remained, but its living spirit would have departed from it."25

The attitude of Ohio Democrats towards the Bank and financial institutions in general was clearly inspired by the attacks of leading Jacksonians, but it also reveals what may have been a crucial grass-roots source for Jackson's attack of the Bank in the first place. While Jackson's veto of the re-charter effort may have galvanized the Democratic party around the bank issue, his message did not fall on ears unfamiliar with hostility to banks and the influence of bankers. Deep-seated prejudices were clearly present, the result of past experience, especially from the Panic of 1819, and of inherited political ideals. The rhetoric of Ohio Democrats, both before and
after Jackson's veto message, revealed that banks were regarded as
dangerous institutions, being used by a privileged group of men for
their own benefit, creating unstable economic conditions and conferring
too a great deal of influence on that group within society and the
political system.

The history of the Bank of the United States within Ohio had not
been altogether stable, and indeed its activities leading up to the
Panic of 1819 had brought about a major constitutional crisis between
the Supreme Court and the State, culminating in the case of Osborn vs.
the Bank of the United States. Laboring under the incompetent
management of William Jones, the newly-chartered Bank, including its
two Ohio branches at Chillicothe and Cincinnati, had contributed
greatly to the speculative rage of the years following the War of 1812.
It was with painful effect, therefore, that the Bank reversed its
policies in 1818, contracting its credit and calling on state banks to
redeem their paper notes, so that the Bank itself might have enough
specie to redeem its own notes. The demand on the state banks was too
great, and suspension followed, prostrating much of Ohio's commercial
economy, and leaving many farmers already in debt to the Government for
their lands with no means of meeting their obligations, as attested to
by the numerous newspaper advertisements for sheriff sales. In the
light of this economic disaster, Ohio newspapers portrayed the Bank as
a grasping monster, sailing stocks of western specie down the Ohio
river and draining the State of its wealth. Meanwhile, large amounts
of Cincinnati real estate accrued to the Bank as payments of its
obligations.
Such were the all-pervading effects of this crisis that wholesale opposition to the Bank arose, whether from farmers or businessmen, such as Charles Hammond, and there was little distinction between men who would later split on the banking issue in the 1830s: future Democrats and Whigs combined in the face of economic hardship to condemn the Bank's activities. In the political field these feelings were manifested in attempts to drive the Bank branches out of the State by means of taxing its profits. Initially intending to tax the Bank for revenue, in order to give the State some benefit from the business of the BUS, as it got from that of other banking institutions in the State, the Ohio legislature passed a law in February 1819, ordering the branches to pay a tax of $50,000 each or else withdraw their business from the State, the latter being the option that Ohioans hoped the Bank would take. Such were the lengths to which the Ohio legislators had been driven by the economic distress caused by the Bank, and by their perception of its trying to save itself at the expense of the interests of anybody else. Bolstered by the Supreme Court decision in *McCulloch vs. Maryland* in March 1819, a parallel taxing case, the Bank refused to comply with Ohio's law, forcing Ohio officials to carry out the seizure of the tax from the Chillicothe branch's vaults by force, in contempt of the Court's decision. This placed the issue somewhat in limbo for five years, as the State and Bank fought over the legal complications of the case, the position of the Bank being upheld by the Supreme Court in 1824 in *Osborn vs. Bank of the United States*. As economic conditions gradually improved, explicit hostility to the Bank declined, and in 1825 the taxing law was withdrawn from the Ohio Statute Book,
but the whole episode left latent feelings of suspicion and mistrust of
the Bank, and of financial institutions in general, and these feelings
would emerge again in later attacks on the Bank.26

That some groups never forgot their hostility to the Bank of the
United States and needed no encouragement from Jackson to renew attacks
on it can be shown by Moses Dawson, editor of the Cincinnati
Advertiser, who as early as 1825 was denouncing the "monster"
institution in terms that would become familiar in the 1830s.
Questioning why Congress had ever created such a body, Dawson compared
the already corrupt Great Britain with a United States which was
showing depressing signs of the same problems: "They did know, or they
ought to have known, the power and influence given to the British
government by the Bank of England, and the means which that
establishment has in its hands of throwing the power of the people
still further into the shade. Yet what have the American people
done?—They have given existence to an establishment which has gained
more power in eight years than the Bank of England has done in the
first half century after its establishment."27 The extent of that
power was made clear later the same year, as Dawson pointed to the
Bank's intimate connection with the general government, its "influence
over that judiciary," and its possession of the "gigantic influence
that an immense capital must give to it ..."28 Four years later,
Dawson pointed out the more direct political danger of the Bank,
representing as it did a monopoly for "a monied aristocracy of the most
mischievous kind": it would be a "powerful instrument in the hands of
corrupt men both in and out of congress. It will be the engine of
corruption itself."29 The choice was clear, either to deny the Bank a new charter, or else to labor under its effects: "Twenty years more of the bank, and farewell to freedom. The government will be an oligarchy and the people slaves."30

It can be seen, therefore, that even before Jackson's bank veto, Dawson was outlining the main reasons for being wary of the Bank as a potential threat to the republic, both as a corrupting influence within society, and as the instrument of a privileged aristocracy seeking to subvert the government. It would be these themes that would recur throughout the 1830s and 1840s after Jackson's message had brought to life latent hostility to banks. At first limited to the national Bank, as the Democratic administration tried to work with local "pet banks," but then extended to banking institutions in general, such rhetorical attacks would provide the backbone of Democratic party appeal for the rest of the Jacksonian period.

"Aristides," writing in the Little Magician, gave a standard view of the Bank in 1840, operating as it now was under a charter from the Pennsylvania legislature, as the United States Bank. It was the "darling of the Whig party," and was "from its nature and by the admission of its own managers, an institution purely aristocratic wielding 'predigous political power,' adversely to our government ... ." As such it was essential that it, along with all other banks, should be kept apart from the business of the government by means of the Independent Treasury Act. It was no surprise to "Aristides" that bankers should find this act odious, since it would rob them of their artificial power, and return them to their proper level in society.
Bankers were a "certain sect, who are the mere parasites on the body politic—and are too lazy to work, and ashamed to beg, but ashamed of nothing else..."31 The Advertiser re-iterated the view that the Bank was always likely to be run for the benefit of a privileged few without regard to republican principles. Banks in general were made up of moneyed men, and true Americans could "never expect that one set of moneyed men will act otherwise than in a way to promote their own pecuniary interest."32

The Democratic Standard picked up on this view of the Bank being for the benefit of a privileged few, and in calling for the defeat of Whig plans in 1842 to charter a new national bank, pointed out the effects that such a body would have on the people. The bill would create a "great banking and brokerage establishment, for the benefit of merchants and stock-jobbers, who will thereby be enabled to prey upon the producing classes until this government loses all the advantages sought to be secured by the Constitution, and becomes more unjust and oppressive, if possible, upon the people than is that of Great Britain."33 But perhaps the main danger was not the economic effects of this oppressive body on the people, but rather the degree of dependence and political influence that those economic effects might entail. Once again the Advertiser explained this danger, claiming that the Bank was "making rapid strides towards assuming despotic power." Even the most talented tyrant could not have devised "a worse or better scheme to enlist individual interest in their favor than that of making the whole community indebted to them, and holding their claims in terrorem over the peoples' heads."34 Dawson's warnings seemed to gain
an even more realistic tone in the light of the Bank's efforts to secure the renewal of its charter, by means of a disruption of the economy. "The capacity of a great moneyed aristocracy is infinitely more dangerous to liberty and more destructive to the interests of the rest of the community than any other powers whatever, and we have full proof of this fact in the struggles which have been made to perpetuate the power of the Bank."35

Having pointed to the dangers of a Bank controlled by and operated for the benefit of a privileged group within society, and having stressed that such a group could obtain undue influence over the political processes of the country by means of economic dependence, Democratic editors and politicians did not hesitate to portray the Bank as the center of a conspiracy to subvert the republican government of the United States and to replace it with a nobility of moneyed despots or a monarchy. Calling Americans to the polls, the Ohio Eagle stressed the importance of the Bank issue. To prevent the Bank from further sapping the foundations of government, the recharter effort had to be defeated. "If ever there was a danger to our republic, it is now,—it stalks abroad at mid-day, it invokes the supporters of our constitutional government to unite and exert themselves, to preserve unimpaired, the blessings of our free institutions."36 The Advertiser described more explicitly the danger of the Bank, which constituted "the only mode of establishing a power above the people, and paramount to the republican institutions of the country," and claimed that it was the "favorite measure with those men who sigh for an order of nobility."37 The Democratic State Convention in 1834, referring to the
attack on the Bank as a revolution ridding the country of its yoke, stated that "the purity and safety of our institutions imperatively require, that an agent so powerful, so alien in its very nature, to the spirit of free government, so corrupt, and so corrupting, should not be permitted to exist beyond the term guaranteed in its charter." 38

After 1836 it might have been expected that the danger from the Bank had been beaten back, but the continued operation of the institution, still headed by Nicholas Biddle under its Pennsylvania charter, and debates on whether the credit system should be regulated by an Independent Treasury or a new national bank, kept the issue very much in the foreground. Democrats in Ohio now demanded that the lessons of the past be learnt and that another Bank not be inflicted on the country. Noting Whig suggestions for a new bank, the Eagle warned that "the Federalists are striving to again curse the country with such an institution;--to rivet upon this people forever the chains and fetters of such an arbitrary and tyrannical power." 39 Addressing the same issue, the Western Telegraph made a clear distinction between the Democrats and Whigs on the Bank question, the former hostile to, the latter supporting a new national bank. "It remains for the American people to decide whether they will suffer foreign nabobs and swindling speculators at home, to fasten the yoke of bondage upon their necks. It remains for the freemen of this nation to determine whether they will sacrifice their glorious institutions at the shrine of a moneyed tyrant." 40 Finally D. P. Palmer, editor of the Democratic Standard, stated his preference for the Independent Treasury system, since through a national bank "foreigners may control all the business
operations of the country, render our government subservient to their interests, and finally overthrow our free institutions and place a monarchy in their stead.**41**

From the initial attack on the Bank in 1832, questions began to be raised at the state level about the nature of banking in the future. The placing of federal deposits in local "pet" banks not only led to federal attempts to regulate those institutions, but also intensified problems of banking at the state level, and these problems reached their climax in 1837, when a combination of the Van Buren administration's announcement of its intention to divorce the federal government from banking institutions, and economic depression, confronted state politicians with a banking issue of immediate relevance. Apart from Whig suggestions to reinstitute a national bank, other solutions proposed were State Banks to act in a regulatory manner over local banks, just as had the BUS, specific charter reform, to enforce stricter regulation on banking institutions, and even total prohibition of banking. Along with the everyday business of dealing with petitions for more local banks, these alternatives ensured that the banking issue would remain active into the 1840s. As the period progressed, party lines on this issue became more tightly defined and Democrats soon came to use the same sort of language against the banks in general as they had used specifically against the BUS. Financial institutions were criticized as the centers of power for privileged moneyed aristocracies, who by means of economic influence and corrupt power would subvert government for their own evil designs.

A State Bank, analogous as it was to a national bank, only at the
state level, might have been expected to provoke similar warnings of the dangers of a privileged engine of corruption. Initially, however, Democrats looked quite favorably on such body, as a necessary replacement for the BUS. But even this attitude did reveal deeper worries about the banking system. Robert Lucas, in his Inaugural Message of 1832, proclaimed that it was "a time peculiarly suitable for the establishment of a State Bank." An uncontrolled system of banking was to him "objectionable," since it established "institutions that are controlled by different interests, and frequently come in contact, when all their energies are used to break down and destroy each others' credit, to the injury of the public, and loss to the holders of their paper." As a remedy a State Bank would "sustain its credit, give uniformity to our currency, and effectually secure the interests of the people against the effects of broken banks and fraudulent banking."42

Several Ohio Democratic newspapers supported such a suggestion. "A project for a new Bank in this state, is in agitation in some parts of the state.—The intention appears to be, to make a state institution of it—thereby securing a sound and permanent currency." So reported the Georgetown Castigator, which concluded: "In our humble opinion the plan is a good one, and it is popular with all parties."43 Warning that a failure to do so might create an embarrassing want of a circulating medium, the Ohio Monitor stated its hope that a State Bank would be established in the 1832-33 legislative session. Given the unlikelihood of this, though, they maintained their hope to "see one next year established, improved in its details by the observation of enlightened financiers; and consolidated by the impress of the peoples'
will."44 The following year, the Monitor continued to express its worries that a State Bank bill might not be passed. For the newspaper such a Bank was the "only practicable remedy," while the alternatives were less attractive: it would be a question between a scarcity of circulating medium, "or a still greater ultimate calamity," the passage through the legislature of a "litter of local banks;" or perhaps even worse still, the people might turn back and call for "a charter of the monied monarch."45

Given a choice between a State Bank and a new national bank in 1832-34, Ohio Democrats would clearly have preferred the former, but as party lines hardened in the 1830s, Democrats became increasingly hostile to the idea of a state bank, especially one initiated by the opposition. This change of attitude brought with it rhetoric against the idea of State bank very similar to that used against the U.S., a body with too much connection with, and corrupting influence over the state government.

The Cincinnati Advertiser described certain of the dangers of a proposed State Bank in 1837, such as its creation of paper money, a real evil in itself, and the effect that it would have in making real money scarce for the producing classes. But more dangerous than these economic effects could be its influence on elections, and the effect that it might have on the representatives of the people: "A more ruinous scheme cannot be concocted; it will be a source for corruption for all future legislatures so long as it continues, . . . and will be more difficult to get rid of than other banks."46 Governor Wilson Shannon repeated such sentiments in two successive annual messages: he
greatly feared that a State bank would "partake of the political impulses of the party in power, which would . . . bring into the political field a corrupting moneyed influence, hostile to the genius of our free institutions."47 A year later he warned that whatever political influence such an institution might wield "would not be favorable to public liberty or the rights of the many." Money, when connected with politics, was "always a corrupt influence and fatal to democratic institutions."48 Comparing a proposed State bank with the Bank of England, Thomas Bartley described it as "a union of bank and State—the formation of an incestuous and unholy coalition between an organized, combined moneyed interest, and the civil power upon which the people depend for the safety of their liberties. The debtor is correctly said to be the slave of the creditor, as the State under this system would become the dependent and subservient instrument of the banking interest."49

Having succeeded in preventing the establishment of a State bank for fifteen years, the Democrats were not surprisingly vocal in their denunciation when the Whigs, aided by continued financial difficulties within the State, and the decline in numbers of local banks (all but eight had had their charters run out by 1845), were able to pass a system of banking designed primarily by Alfred Kelley, a leading Ohio Whig and champion of economic development within the State. Combining a network of state and local banks, this system would be the basis of Ohio banking for the next five years, surviving Democratic attempts to repeal it. To the Democrats it constituted a "monster," "Kelley's Sea Serpent," which robbed and swindled the community,50 and it represented
a "striking example of the perfidy and abandoned wickedness of this mushroom aristocracy." 51

That Ohio had experienced a marked decline in its banking institutions up to 1845 is a testament to the success of Democratic anti-bank efforts, as re-defined by developments of the 1830s under the pressure of financial recessions in 1837 and 1839. Some Democratic suspicion of unlimited numbers of local banks has already been seen in earlier calls for a State bank to regulate them, and this was reflected later in rejoicing of Democratic editors at the blocking of new charters in the legislature. However, Democratic views toward local banks were not unanimous, and while denouncing such bodies in theory, the practical reality of their importance did force many Democrats to accept them, only under the condition that regulations over banking activities be tightened, to offset their worst features. Even so, some "hard" Democrats in the mid-1840s were beginning to advocate the total abolition of banking, which would be seen in efforts to make regulation so tight as to be prohibitive, and finally in the attempt by Democrats in the Constitutional Convention of 1850 to prohibit banking altogether. As financial distress bit deeper in the period of 1837-45 more and more Democrats were attracted to this latter approach, especially as Whigs concerned to save the banking system from further embarrassment also began to advocate reforms on lines similar to those of the "soft" Democrats. 52

"We will glory in seeing the day when banks are all annihilated," proclaimed the Cincinnati Advertiser as early as 1825. "They are calculated for nothing so well as depriving industry of its rewards,
and the people of their civil liberties. We do most sincerely hope that the people will soon become so much alive to their own interests and to the perpetuity of their liberties to put down all banks . . . .

53 This hostility to banks on principle would be repeated by Democrats throughout the Jacksonian era, as they commented on the dangers of incorporating new banks and on the success of attempts to prevent such a development. The *Georgetown Castigator*’s editor bemoaned the legislative sessions of 1833-4 and 1834-5: "The unusual number of monopolies or corporate bodies with unlimited powers created within a short time past, cannot be looked upon otherwise than with regret. In order to check their growing power, it is proper that every individual in community should take an early and decisive stand against all such institutions."54 A year later the same editor praised the legislature for sustaining itself against "the numerous applications for local banks in the different sections of the state." In the newspapers’s view it was wise "that not a single new bank charter should be granted."55 The editors of the *Newark Advocate* would have sympathized with such a statement, declaring that they were "the opponents of all sorts of banking, either by companies or private individuals."56

However, even Moses Dawson, later one of the most hostile of all Democratic editors to banking, in the 1830s could modify his opinion in line with the financial needs of the State and the people. "That banks are great evils under the sun, we do not hesitate to give our opinion; but they being evils to which mankind are more willing to submit than many that are much less prejudicial to their well being, and being
evils to which they have so long submitted as to render them in some degree necessary, it becomes our duty to procure such a bank as will not only be attended with the fewest evils, but be productive of the greatest number of advantages.\textsuperscript{57} His view seemed to modify further by 1835 when he claimed that there was "no evil which the people of the United States . . . have so much to apprehend as that of over-banking," rather than all banking activities.\textsuperscript{58} That he could at least accept some degree of banking now was confirmed a year later, when he declared that "I have never been the enemy of Banks farther than the abuse of them."\textsuperscript{59} While Dawson might claim later that banks were inherently liable to "abuse," at least it appeared as if his attitude in the mid-1830s had softened to a certain degree. The Democratic Convention of 1838, in defending Van Buren's suggestions for an Independent Treasury, showed a similar acceptance of the need for some banking activity. Denying that the scheme was intended to be hostile to honest banking or to the credit system, the Committee of the Convention admitted in its Address that "this system in all its ramifications, has become too fully interwoven with our system of trade, and we may say of Government, to be prostrated, without materially impairing the whole fabric."\textsuperscript{60}

While accepting, reluctantly in many cases, the banking system as an established part of the Ohio economy, Ohio Democrats were quick to point out that the system was by no means perfect. Affirming that Democrats had denounced "the present unequal and unjust system of banking, and the downright knavery upon which some, yea nearly all, of the banks have been conducted . . . ," the \textit{Western Telegraph} called for
a "banking system well regulated and restricted, and honestly and fairly managed." The Ohio Eagle portrayed bank reform as the "TRUE ISSUE" between the two political parties. "A thorough, radical and positive REFORM OF OUR BANKING SYSTEM! Let no one forget this—the TRUE ISSUE. The Whigs are for Banks with all their corruption—the Democrats, for making bankers honest like other people." Hammering home its point, the Eagle stressed that the Whigs were out to make "the common people honest by the force of law," and to sustain "the Banks in dishonesty without law," while the Democrats were out to make "the Bank, and people all honest alike."62

The abuses of the banking system addressed by Democrats in their reform efforts bore a marked similarity to those claimed to be the problem with National and State banks also, and can be seen as part of the fear that banks were hostile to the political party trying to secure the republic. It was felt that regulation of banking activities was necessary to prevent the worst economic effects of an uncontrolled system, such as speculative rages and the failure of banks to meet their obligations when called upon to redeem notes in specie. Linked with fears of economic upset were claims that banks by nature of their foundation were against republican principles, since they gave exclusive privileges to a few fortunate businessmen, who could then use their influence to prey on and share the wealth of the rest of the community. What the Democrats considered worst of all, however, was the political influence that this privileged aristocracy might exercise by means of their control of the economy. A division between "softs" and "hard" emerged over the degree to which such abuses were regarded
as being beyond hope of reform. "Softs," influenced no doubt by personal interest in the maintenance of a banking system and in certain banks in particular, and also more convinced of the need for banks within the economy, tended to regard the abuses as remediable. Committed more to the survival of the system than were the "hards," they concentrated on the economic problems of the banks, in an effort to bring about reform that might make the system more acceptable. "Hards," convinced that banks were by their very nature liable to abuse, especially those abuses which affected the rest of the community, sought to reduce the influence of banks within the economy, and to prohibit them altogether eventually. The causes of both groups were given extra urgency by the events of 1837-9 which gave ample evidence to the "softs" of the economic dangers of an unregulated banking system, and which seemed to prove to "hards" that banks and their stockholders were trying to influence politics within the State.

The Panic of 1837 highlighted many of the problems of the banking system in Democratic eyes, as they claimed that banks had been too numerous, founded on insufficient resources, and had issued too much paper money without a guarantee that they would redeem notes in specie. Dawson's criticism of "over-banking" has already been mentioned above,63 and was a common theme for Democrats in the 1830s. "I consider the rapid increase of bank monopolies within the last few years... as an evil of the greatest magnitude," noted Wilson Shannon on bringing up the question. "We should not forget that we may have too much bank credit, as well as too little, and that both extremes should be avoided."64 Efforts to remedy this evil can be seen in the
successful blocking of new bank charters by Democrats in the Ohio legislature, as well as regulations designed to make banking conform to much stricter standards. While such regulations were seen by some as a way of prohibiting all further banks (notably the Latham Law of 1842), they were more a reaction to the hardships caused by bank failures in the 1837-45 period. In the wake of the Panic in 1837 Ohio Democrats had called for reform. Setting up their banner for the 1838 elections, the Democratic nominating committee announced that they were

in favor of compelling the Banks to resume specie payments—in favor of making the holders of Bank stocks individually liable for their corporate debts—are in favor of imposing heavy penalties on Banks and their agents, whenever guilty of usurious practices; and in favor of annulling the charters of Banks, when they have been violated. These reforms... are not only necessary, but we sincerely believe them to be the only safe means within the reach of the people, of preventing the over-issues of Banks—of restraining their avarice and cupididity and of saving our beloved country from ruin.

Even though banks did resume specie payment in the summer of 1838, the Democrats still won the election and, under the direction of the Democratic chairman of the House banking and finance committee, John Brough, regulations were introduced in the 1838-9 session in the form of the Bank Commissioner Law. This law appointed commissioners to overlook banking operations, made stockholders liable to a limited degree for bank obligations, limited the amount of bank notes issued to three times the amount of specie paid into banks' capital reserves, and tried to ensure that banks paid specie, on the pain of losing their charters.66

Further suspension in 1839 dented these reform hopes and
heightened the agitation of the "hards," who became increasingly influential within the party. The 1842 Latham Law was a compromise between the two wings of the Democratic party, the "softs" hoping that reform would work for reform's sake, and would "protect the community against such swindling operations as have heretofore characterized the banking institutions of this State,"67 while the "hards" hoped that the legislation would be prohibitive.68 For the latter group 1839 had emphasized that banks could no longer be trusted to continue to operate in Ohio. Representing as they did a means for the privileged few to pursue their material ends, banks were also portrayed as political engines, designed to secure support for the pro-bank Whig party, so that they might prolong the benefits of banking to the few, and, worse still, that they might subvert the American republic.

Supporting efforts to block the chartering of more local banks, Moses Dawson expressed the view that the proposed charters would "augment the number of monopolists and give them still further power to oppress the poor, and keep down the industrious."69 This was a problem, however, that "softs" such as Wilson Shannon also recognized and hoped to remedy by reform. Calling for limited liability clauses, so that the bearers of notes might be protected against suspensions by banks, Shannon said that "Banks should never be created unless for the public good. They should not be established to enable a few individuals to make money with more facility than others."70 Two years later he again admitted that the banking system "as it exists in this country, and in England, has a direct tendency to lead to the opulence of the few and the pauperism of the many."71 However, it was acting
Governor Thomas Bartley, a "hard" Democrat promoted to the post from the Speakership of the Ohio Senate after the retirement of Shannon, who put most forcefully this line of argument:

Banks create debt, but not capital. Actual capital is produced only by the productive labor of the country. . . . Although banks produce debt, and not capital, yet by the insidious operations of the paper money system, they levy a tribute upon the productive industry of the country, and take from it a large portion of its profits. This is shown by the fact that although they add no actual capital to the wealth of the country, yet they accumulate large amounts of it from the products of labor. . . . The direct tendency of the system as heretofore conducted in this society, is to lead to the opulence of the few and the pauperism of the many.

In conclusion he noted that "since the chains of feudal bondage have worn off, the ingenuity of men has devised the more refined and invidious machinery of government stocks, paper money and special privileges, by which a few are enabled to live on the profits of the labor of the mass of the people."72

The reforms put forward to meet this problem were various. Shannon had already been seen to favor the use of "limited liability" clauses, and the Democratic Standard agreed with this means of making sure that ordinary people were not left holding worthless paper bank notes: "the Democrats desire to make bankers, like persons employed in other kinds of business, entirely responsible to the community for their debts."73 However, to many Democrats even such safeguards as this were not adequate, since banks, by their very incorporation, were bound to give special privileges. The Ohio Eagle asserted that the Democrats would "lend their aid to no system of Banking, unless it is entirely purged of the exclusive privileges, heretofore enjoyed by
those engaged in the business." The logic of such a call led to
appeals for "free banking," which in other states, especially in the
North-West, produced general banking laws allowing anyone to undertake
banking activities without the need for a special charter from the
legislature, clearly meeting the problem of "exclusive privileges."
However, in Ohio "hard" Democrats tended not to support such a system
and took the line that banks, being by nature special privileges, were
therefore best done without altogether. Such was clearly the opinion
of the Newark Advocate: "No banking system of any kind should be
tolerated by a party who profess to be governed by principles of
EQUALITY; who have EQUAL LAWS and EQUAL RIGHTS inscribed upon their
banner; for you cannot have any kind of banking system without you
confer special privileges."75

This conviction was strengthened, especially after 1839, by
Democratic fears that banks and bankers were using their influence over
the economy for political purposes. The Whig party, with their banking
allies, were viewed as having deliberately exacerbated the effects of
the panics of 1837 and 1839, by keeping banks closed longer than they
needed to be, in order to disrupt the economy. Such a disruption, it
was claimed, was intended to drive supporters to the Whig party, and to
overthrow the Democratic administration of Martin Van Buren.
Deliberating why Ohio banks had failed to resume specie payments in the
spring of 1838, the Western Telegraph concluded that "they have been
converted into political engines in the hands of the Federalists, for
the purpose of producing another panic, which they believe can be so
managed as to operate to the temporary success of Federal principles."
Those banks awaited the "dictation of Nick Biddle, their rag money King," who had set himself the task of prostrating the principles of Democracy. The Ohio Eagle agreed, describing the failure to resume specie payment as a "combined and systematic attempt which is making to subdue the Government, and establish the power and supremacy of the Banks." It just went to prove "that there is a motive for this continued oppression of the country, deeper than that which has been so conspicuously displayed upon the surface. That motive is the attainment of political power, and the subjugation of the people." Two years later, in the wake of renewed panic in 1839, the same newspaper placed the bank issue squarely in the context of the Democratic view of the history of the struggle between the few and the many:

The monied power of the land is partner with the leading Federalists, and is struggling with them to become a part, and that the controlling part, of the Government,—in fact to control the Government, by controlling its resources and to control the people, by controlling their business,—making money plenty or scarce,—making plenty of pressure; whenever its sovereign pleasure dictates. It is the same question—shall we have a Government of the many, or a Government of the privileged and incorporated few,—a Government of the People, or a Government of the Banks.

Faced with a combination of the economic abuses of banks, their painful effect on the community, and their influence over both the people and government, it was not surprising that Democrats, accustomed to presenting the Whig opposition as a threat to the very security of the republic, defended their anti-bank measures in similar terms. Not only were banks by nature of their establishment against republican principles, in that they represented a form of special privilege, but
also the groups that benefited from that privilege were presented as trying to subvert the government to maintain their position. The Democrats portrayed the banking issue as one of continuing importance. "The money power of the land, which has gradually grown up under exclusive privileges, since Alexander Hamilton's financial system was introduced, to its present giant strength, has assumed the Office of supreme dictator, and threatens widespread ruin if its will be disregarded," warned the Democratic Standard on the eve of the 1840 election, while the Newark Advocate noted that "the question of privilege had always been the dividing line between the Democratic and Federal parties, from the time of Jefferson and Hamilton down to this day."80

In this struggle the Democrats, especially those "hard" Democrats hoping for an eventual prohibition of all banks, met with both joy and disappointment. Thomas Bartley, revelling in the beneficial effects of the Latham Law, which had helped to reduce the number of banks in Ohio to less than a dozen in 1844, mocked opposition claims that ruin and disaster would occur. Instead, "business and enterprise have continued to revive unimpeded in their progress. Thus, as the banking system has literally rotted down in the sink of its own folly and corruption, the prosperity of the country has received new life. Industry and enterprise, relieved from the bondage of banking operations, are recovering their energies with renewed vigor; and commerce, having in a measure thrown off the shackles of paper money, has replumed its wings for a career of prosperity."81 The Kelley Banking Bill of 1845 threw a damper on this enthusiastic mood, and led to Ohio Democrats putting
their hopes in a constitutional prohibition of banking in the
convention of 1850. This meeting was considered a "contest of right
against might—of labor against capital—of the laboring Democracy
against the shinplaster Aristocracy." While the Democrats had to
"rally the people and slay this hydra-headed monster and giant monopoly
by the overwhelming force of public opinion," the opposition would
"work secretly through their own organized system of corporate bodies,
and will bring an influence to bear, powerful, and unseen, except at
the ballot box."\(^{82}\) However, "hard" Democratic hopes at the Convention
of 1850-51 were dashed by a combination of Whig and "soft" Democratic
delegates. The plaintive cry of the editor of the Newark Advocate
summed up their despair: "The Bank Oligarchy has triumphed over the
People!"\(^{83}\)

It can be seen, therefore, that Ohio Democrats did draw heavily on
old Republican ideas as a means of appealing for support for their
anti-bank activities. As Meyers suggested, the Bank, and, later, banks
in general, were portrayed as an evil influence within society, an
agent of corruption, run in the interests of a few men who strove to
pursue their own ends, whether economic or political, by means of the
power of banking within the economy and as an agency of government
power. As such the Banking system did provide a central symbolic
target against which the leaders of the Democratic party could rally
support. However, while Democrats portrayed the banking system as a
potentially corrupting force in any circumstances, they strove to
ensure that those conditions prevailed that were least favorable to the
banking classes in their attempts to subvert the government for their
own purposes. The efforts at corruption would be less successful if a majority of Americans were able to maintain a degree of political and economic independence to quarantine them against those efforts. Alongside the negative reaction to an undesirable element within American society, which was the attack on the Banks, the Democrats proposed other policies, of a more positive nature, designed to offset the danger of banking and to provide for a healthy, independent and industrious citizenry, whose virtue would help save the Republic against its assailants. It is in such light that Democratic rhetoric on other elements of the political economy, the tariff, overseas trade, internal improvements, and land policy, will now be examined.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV


123-189, and Shade, pp. 79-85 and 102-110; quote is from Sharp, p. 195.


15 "1st Annual Message," James B. Richardson (Comp.), Messages and Papers of the Presidents (New York, 1897), 3: 1025, 1014.


20 "2nd Annual Message," Ibid., 1711.

21 "Note to Cabinet on Removal Policy," Ibid., 3: 1234, 1238.


Cincinnati Advertiser, 18 May 1825.

Ibid., 7 December 1825.

Ibid., 4 November 1829.

Ibid., 17 April 1830.

Lancaster Little Magician, 29 April 1840.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 22 February 1834.

Georgetown Democratic Standard, 4 January 1842.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 16 June 1832.

Ibid., 9 July 1834.

Lancaster Ohio Eagle, 2 September 1832.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 11 October 1834.

Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention (Columbus, 1834), p. 22.

Ohio Eagle, 3 February 1838.

Hamilton Western Telegraph, 6 June 1838.
Democratic Standard, 6 August 1840.


Georgetown Castigator, 18 December 1832.

Columbus Ohio Monitor, 4 February 1833.

Ibid., 20 & 23 January 1834.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 4 January 1837.

1st Annual Message," Ohio Executive Documents, Reports, including Messages and other Communications made to the General Assembly of the State of Ohio (Columbus, 1836 - ), 4 (1839): Document No. 1, p. 13.


Ohio Eagle, 30 January 1845.

Ibid., 24 July 1845.

For differing Democratic stances, see sections on Ohio in Sharp, Jacksonians, and Shade, Banks or No Banks.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 16 November 1825.

Georgetown Castigator, 20 July 1835.

Ibid., 24 February 1836.

Newark Advocate, 18 September 1841.

Cincinnati Advertiser, 15 December 1832.

Ibid., 4 February 1835.

Ibid., 13 August 1835.

Cited in Ohio Eagle, 7 July 1838.
61Western Telegraph, 24 May 1838.
62Ohio Eagle, 11 August 1838.
63See above, Note 58.
64Inaugural Address of Wilson Shannon on taking the Oath of Office as Governor of Ohio (Columbus, 1838), p. 12.
65Cited in Ohio Eagle, 7 July 1838.
67Democratic Standard, 18 April 1843.
69Cincinnati Advertiser, 21 December 1836.
73Democratic Standard, 28 June 1842.
74Ohio Eagle, 21 November 1840.
75Newark Advocate, 20 November 1841.
76Western Telegraph, 17 May 1838.
77Ohio Eagle, 23 June 1838.
78Ibid., 23 May 1840.
79Democratic Standard, 6 August 1840.
80Newark Advocate, 20 November 1841.
82West Union Adams County Democrat, 22 August 1849.
83Newark Advocate, 8 February 1851.
CHAPTER V

OHIO DEMOCRATS AND THE IDEAL ECONOMIC ORDER

While Democratic attacks on the banking system represented a largely negative reaction against conditions which had already taken root in American society, other elements of their political economy had a much more positive background. Once again drawing upon their Republican heritage, this time as it had developed under the Presidency of James Madison, Democrats at first supported policies very similar to those of the "American System" as later espoused by the Whigs, both seeking measures which would help western farmers get their agricultural surplus to a potential market. Much has been made of the difficulty which confronted Jackson's managers for the 1828 election on the issue of the protective tariff, with Southern groups being told that Jackson was hostile to such a tariff, while potential northern supporters, especially in Pennsylvania and the Northwest were given a picture of Jackson being highly in favor of the principle of protection. Similarly western Democrats, confronted with conditions which ideally required improvements of transportation and interior communications, initially tended to support federally-funded internal improvements projects, and later the idea of distribution of federal government surpluses to the states for their use on such measures.

However, by the end of the 1830s a different picture was emerging, with Democrats showing marked hostility to the idea of a protective tariff, while Whigs continued to support it. Democrats had also turned against the idea of funding internal improvements with federal money,
whether by direct appropriation, or by distribution of the surplus, both of which Jackson had stood against on the grounds that they were unconstitutional. Indeed, although still ultimately attached to the principle of internal improvements as an essential element of their political economy, providing as they did the vital link between farmers and their markets, Democrats were even prepared to jeopardize such projects, if they felt that the cost was too great in terms of debts to the states, especially after the Panic of 1837. Just as the federal funding of internal improvements was declared unconstitutional, so it is usually in that light that Democratic attitudes toward the protective tariff have been explained: paying the price for their earlier duplicity on the Tariff issue in the 1828 election, Jacksonians gradually retracted their support for such a tariff, partly out of the decision that its broad construction of the constitution posed an evil in itself, but most of all out of the need to reconcile hostile Southern Democrats in the wake of the Nullification Crisis. While such motives were undoubtedly important in changing Democratic attitudes toward the protective tariff, there is evidence to suggest that this change was not inspired by constitutional propriety alone, and that the effects of the measure itself came to be regarded as dangerous for the type of society desired by the Democrats. Acting as a special privilege to the "manufacturing class," who were now being associated more closely with the "banking aristocracy," the Tariff was seen as productive of conditions under which the vicious few could "enslave" the people and subvert the republic. Positive support for the tariff as a policy, turned into a negative reaction, similar to that against
the banking system. Efforts were renewed to take more positive steps toward securing a virtuous citizenry, by means such as improved foreign trade and easier access to land, both of which would bolster the agricultural classes against the efforts of the "moneyed few" to prey upon them. It was almost as if the Democrats had completed a full circle, and were once again following original Republican ideas on political economy, fighting to maintain their own view of the better economic order, against a Whig party which continued to encourage manufacturing and financial activity. As Daniel Walker Howe has noted, "the Whigs proposed a society that would be economically diverse but culturally uniform; the Democrats preferred the economic uniformity of a society of small farmers and artisans but were more tolerant of cultural and moral diversity."

The key to success of the republican experiment was agriculture, which as has been noted above, provided a sure foundation of virtuous, independent and incorruptible citizens upon which the republic could depend. While Democrats recognized that other occupations might be equally productive of a virtuous citizenry, this depended on whether or not conditions were allowed to degenerate to levels of near servitude, and here again agriculture helped: as long as there was land for manufacturing labor to escape to if necessary, then that labor would never be forced into a dependent state, and therefore could not become the tools of the vicious minority.

So it was then that land policy was regarded as an essential part of the Democratic political economy, as they strove to make land easily available for settlement. Headed by Missouri Senator "Old Bullion"
Thomas Benton, Democrats pushed for policies of cheaper western land in general, and certain other features, including pre-emption, which gave priority of purchase to settlers already squatting on unsold lands. Support for these moves came also from the very top of the Democratic party. Referring to the importance of the agricultural class for the country, Jackson himself announced that it "can not be doubted that the speedy settlement of these lands constitutes the true interest of the Republic."4 Van Buren, hoping that land sales policies would always be prudent, averred that "its leading object ought to be the early settlement and cultivation of the lands," and that if land could be prevented from falling into the hands of the few, clearly a reference to the disastrous effects that land speculation had had in contributing to the panic of 1837, then would be formed a "body of free and independent landholders with a rapidity unequalled in the history of mankind."5

Ohio Democrats also saw the benefits of a cheap land policy, and attacked Whig policies which sought to raise more money for improvements by increasing land prices. "Facility to the people of the older states... to emigrate westward, is but a facility to improve their pecuniary condition! It is but a method of providing that those, who had not soil in the older states, or have not money to buy poor soil, may come and buy rich soil, almost... without money and without price." Turning from the purely material advantages of a cheap land policy to more fundamental benefits, the Ohio Monitor stated that it tended to "an equalization of property among the citizens of our country; at least, among the most numerous, and worthy class, the
agriculturists." Moses Dawson of the Advertiser made clear how the "power, the morals and prosperity of a nation are always estimated and measured by the independence and industry of the population."

Asserting that an independent yeomanry was the "bone and sinew" of the country, he proceeded to note that "nothing can more completely secure to the United States, a yeomanry as cheap land, and a facility for obtaining a livelihood by the cultivation of it." Three years earlier Dawson had shown how this view could affect his attitude toward different land sales policies, comparing a plan proposed by Benton, which would have given the poor man a chance to buy a farm and become independent, with one proposed by Henry Clay, which would "prevent all this . . . ." Under Clay's plan, which to Dawson's disappointment was the one to pass, the "land that would have been occupied by a hardy, independent yeomanry, will now lie vacant, or only be occupied by the wild beasts of the forest."

Dawson's reference in 1833 to a "facility for obtaining a livelihood by the cultivation of it," reminds us that cheap land alone was not a sure way to secure a virtuous agricultural citizenry. Land might provide independence, but other values were also required, such as frugality, and especially industry, since any free time allowed to a farmer might tempt him into less acceptable activities such as speculation. Once again, as in Jefferson's times, the fertility of the American soil made it unlikely that mere subsistence-level farming would provide a full-time occupation for a farmer, and so it was necessary to play upon his pecuniary self-interest to encourage him to grow a surplus. So continued the age-old problem of supplying the farmer with
a market for his goods, and with the means of reaching that market cheaply and efficiently. Wherever the market, overseas or domestic, Southern plantations or Northeastern manufacturing towns, it was generally recognized that transportation facilities needed to be improved, to allow goods to move more economically, and thereby to facilitate the movement of agricultural surpluses. The question of internal improvements continued to rank high in political affairs, bringing up problems of constitutional propriety, local benefits and the methods of funding, but it was on this question that Democrats tended to differ least from the Whigs, it being an essential part of both parties' views of a future economic order.

As a Westerner, who had won western support for his election in 1828, Andrew Jackson would have committed political suicide if he had expressed anything less than full support for the principle of internal improvements. Whether such improvements would be made by the federal government in all circumstances was a different matter, however, as he made clear in his Inaugural: "Internal improvements...so far as they can be promoted by the constitutional acts of the Federal Government, are of high importance."9 Aware that many people regarded direct aid from the federal government to improvements projects of a local nature as unconstitutional, and firm in the knowledge that the national debt would soon be paid off and surpluses building up from tariff duties, Jackson proposed that a distribution of those surpluses to the states should be used for the funding of improvements instead, backed by a constitutional amendment if necessary.10 Yet it was in his veto of the Maysville Road bill in 1830 that Jackson most forcefully
stated his opposition to federally-funded improvements: avowing that he was "sincerely friendly to the improvements of our country by means of roads and canals," he proceeded to claim that federal improvements would increase the national debt, and would result in a scramble in Congress of local vested interests after their own pet schemes. Such appropriations promoted abuse far more than good, and would "be resorted to as artful expedients to shift upon the Government those losses of unsuccessful private speculation, and thus, by ministering to personal ambition and self-aggrandizement, [they] tend to sap the foundations of public virtue and taint the administration of the Government with a demoralizing influence."\[11\]

The way in which Ohio Democrats reacted to Jackson's veto of the Maysville Road bill was conditioned by their view of the importance of improvements in general, and by their desire to uphold constitutional principles. While coming to accept the Veto as necessary, it must have been with some reluctance, since Ohio at that time was heavily engaged in projects of her own, such as the Ohio Canal, and would have appreciated federal aid, just as would have any western state.\[12\] Ohioan's favor of national help for local interal improvement projects had been seen earlier in their support for aid bills for the Cumberland Road. The Advertiser put in succinct terms the importance of this road, which was "fraught with advantages to the United States generally." It tended to "strengthen the bond of union among them [the states] but will be beneficial to those western states in particular, through which it passes." The road would "improve the country, by inducing new settlements, and consequently enhance the values of lands
on either side of it."13

The dual benefits of improvements, economic and political, were referred to time and again as Democrats supported the building of roads and canals, by whatever means they might be funded. Robert Lucas referred to the "beneficent effect" on improvements, which were "calculated to better the condition and add to the comforts of the people in any part of the state."14 The Western Telegraph explained the point even more clearly: "In a country so very fertile, and productive as this, it is a desideratum of the highest importance that a cheap conveyance to market should be furnished." It was clear that "the greatest consideration in public roads is public utility; the road shortest in route and accommodating the greatest population, and opening communications with the greatest number of trading towns, must be considered the best for the advantage of the people."15 Referring to the Ohio Canal and its benefits, the Ohio Eagle stressed how it had helped Ohio farmers in particular: its effects were "seen, and felt by the cultivators of our soil, in the ready sale of the farmers' surplus grain, in the augmented price, and increasing demand for the staple products of agriculture."16 Nearly twenty years later the main concern of the Eagle remained the same, even if the mode of transport had changed:

The farmer is more deeply interested in a Railroad connection of this city than is the merchant or capitalist. He is directly interested. It gives him higher prices—surer markets—better pay—and provides for increased production of his products. All other interests in community are effected but indirectly. The merchant and mechanic alike desire advantage; for the agricultural class being the main consumers of goods and wares, are of course the better
able to purchase and pay, from having received higher prices for their surplus commodities.17

The idea that political strength, as well as an encouragement to farmers' industry, would be imparted by improvements was clearly one drawn from Madison, who had seen communications as the way to bind together an extended republic. The Newark Advocate, noting that the United States were a nation of wide extent and diverse interests, saw roads and canals as important links: "Nothing has a greater influence over the human mind than self-interest; and so long as our countrymen can trade with each other to advantage, so long will they hang together." Showing a lesser degree of faith than many other Democratic editors in the ability of the government to maintain society in a virtuous state, the Advocate's editor continued: "It would be unwise, and contrary to all examples found in history, to calculate upon the preservation of the Union from the virtue of the people, alone; for, although the government may rest secure on that basis while young, yet we find that as nations grow old, they grow corrupt." Improvements would help to offset the danger of this.18 Showing a greater degree of optimism, Wilson Shannon averred that the spirit of the people when involved in improvements would "bind together the States of this confederacy, by a system of internal communication, advantageous to all in a political, as well as a commercial and social point of view. The local prejudices and jealousies which exist in one section of the Union against another, will rapidly disappear as the means of communication are extended, and as the inhabitants of the different sections become identified in business, and familiarized with the manners, customs and habits of each other."19
"We know of no man who disapproves of Internal Improvements in the abstract. The only difference of opinion that arises on the subject appears to be how and by whom they should be made, and also as to what may be considered national and what local."20 It was with these true words that the Cincinnati Advertiser referred to the Maysville Road veto, having previously praised Jackson for standing on his principles, even if it meant going against the most popular of policies.21 The Veto threw Ohio Democrats into a difficult position, since they would wish to back their party leader on this issue, many agreeing with the constitutional point being made, that the bill as passed had been strictly of a local not a national character and therefore could not be funded with federal money. But Congressmen were also constrained by the future votes of their electorates, and this probably went a long way toward explaining why only one Ohio Representative reversed his vote when an effort was made to force the bill through over the President's veto.22 However, Democratic spokesman within Ohio gradually reconciled themselves with the veto, and began defending it on practical and constitutional grounds. Moses Dawson saw it as part of the question of the National Debt, which was on the point of being paid off: "If General Jackson had not put his veto to the Internal Improvement bills, and had encouraged the application of the national funds to the projects of Congress, where would the money have come from that would pay the debt?" Not only would the most recent debt repayment instalment have been impossible, but "more debt must have been contracted instead of paying off the old."23 That the subject could still arouse feelings three years later was made clear when the
Democratic convention of 1834 declared that the limiting of the federal power to make appropriations for internal improvements could be "productive only of unmixed good." If no limitation were imposed, "a system of combinations and bargainings will be introduced into Congress. Appropriations will be made and withheld with a view to influence the elective action of Counties and Districts. The public treasures will wasted upon partial objects."24

The denial of Congressional authority to make appropriations for local improvements left unanswered the question of whether federal money could find its way to such projects at all. The Ohio Monitor, recalling Madison's earlier solution to the problem, suggested that if federal funding of internal improvements was desirable in policy-terms, but blocked by constitutional problems, then the best remedy was to amend the Constitution.25 However, this met with the same negative results as had Madison's suggestions in the past, and in the six years following the Maysville veto, the policy of distribution of federal surpluses to states in proportion to their population became the favored policy, meeting as it did the problem of what to do with the surplus after the national debt was paid off. The Cincinnati Advertiser had called for such a policy as early as December 1829, seeing it as a way for states to control their own improvements, and for the federal government to avoid intrigues and not to have too much influence over state governments.26

However, Democratic support for the principle waned as Jackson's term of office proceeded, and as the Whigs, thwarted by vetoes of improvements bills at the federal level, began to support distribution
themselves. Thus it was then, that when the Whigs combined 
distribution with the Deposit act which regulated the holdings of "pet 
banks," Jackson announced his opposition to distribution. He 
criticized it in terms familiar to his Democratic audience, saying that 
distribution tended to act as a tax on some for the benefit of others, 
while the movement of funds to the western states encouraged banking 
speculation by providing more capital. Drawing attention to the lack 
of specific constitutional sanction for the policy (reflecting his 
earlier call for an amendment, when he had supported the policy), the 
President warned that it would enslave western states to the federal 
government, since they would become dependent on its surplus revenues 
for their well-being. His solution was to leave improvements 
exclusively to the individual states, while avoiding the need for 
distribution by limiting government revenues to that required for 
expenses: cheaper land prices and a reduced tariff would help to keep 
down the federal income, this being one reason for the swing of 
Democrats away from the policy of protective tariff, which will be 
examined in greater detail below.27 Moses Dawson reiterated most of 
his President's arguments in Ohio, seeing distribution as in effect a 
tax without stated purpose, and therefore unconstitutional. He also 
fearred that states would become indebted to the federal government, and 
looked forward to the day when the Tariff of 1833 would reduce revenue 
to the level required for government expenses only, reducing the danger 
of a surplus.28

While coming to accept the prohibition of federal aid to local 
improvements, Ohio Democrats lost none of their zeal for improvements
in principle, and efforts continued at the state level to improve the means of transport, whether roads, canals or railroads. Their rhetoric appealed especially to the benefits to be expected by farmers who would have better access to markets, and at times they noted how better communications would tie the country together, and encourage farmers to be industrious, both important ways of securing the republic. When disagreement arose at the state level over improvements, it tended not to be a party issue as to whether improvements should or should not be undertaken, but rather a local issue, with various areas claiming that all should be able to share the benefits of roads. Brown County in particular felt it had cause for complaint, as both the Castigator and the Democratic Standard avowed. The former, while supporting improvements in general, compared Brown county farmers in favorable terms with those of the rest of the state, and claimed: "Remotely situated as this county is from the two leading and the many collateral canals,—the citizens have been burthened with taxes to aid in these improvements, while they have not been, and probably never will be of any real advantage to them." Too much dependence was placed on hauling the goods of the country to the Ohio river, and "by a longer delay of .. improvements, the best interests of the citizens are neglected."

If the Democratic Standard is to be relied upon for fair judgment, then it seems as if the situation had not been remedied six years later. "We can see no good reason for the neglect our county has suffered in this respect," bemoaned the editor. "Brown has as yet derived but little if any advantage from the system of public improvements for which her citizens have been taxed, and by which other portions have
been so greatly benefitted." While other areas saw rapid improvement, work on a turnpike in their county was in arrears, and the newspaper could see "no excuse for this partaility ...."30

While improvements projects did continue throughout the period of financial crisis from 1837 to 1845, a considerable degree of strain was felt, as federal funds dried up with the suspension of the last of four payments of the surplus ordered by the Deposit Act of 1836. The State was forced to borrow money to meet the needs of improvements projects already in progress, and to some Democrats this brought up the spectre of a state debt, just as "country" opponents had feared a national debt in England in the early 18th century, and the Republicans had opposed the funding system of Hamilton. We have already seen how Moses Dawson justified opposition to internal improvements projects funded by the federal government on the grounds that it would ensure the paying off of the national debt. Now in 1839 he began to worry that state improvements might lead to a similar situation, bemoaning the way in which state debts acted as a tax paid by the working class, and expressing his hope that the debt could be paid off, and no more improvement schemes instituted until old ones were completed.31 The Democratic Standard, outlining its continued adherence to Jacksonian principles, included in these an opposition to "extravagant expenditure for internal improvements, and all other concomitants of a splendid government and a beggared people."32 Claiming support for improvements as long as they were finished, the Newark Advocate pointed to the railroads as part of "an attack of mania for Internal Improvements" which had left the States with a debt of $200 million.33 This fear of
a state debt was reflected in other Democrats' attitudes toward public
debt in general, which was seen as a dangerous element within American
society, aiding a few at the expense of the many, and threatening to
tie the country's (or State's) fortunes to the interests of that few.

Democratic Presidents made clear the dangers of the problem of a
public debt, and were able to rejoice in the United States' position of
being on the verge of extinguishing (in Jackson's early years) and then
without (in Van Buren and Polk's terms) a national debt. On his
arrival at Washington Jackson had called for economy in government,
which would help to reduce the Debt, "the unnecessary duration of which
is incompatible with real independence . . . ." If a policy of
economy were not diligently followed, and too much money was spent on
projects not strictly within the jurisdiction of the federal
government, then either the debt would be increased or taxes would have
to be raised, in itself an unrepugnant burden on the people. It was
left to Van Buren and Polk, however, to put the issue of a debt more
directly in the context of what they perceived to be the struggle
between the Democrats and forces trying to use government for their own
purposes. Warning against the United States government incurring a
debt, except "when the honor and safety of the nation demand the
temporary sacrifice of a policy which should only be abandoned in such
exigencies," Van Buren described the Debt as a system "so apt to lead
in the end to the commission of that most odious of all offenses
against the principles of republican government, the prostitution of
political power, conferred for the general benefit to the aggrandizement
of particular classes and the gratification of individual cupidity . .
Thomas Polk repeated the sentiments in his Inaugural, seeing the Debt as one of the several systems which perverted government from its legitimate purposes. "A national debt has become almost an institution of European monarchies... Melancholy is the condition of that people whose government can be sustained only by a system which periodically transfers large amounts from the labor of the many to the coffers of the few." He concluded that "[s]uch a system is incompatible with the ends for which our republican Government was instituted."  

Ohio Democrats in the late 1830 seemed even more concerned that dangers might follow on from a state debt, and thus saw not only the threat of economic oppression, but also political oppression by American bankers and their financial connections in England. Pointing out Ohio's relatively healthy economic state as compared with other bankrupt state governments, the Ohio Eagle warned that if successful in the 1840 election, the Whigs would borrow large amounts of money, as part of a credit system which would cause states, merchants and private citizens "to hang upon the nod and tremble at the frown of a grasping conclave of monied Shylocks in the city of London." Stressing the potential dangers of the "combination of British bankers and American brokers, merchants and speculators," as they tried to use money to corrupt the elective process, the Hickory Club noted a major reason for this: "The reason why the British bankers are so deeply interested in the contest is because they know that if the federal party succeed, the General Government will assume the debts of the States, and thus increase the value of the State bonds from 20 to 30 percent. They are
therefore in a pecuniary point of view, directly interested in this struggle . . ."[^39] The possibility of the assumption of the state debts into a national debt produced the same degree of fear of a consolidated government, under the influence of a wealthy few, as it had done when Hamilton had proposed a similar scheme. The Democratic Standard saw Whig suggestions that state debts be assumed as a continuation of the Federalist design of a "strong concentrated and consolidated Government, under the direction and control of a powerful, privileged and protected class of wealth, interested in the support of the government, in oppression for their benefit." The debt itself would feed "its thousand cormorant fund-holders, fattening upon the revenues of government, wrenched from the hard hands of oppressed, despised and degraded labor." In conclusion, the Standard warned that the result would be an "aristocracy of wealth in the manufacturers, more odious than the hereditary noblesse of monarchy, interested in sustaining the government, and the bank, in oppression, injustice, and disregard of the rights and interests of the States and of the people. These would indeed constitute a government, capable of maintaining itself against the ignorance, the passions and the folly of that senseless and unruly mob, as federalism seems ever to regard the people."[^40]

Seemingly disregarding the fact that to be protective, a tariff would necessarily lead to a reduction in revenue from duties, Democrats initially supported a protective tariff by claiming it would help reduce the unrepugnent public debt, thereby avoiding the dangers outlined by the Democratic Standard. However, the protective tariff
also played a much more positive role, in an integrated economy, designed to help promote those conditions most likely to produce a virtuous citizenry. Concerned to provide markets for agricultural surpluses, thereby encouraging the farming basis of American society, yet also willing to admit the virtue of other producing classes under the right conditions, the Democrats initially saw the promotion of manufactures as the ideal solution, as had Madison before them, and also as did their contemporary opponents, the Whigs. Manufacturing would provide a home market for agricultural goods, a market more reliable than those overseas, and so it would encourage the interests and industry of the farming class. However, as the 1830s progressed, Democratic opinion gradually swung away from support of the principle of protection; this was partly to conciliate Southern Democrats, who had shown their marked hostility to the constitutional principles behind the protective tariff, but it also reflected the decline in need for revenue after the paying off of the national debt, and Democratic fears that manufacturing was approaching those conditions at which it would no longer be safe to the virtue of good republicans, especially if it were to be encouraged by means of special privileges. Democratic rhetoric explained this change in policy, in terms of the wider struggle which Democrats perceived, and they began to present the protective tariff as just one more of the instruments being used by the wealthy few to reduce the people to submission and to put the government under their own control.

As a national leader Jackson's stance on the tariff issue was certain to be more guarded than those of Republicans of one or other of
the distinct sections of the country. While Northern and Western Democrats might claim whole-hearted support for protection, Jackson had to be careful not to drive away Southern support, and he tried to limit his policy statements to what was allowed by the Constitution. It is certain that at first he favored a mixed economy, with equal help to the "great interests of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures," while only those products "essential to our national independence" were worthy of special protection.41 He repeated these sentiments in December 1830, affirming that while "the chief object of duties would be revenue, they may be so adjusted as to encourage manufactures."

However, "objects of national importance alone ought to be protected. Of these the products of our soil, our mines, and our workshops, essential to national defense, occupy the first rank. Whatever other species of domestic industry . . . may be expected, after temporary protection, to compete with foreign labor on equal terms, merit the same attention in a subordinate degree.42 Two years later at the height of the Nullification crisis, Jackson said that only war articles merited permanent protection, while other duties were acceptable only if "necessary to counteract the regulations of foreign nations," or temporarily, to build up manufactures "adequate to the supply of our domestic consumption."43 By 1835, with the public debt paid off, Jackson was more firmly convinced than ever of the need to keep the tariff at revenue levels, rather than to allow protection. "It is certainly our duty . . . to regard all the restrictions which are imposed on the trade and navigation of our citizens as evils which we shall mitigate whenever we are not prevented by the adverse legislation
and policy of foreign nations or those primary duties which the defense and independence of our country enjoin upon us." 44

Future Ohio Democrats in the 1820s and early 1830s were much more vocal in their support of the principle of the protective tariff, and clearly outlined its importance for the farming class and the maintenance of a virtuous citizenry. In 1824 the Advertiser noted: "We are no manufacturer, we are no trader, nor have we any connection with either one description or other to bias our judgment in the case. We firmly believe, that the interest of the nation depends upon the encouragement which shall be given to domestic manufactures." 45 A year later the same newspaper almost totally rejected the earliest Republican pleas, such as those made by Thomas Cooper, that agriculture alone should be the occupation of the United States. "The circumstances of the country at that period [the 1790s], and for some years after, might have very well borne him out in his arguments against domestic manufactures," but the Advertiser recognized, as had Madison, that conditions had greatly changed, both in the United States and in Europe. Now that the American population had grown, it was cultivating more land and producing a larger surplus, and so it was necessary for the government to encourage manufactures rather than commerce." 46 Stressing that it was upon farmers that the government relied for its support, and other people for their subsistence and defense, the Ohio Monitor warned that when "there is no object to stimulate the farmer to persever in agriculture, he becomes indolent and discontented." The newspaper continued by claiming that the "greatest evil experienced by western farmers, is the want of a
suitable market for products." The Monitor concluded: "This might be remedied, if both the Government and the farmers would encourage domestic manufactures as they should be."47

The editor of the Monitor remarked further on the benefits of encouraging manufactures, in three other issues, this time pointing out some more direct political effects. "To the most superficial understanding must now be obvious, what the theory of the sagacious would long ago have instructed him, that to constitute a nation wealthy and independent, they must raise their own provisions and manufacture their own clothing."48 Not only would a protective tariff help to encourage "the self-sufficiency of the United States in clothing but it would also provide a "source of revenue" for the government.49 What is more it would encourage that most valuable of resources for any republic, labor, something which was of particular practical importance after the panic years following 1819: "That labor is a source of wealth, the nation must know by sad experience. For during the last five years, this nation, instead of encouraging labor at home, has bought the labor of other nations, and the effect is too visible, in the distress that pervades all ranks of society."50 Protecting domestic industry would allow Americans to work for themselves while providing a market for agricultural surplus at the same time.

Ohio Democrats' support for the protective tariff was manifested in attempts to persuade the electorate that Jackson was also in favor of such a measure. Asserting that opposition claims that Jackson was hostile to the tariff were "unsustained by facts, and equally unsupported by reason," the State convention of 1828 pointed out that
Jackson's "support of the protecting tariff of 1824, while a Senator in Congress, is known to have been decided and energetic, and like himself, fearless candid and unwavering." The address went on to quote from a letter of the General himself, written in 1824, which outlined the major argument that, failing a sure market, there should be a division of labor, with some farmers becoming employed in manufacturing and creating a home market for breadstuffs.51 The Marietta and Washington County Pilot, stepping into the controversy over the Tariff of "Abominations" of 1828, claimed that the opposition had supported the original woolens bill which had been "calculated to oppress the Farmer and benefit the monopolist—the Manufacturer—and the Capitalist alone," while Jacksonians were responsible for the tariff bill which eventually passed, which was acceptable "because it affords protection to the Farmers—as well as the Manufacturer."52

The Tariff issue came to a head in 1832-33, when South Carolina, upset by the constitutional implications of a protective tariff, threatened to secede from the Union.53 As efforts were made in Congress in 1832 to pass a tariff which would be acceptable to the South, Ohio Democrats noted the difficulty of such a law passing, since different parts of the country wanted different things. The Ohio Monitor made its view quite clear, though: "The people of the Middle and Western States are, generally, in favor of protection to manufactures . . . ."54 This continued support for protection ensured that Democrats would support Jackson in his stance against South Carolina. Not only was he standing up against what many considered to be a direct challenge to the survival of the federal government, but he
was also insisting on the implementation of a policy, neither the constitutionality nor expediency of which Ohio Democrats would deny. However, even in the heat of the Nullification Crisis, there were signs that Ohio Democrats were beginning to follow Jackson's reasoning on the Tariff, seeing it as only necessary for essential items, while a degree of sympathy was offered to the South. "I have no doubt that a great portion of the people of Ohio are in favor of protecting duties, and not only admit the right, but believe it to be the duty of Congress to give protection to such manufactures as are essential to national defense, and all others, in proportion, as they are adapted to our country, and of which the raw materials can be produced by ourselves." Robert Lucas continued: "Yet we have no desire to see one branch of industry built up to the destruction of another, or one part of the community oppressed for the benefit of another, but believe that a system to be just, should be equal in its operations, that it should diffuse its benefits and distribute its burthens with an even hand, throughout the whole community over which it was intended to operate."55

The Compromise Tariff of 1833 was truly just that, providing manufacturers, at first, with high duties which would help protect their manufactures, while presenting to the nullifiers the appearance of a purely revenue tariff, without any discrimination between different products. It also satisfied Jackson, and those who felt that tariff revenues should be reduced to avoid a large federal surplus, since the compromise law provided for the gradual reduction of duties over the course of the next ten years, until they would stand at the
20% level in July 1842. The Compromise not only dampened the ardor of the awakening slave controversy, but it also took out the tariff as a topic for discussion on matters of political economy. When the Tariff issue arose again in 1842, circumstances would have changed greatly, and Democratic rhetoric would show a marked hostility to the idea of a protective tariff. Galvanized by the Bank war into opposition to the "privileged few," Democrats now came to regard the tariff as another instrument of those groups trying to gain undue influence within government and society, and warned of the dangers that were being posed by the creation of a dependent manufacturing class. No longer was the protection of manufactures seen as a safe means of providing a market for agricultural surplus, since it seemed to promote the very dangers which Democrats had hoped to avoid all along.

The new Tariff law of 1842, designed by the Whigs under the leadership of Clay, provided a target upon which Democrats could focus their new hostility to the idea of protection. Having been vetoed twice by President John Tyler on the grounds that it included a clause for distribution of surplus revenue (which he considered unconstitutional), the 1842 bill finally passed, imposing duties at their 1832 levels, while dropping the distribution clause.56 To Democrats, such a law appeared to favor certain elements of the community far more than others, most notably those manufacturing capitalists, who could now exploit their labor force, while farmers had to pay increased prices for their purchases. Stressing the equal importance of farming, commerce and the mechanic arts, James Polk noted in his Inaugural Message how he considered the Tariff of 1842 unfair:
To tax one branch of this home industry for the benefit of another would be unjust. No one of these interests can rightfully claim an advantage over the others, or to be enriched by impoverishing the others. He made his point more specifically nine months later, saying that the 1842 Tariff was "so framed that much the greatest burden which it imposes is thrown on labor and the poorer classes, who are least able to bear it, while it protects capital and exempts the rich from paying their just proportion of the taxation required for the support of the Government. While it protects the capital of the wealthy manufacturer and increases his profits, it does not benefit the operatives or laborers in his employment, whose wages have not been increased by it." While he was not against manufactures in principle and saw their prosperity as an important interest of the nation, Polk considered this to be the case only when they were not exploitative and wages were fair. The Walker Tariff of 1846 was much more to his liking, imposing duties at revenue levels only, allowing manufactures to prosper, but without the unjust effects of the mass on the people.

The reaction of Ohio Democrats to the renewed efforts of the Whigs to impose a protective tariff mirrored that of their president in the 1840s. Uppermost among its effects was that of taxing the poor for the benefit of those wealthy manufacturers who had their capital in manufacturing industry. Noting that a tariff had to raise the price of the protected article in order to be protective, Wilson Shannon explained who would pay that greater cost: "If it raises the price to the consumer, then it is a tax on the agricultural and nonmanufacturing
classes, for the benefit of the manufacturing capitalists, and instead of encouraging home industry, is a tax of the labor of the great mass, for the benefit of the few."61 Two years later the Democratic Standard reiterated such a view: "The laborers and mechanics of the country are taxed the same as the farmers by the tariff—and their interest is so intimately connected with the prosperity of the farmers, that whatever effects injuriously the latter, is a hardship upon the former. Agriculture, trades and commerce, are thus taxed and depressed for the benefit of a few stockholders in large manufacturing establishments."62 Viewing the 1842 Tariff in the light of the Walker Tariff of 1846, which discriminated in favor of the laboring classes if at all, the Ohio Eagle claimed that the former had "discriminated in favor of overgrown capital and against the honest tillers of the soil . . . . What did the tariff of 1842 do for the agricultural interest; nothing, absolutely nothing—but all against it."63

Democratic claims that all the benefits of the protective tariff went to the manufacturing capitalist rather than to those who labored for him, undermined the classic argument for supporting manufacturing industry as part of a viable mixed economy. The tariff might encourage more farmers to turn to manufactures, leaving the rest to charge higher prices for their grain, stated the Newark Advocate, but the overall effect would be of no greater benefit to farmers, since they "would have to pay a higher price for any manufactured article they bought, than they now do, and the question is, would they be any better off at the end of the year than they now are?"64 Such was hardly the encouragement that the American farmer wanted for their activity and
the Ohio Eagle even denied that a protective tariff would provide a home market for farmers' surpluses: the Home Leaguers "said it would bring our farmers a 'home market'!" and high prices.... But WHAT SAY FACTS?—and facts are stubborn things,—the best of all arguments. Why, facts prove that the Whig promise of a 'home market' was a GREAT HUMBUG, and that the Whig tariff passed to enrich the capitalists of New England, has robbed the farmers of the country of MILLIONS OF DOLLARS. It proves to be a system for impoverishing Peter to enrich Paul."65

More worrying for the Democrats, however, were the conditions which manufacturing labor was having to endure, with low wages, dependence on employers, in short those conditions which seemed to make men less certain guarantors of the virtue needed to support a republic. The Advocate held out some hope that the Tariff of 1842 would not succeed, because the very conditions it sought to impose would be unacceptable: "Can you prevail upon an American freeholder to forsake his plough, and throw away all the advantages of his glorious independence, and go into a workshop where he would breathe a sickly atmosphere, and be compelled to go to work at the ringing of a bell?"66 Other Democratic editors were less hopeful, however, and saw in conditions already extant in the North-east signs of the danger to the virtuous republic. Reporting meetings of like-minded men in New York, who were calling for easy access to western lands as a way of remediying worsening conditions for manufacturing labor, the Ohio Eagle sounded the warning that "in the older portions of the country labor is daily becoming more servile and capital more tyrannical."67 A year later the same newspaper concluded
its indictment of the protective tariff by stressing its unconstitutionality as well as "its injustice and the numerous evils attending it." Those evils included "Tyranny, oppressive taxation, perverted industry, the deviding [of the] community into classes—and the misery and distress of the masses . . . ."68 Clearly manufacturing industry had reached the point where it threatened to give the "privileged few" total domination over their labor force, a dependent relationship which threatened the very basis of the republic, that being an independent, virtuous citizenry.

Opposition to the tariff, and the claim that it was no longer safe to provide a "home market" for the sale of agricultural surplus by encouraging manufacturing, left one link of the Democratic political economy unsettled. Pushed back increasingly towards original Jeffersonian ideas of maintaining the farmer as the foremost citizen in American society, and opposing the unnatural encouragement of a manufacturing labor force, Democrats were forced to adopt ideas of increased overseas trade as well, as the best way of providing a market for the farmer's surplus.

Democrats had inherited the Republican favor for free international trade, but also the realistic view that unless all nations concurred then tariff duties would be necessary. However, President Jackson could still hope that all restrictions would be abolished, so that commerce could "flow in those channels to which individual enterprise, always its surest guide, might direct it."69 That such a viewpoint was a definite policy and not just a rhetorical expression of accepted principles, is shown by Jackson's numerous
proclamations suspending tariff duties on goods from various European states which came to reciprocal trading agreements with the United States, and also in his successful efforts to open the British West Indies markets to American goods. Moses Dawson celebrated this success, chiding former Secretary of State Clay for having neglected opportunities to secure the opening of the West Indies trade, "the advantages of which have been lost by our merchants and farmers for four years . . . ." 70 A year later Dawson demonstrated the great effects of Jackson's policy, noting that the "trade and navigation of the country have every day been flourishing more and more; the agriculture of the country has been thriving in an unexampled manner." 71 It was clear to the reader that trade, and the opportunities it opened for American farmers, were the elements that ranked uppermost in Dawson's mind.

The desire for more open trade to allow the export of agricultural surplus became more intense in the 1840s, as Democrats turned against protection of manufactures as a safe means for providing a market for that surplus. In this light another reason for opposing the tariff proposals of the Whigs presented itself: not only would the tariff create conditions unfavorable to a virtuous society, but it also threatened chances of freer trade, which was coming to form once again an essential part of the Democrats' political economy. Addressing the problem even before the Whig Tariff of 1842 had passed, the Newark Advocate considered it "nonsense to expect foreign countries to trade with us, if we refuse to trade with them—to buy our surplus cotton, flour, and tobacco, if we will not take their silk and cloths in
exchange." Wilson Shannon warned that the tariff would provoke reciprocal action from other countries, cutting off American exports of food. A "foreign market" was essential to western farmers, since even if manufactures in the North-east did provide a home market, its needs would be met adequately by its own farmers and those of the middle states. The Democratic Standard averred that low tariff duties encouraged exportation, and continued: "A liberal system on our part is what the agricultural interest needs, even more than the mercantile interest, the members of which . . . are the agents of the agriculturalists. The farmers should look deeply into this matter, and not permit their interests to be sacrificed for the benefit of a small manufacturing class, who are rich enough already and who need no protection." Finally the Democratic Convention of 1844 denounced the Tariff of 1842 as a "mad corrupt . . . policy," which would hurt international markets. The leaders of the party in Ohio went on to demand support for the yeoman's interests as a major goal of government: "It should . . . secure to him the just reward of his toil, by opening wide the markets of the world, to his surplus productions, or at least do nothing to close those markets and thus prevent his obtaining the best price for the products of his labor." For a Democratic party concerned with maintaining open trade for the encouragement of agricultural exports and with avoiding the dangerous results of a protective tariff, the years 1842-6 must have been painful ones, as the Tariff of 1842 wreaked its awful effects. "The Whigs got their high tariff, and by its operations deranged our
foreign commerce," complained the editor of the *Ohio Eagle*. Yet 1846 proved to be a year of relief, as the Democrat-inspired Walker Tariff was passed, reducing duties to revenue levels, and, perhaps most importantly of all, as the British government repealed its Corn Laws. Following on from the earlier opening of the West Indies trade, this seemed to represent the culmination of American struggles to gain access to British markets, struggles which had contributed a considerable amount to the coming of war between the two nations in 1812. Reflecting on the year's events, Polk clearly saw the repeal as a major success, noting that "new and important markets have already been opened for our agricultural and other products, commerce and navigation have received a new impulse, labor and trade have been released from the artificial trammels which have so long fettered them, and to a great extent reciprocity in the exchange of commodities has been introduced at the same time by both countries, and greatly for the benefit of both." Nine months earlier, reacting to the immediate news of the repeal, the *Ohio Eagle*’s editor was exultant: "The consequences will be glorious times to the farmers of the West. Corn is, in this region, the surest crop. The market will be abundant. We can scarcely form any conception of the value of such a market to the West." He went on, however, by warning that "the tariff lords of the East . . . wish to circumscribe the markets for the Western farmers, so that they can buy cheap and sell dear; and are in conjunction with the bank federalists of the West, laboring to prevent the creation of new markets for Western produce." The latter association of the tariff supporters with bankers sums
up the direction which Democratic thought on political economy had taken in the later 1830s and early 1840s. Hardened in their opposition to barking classes which seemed to pose an economic and political threat to the Democratic view of a virtuous republic, Democrats now came to perceive manufacturing capitalists in the same light, making use of the "exclusive privileges" afforded by a protective tariff, to prey upon the economic interests of other people in the community and to reduce their labor force to a degree of economic servitude.

Convinced that the balance in the economy was swinging from a safe mixture of agriculture and small-scale manufacturing, to a position where manufacturing was gaining ground at the expense of farming, Democrats veered away from their earlier support of a protective tariff, which encouraged artificially the developments they despised, to a stance in favor of overseas trade in agricultural surplus and of encouragement of settlement on western farms, while allowing manufacturing to develop at a more natural rate. This shift in policy represented a reaction against society as it seemed to be developing in the 1840s, with signs of conditions as had previously been known only in Europe. The **Democratic Standard**, warning against the introduction of the factory system in the United States, summed up the whole argument:

> We must omit no exertion to prevent the introduction of that poisonous fountain, aristocracy whence flow all the waters of bitterness that inundate England. If once an aristocracy be established in our country, we mean entrenched behind the ditches and ramparts of law, it will grow and expand and fasten upon every thing, till it produces the whole system of English contempts and factory cruelties and legal butcheries. And how can it be established?—By Banks and protective Tariffs; by institutions that will increase the wealth of the rich
and the poverty and number of the poor, and by laws that will enable one to command the services of thousands at expense of the whole? ... The present generation of operatives are well educated, and labor in factories from choice and not necessity. But will the next generation resemble them? ... Let us then be wise in season, and carefully prevent the introduction of the system, not by prohibiting manufactures, but by leaving them to their equal chance with other business, by granting them no monopolies, by excluding children under ten years of age from labor in factories and by prohibiting the employment of minors in any labor beyond eight hours daily.

History has revealed that Democratic efforts failed on a national level, with the continuation of banking and the gradual entrenchment of factory-style manufacturing, especially in the North-eastern sector of the country. Indeed it seemed to many Democrats, as it had done to Republicans before them, that an inevitable progress toward a more corrupt society was taking place. But once again, Democrats followed their Jeffersonian predecessors in maintaining a hope that the worst effects of such developments might not affect directly all areas of the nation. Just as Jefferson had placed his hopes in the continued virtue of his own "country," Virginia, and also of the West, so Democrats in the 1830s and 1840s kept faith with the western states. It is with the Ohio Democrats' perception of their State's role as a western bastion against the inroads of corruption that this study will conclude.
NOTES TO CHAPTER V


3. See Chapter 3 above.


6. Columbus Ohio Monitor, 19 May 1830.

7. Cincinnati Advertiser, 10 August 1836.

8. Ibid., 13 March 1833.


12. For Ohio's projects of internal improvement in the period up to the Civil War, see Harry N. Scheiber, Ohio Canal Era: A Case Study of Government and the Economy, 1820-1861 (Athens, Ohio, 1969).


15. Hamilton Western Telegraph, 15 August 1828, 16 January 1829.

17. Ibid., 25 February 1847.

18. *Newark Advocate*, 30 December 1824.

19. Inaugural Address of Wilson Shannon on taking the Oath of Office as Governor of Ohio (Columbus, 1838), pp. 6-7.


21. Ibid., 9 June 1830.


29. *Georgetown Castigator*, 1 June 1835.


37"Inaugural Address," Ibid., 5: 2227.
38Ohio Eagle, 1 February 1840.
39Hamilton Hickory Club, 6 October 1840.
40Democratic Standard, 12 March 1844.
41"Inaugural Address," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 3: 1000.
45Cincinnati Advertiser, 30 April 1823.
46Ibid., 21 February 1824, 25 February 1824.
47Ohio Monitor, 11 May 1822.
48Ibid., 27 June 1816.
49Ibid., 10 November 1821.
50Ibid., 6 April 1822.
51Cited in Georgetown Castigator, 12 February 1828.
52Marietta and Washington County Pilot, 30 August 1828.
53For the best discussion of the Nullification Crisis, especially
the motives of the leading nullifiers, see William W. Freehling,
Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina,
1816-1836 (New York, 1965).
54Ohio Monitor, 4 July 1832.
55"1st Inaugural Address," 7 December 1832, House Journal 31
(1832-3): 56.
56For details of the 1842 Tariff see Glyndon G. Van Deusen, The
57"Inaugural Address," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 5: 2229.
60Van Deusen, Jacksonian Era, pp. 200-4; "2nd Annual Message," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 6: 2350.
61"2nd Inaugural Address," Ohio Executive Documents, Reports, including Messages and other Communications made to the General Assembly of the State of Ohio (Columbus, 1836- ), 7 (1842): Document No. 8, p. 6.
62Democratic Standard, 16 July 1844.
63Ohio Eagle, 10 September 1846.
64Newark Advocate, 22 January 1842.
65Ohio Eagle, 18 September 1845.
66Newark Advocate, 22 January 1842.
67Ohio Eagle, 3 July 1845.
68Ibid., 10 December 1846.
69"1st Annual Message," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 3: 1012.
70Cincinnati Advertiser, 11 December 1830.
71Ibid., 30 November 1831.
72Newark Advocate, 15 January 1842.
74Democratic Standard, 26 September 1843.
75Cited in Democratic Standard, 13 February 1844.
76Ohio Eagle, 18 September 1845.
77See Chapter 2 above for Republican efforts at commercial
retaliation and their results.

78"2nd Annual Message," Richardson, Messages and Papers, 6: 2351.

79Ohio Eagle, 5 March 1846.

80Democratic Standard, 24 August 1841.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: OHIO DEMOCRATS AND THE WEST

The logical dynamic of Democratic rhetoric, with its emphasis on agriculture, and its eventual hostility to the encouragement of large-scale manufacturing industry, led to Democrats putting a premium on the West as a vital area for the successful maintenance of an agricultural, virtuous republic. Just as Thomas Jefferson had withdrawn within the confines of Virginia to see his dreams fulfilled, although he also had had hopes for the West, so Democrats in the Jacksonian era came to regard the West as playing an important role.

Of course, other historical interpretations have recognized the importance of the West for American politics, starting with the "frontier thesis" of Frederick Jackson Turner, who saw in the West the foundations of American democratic politics, and who also portrayed the West as a "safety-valve," guarding against radical political developments in the East. Homer Hackett follows very much in this tradition of thought, seeing the West as the source for most of the important political developments in the early national era, from Jefferson, who came from a frontier area of Virginia, to those new, young elements in the Republican party in the 1810s, headed by Henry Clay. Later historians disclaimed the importance of the West for the Jacksonian movement. Arthur Schlesinger concentrated mainly on Eastern labor groups as the source of inspiration for Democratic ideology, while Marvin Meyers also focused on Eastern thinkers in the Democratic party. Indeed, Meyers denied that the frontier element was the most important influence, seeing Democratic views of the West as a
projection of the sort of ideal society desired by Eastern Republican leaders onto lands across the Allegheny maintains. Richard Latner, with his examination of Blair's and Kendall's importance, re-introduced the idea of direct western influence on the Jacksonian party, and noted that the West bore "the burden of America's hopes for the perpetuation of a free, prosperous, and republican nation." John Ashworth agrees with such a view, and in stressing the importance to the Democrats of extension of the United States to the West, and of policies encouraging easy land settlement, explains: "The Democrats ... in the western states were determined to prevent the emergence of a new and alien economic order. As they themselves recognized, that order was already becoming a reality in some Eastern states .... The Eastern city was the focus of Democratic fears; the Western farm was the focus of Democratic hopes."4

Ohio in the period 1825-1850 presented a challenge to such Democratic hopes. As the title of Francis Weisenburger's book covering the period suggests, it was a time which witnessed The Passing of the Frontier. Ohio was becoming more integrated, with systems of roads and canals being developed at private and public expense, and in Cincinnati the state had the most thriving commercial and industrial center in the West.5 Already Ohio was the "most economically advanced state of the two western sections," and by 1840, it was "well on the way to developing a highly commercial and industrial economy ...."6 Fired by population growth, which saw numbers rise from 581,295 in 1820 to more than 900,000 by 1830, and over 2 million by 1850, the Ohio economy seemed to be moving along lines of progress which would end in a mixed
economy of agriculture and manufacturing industry.  

However, such a picture distorts to some extent the nature of the economy in Ohio in the period to 1850, just as the nature of the economy of the whole United States has been misleadingly portrayed in the past. Weisenburger, while spending numerous pages in describing commercial and manufacturing activity, clearly those areas best served source material, admits that Ohio was "still primarily an agricultural state." Sharp notes that although it was diversified, agriculture was the occupation still pursued by 76% of the population of Ohio in 1840. Ohio had not yet slipped down the path of manufacturing industry, with its concomitant evils which so scared the Democrats as they had the Republicans before them, and Ohio Democrats recognized this fact. They were happy that Ohio was still maintaining its predominantly agricultural economy, and hoped that such a situation might prevail for many years yet to come. Prepared to abandon the Northeast to whatever manufacturing was necessary for the United States, Ohio Democrats desired that their state might remain a simple agricultural area, a bastion of the republic of virtue.

The mid-1840s saw the question of westward expansion renewed once more with the annexation of Texas, and the formation of the idea which became known as "Manifest Destiny." For many this was an ideological commitment to the extension of freedom into the West, a freedom that allowed individuals to lead independent and healthy lives. "In its pilgrimage to new lands, what does Progressive Democracy give to every man, that will work and earn his bread?" This question was posed by the Ohio Eagle in 1846, and its answer was revealing of Democratic
attitudes to the West as a place of hope. "Freedom, individual freedom, competence—land to live upon, freedom from monopolies and perpetuities. It is the love of that freedom that converts the wilderness of the far west into a joyous garden."10 For President Polk, western expansion revealed that earlier fears of the collapse of an extended republic were groundless. "As our population has expanded, the Union has been cemented and strengthened. As our boundaries have been enlarged and our agricultural population has been spread over a large surface, our federative system has acquired additional strength and security," he averred in outlining the desirability of acquiring Texas for the Union. He went on to allude to the potential dangers of economic dependence, if no such expansion had occurred: "It may well be doubted whether it [the Union] would not be in greater danger of overthrow if our present population were confined to the comparatively narrow limits of the original thirteen States than it is now that they are sparsely settled over a more expanded territory."11

Clearly then, Democrats on both a national and local level recognized the importance of the West for the success of the American Republic. At times this recognition resulted in an almost chauvinistic faith by Ohioans in their section as the upholder of everything that was good about American society, and this attitude led to suspicions that the East was becoming jealous of the West and fearful of losing its political supremacy. In 1828 the Cincinnati Advertiser denied that the northeastern states favored a protective tariff, since it harmed their interests to the benefit of the West: "They view with green-eyed jealousy the rising, flourishing state of the Western regimes. They
consider it a species of political suicide to encourage the agriculture and manufactures of the states west of the mountains; they know that the fertility of the soil itself has induced numerous emigrations from the sterile regions of the north and east; and they are aware that if the productions of our soil be made still more productive by protecting duties, they will suffer further diminution of population by emigration.\textsuperscript{12} Seven years later Moses Dawson again raised the matter, and, suggesting that one day the capital of the United States might have to be moved west, noted that "the increase in population in the western and south western states, in comparison with the eastern, middle, and southern states is striking, if not astonishing, and plainly indicates that within a few years the great strength of this mighty republic will be west and south west of the Alleghenies."\textsuperscript{13}

In the 1820s this western chauvinism was manifested in several ways, including even a desire to be economically "independent" of the rest of the nation, a desire which ran directly counter to later hopes among Ohio Democrats to maintain Ohio largely free of manufacturing industry. Clearly affected by their experiences following the Panic of 1819, which had seen money flow East, and Ohio labor unemployed, future Democrats called for a greater degree of economic self-sufficiency for their state. In banking this was reflected in the attack on the national Bank, and a preference for State banks. Having discussed the problems faced by agriculture in the years of distress from 1819 to 1822, those problems including the distance to markets, fluctuating prices, and a glutted market, the editor of the \underline{Ohio Monitor} regretted that "the products of agriculture being our only exports, \ldots so we
are destitute of other valuable products to aid in procuring a supply of money for circulation." For him the solution was a diversification of Ohio's economy: "Our labor ought to be more divided. Cotton yards might be manufactured in Ohio, as well as in New England. We could feed the hands necessary to be employed in them; and it would be much easier to trade directly with manufacturers among ourselves, than to find a cash market for our grain, in order to raise money to send to other places for goods." In praising the Steubenville wool manufactory, first started in 1816, Dawson expressed similar ideas:

American wool, raised in the western woods, manufactured in a style so superior, and that west of the mountains, ought to be encouraged by every man that has a spark of patriotism in his breast. The advantages to be derived from such a manufacture in the western country are incalculable, and would soon procure for its inhabitants that real independence which never can be obtained, while we send the few hard dollars among us over the Atlantic to pay the people who would willingly deprive us of political, as well as sumptuary independence, for those articles which can be so well made among ourselves.

As the 1820s progressed, however, and as economic conditions improved, aided by the prospect of easier and cheaper communications with the East, as the Ohio Canal neared completion, these attitudes changed, and by the 1830s and 1840s Ohio Democrats were warning against the development of large-scale manufacturing on the lines of Steubenville in their state. This new attitude was partly in recognition of the conditions which were developing in the East, with manufacturing labor becoming increasingly dependent on their employers, and working under worse conditions, the repetition of which Ohio Democrats hoped to avoid in the West. After a trip to the East in
1833, the editor of the Monitor came out in opposition to his earlier view of a diversified Ohio economy, and averred that "the manufacturing must be done in the old eastern states, for which the west must exchange provisions. We are confident that the superior facility for raising meat and bread stuffs, can overcome the price of transportation, and undersell the farmers in that country; and, much more, can they undersell our manufactures of cloth, not only now, but for ages to come." The Ohio Eagle made clear the conditions in the 1840s which it hoped Ohio would avoid, and in so doing sounded reminiscent of earlier Republican comparisons of British manufacturing labor to the more virtuous and independent American population. In Chapter 5 we saw how the Eagle warned against the dangers of labor "becoming more servile and capital more tyrannical," but only in "the older portions of the country," by which the newspaper clearly meant the Northeast; and a week later the same newspaper noted how once again it was the condition of labor in "England and some parts of this country" which demonstrated the degrading conditions of poverty.

Just as Jefferson and Madison had recognized that "household manufactures" were not to be included under those forms of manufacturing which posed a threat to the virtuous republic, so did Ohio Democrats, since such "household manufactures" were performed by individuals or families rather than by a dependent labor force. After praising the prosperity of the state and attributing it to the industry, enterprise and intelligence of people, Governor Robert Lucas brought attention to the success of the State's "agriculture, commerce and manufactures." However, he added this important distinction:
In speaking of manufactures, I do not allude to establishments, that require large investments of capital and protecting duties to enable them to sustain themselves, for we have few such in Ohio, but to such as have been established by our enterprising citizens, for manufacturing materials produced within the state." Lucas went on to explain just what he meant, saying that he was referring to those manufactures "carried on by mechanics in their shops; and particularly that description of manufactures in which our industrious females are the principle operators, and may be found in the greater proportion of families in the state...." The making of clothes, bedding, carpeting and other articles, was "calculated to render us independent as a people," and constituted truly domestic manufactures.18

It was such a combination of agriculture and household manufactures which Ohio Democrats hoped to maintain for some time, at least until the growth of population in the state became so great as to demand a larger degree of diversification. Lucas again pointed this out, noting that the "State is at present an agricultural State, and must continue so to be, as long as labor can be more profitably employed in agricultural, than in manufacturing pursuits." Only when "her population becomes too numerous, and her capital too great to be employed profitably in agriculture, a portion of each will be employed in other pursuits," pursuits which Ohio would nevertheless follow successfully when the time came.19 Wilson Shannon reiterated such views, and stressed that Ohio was still a young state, and therefore not in a position to be forced to pursue manufactures ahead of time.

It is true that a great portion of our State is well adapted to the business of manufacturing, and offers
facilities and inducements for this branch of industry which will not always be overlooked by enterprising capitalists... But it is not in the infancy of a country that we see manufacturing establishments springing into existence, and rivaling agriculture in the creation of actual wealth—manufactures are always of slow growth, and rarely arrive to much importance until the labor of a country becomes greater than the demands of agriculture require. 20

The desire to maintain Ohio as a state primarily engaged in agriculture, while avoiding the worst elements of manufacturing industry, was mirrored by attitudes towards banking. The early attack on the National Bank as a force of external influence within the State, draining it of its specie in 1819-1822, has already been seen above, and similar rhetoric would be used to justify later attacks on the Bank as well. Moses Dawson denounced the spread of Bank branches, seeing their purpose as to obtain "an undue influence in the states where that influence has not been hitherto felt." He hoped that the people would be "cautious of entrapping themselves with these branches... for as sure as they suffer themselves to be thus entrapped they will be made slaves to the Bank." 21 The attack on the Bank can be seen partly as a reaction against an external power, reflecting local, chauvinistic feelings against a centralized institution, and initial support for State and local banks by Democrats confirms this. Yet by the end of the 1830s all banks had been linked together, by Democratic rhetoric as part of the same general conspiracy by a moneyed aristocracy, trying to champion new forms of economic development within the nation. John Ashworth has examined the actions of western Democrats against banking in general, and sees them as part of the rejection of a "new and alien economic order." While banking in the West might have been less
mature, and therefore more harmful when panics occurred, giving a sound material reason for opposition to banks in that section. Ashworth suggests that the very fact that banks were less well established in the West gave the Democrats hope that they could be eradicated completely. Giving up the East as a lost cause, the destruction of banking, in an effort to remove their contribution to the conspiracy aiming to change the economic order and subvert the republic, was a much more feasible goal for the Democrats in the West, and it was in these states, therefore, including Ohio, that Democratic attempts to prohibit banking altogether were most vigorous.22

"We must return to the simple, industrious, frugal mode of life, which distinguished us as a people in time past. Buy less from the merchant and he will import less." This advice, given by the Committee of the Democratic State Convention of 1840, really sums up the Democratic view of the sort of society best suited for United States and Ohio. Limited imports, manufacture of only those goods deemed absolutely necessary, and those to be done largely be means of "household manufactures"; these were the mainstays of a prosperous and independent nation. Not only would they guarantee independence of the nation from foreign powers, but they would also safeguard the American people from the dangers of financial distress, and the use which the moneyed classes might have made of the resulting indebtedness: "this policy will furnish an effectual shield to the people against all bank panics, derangements and pressures in the money market."23

Drawing upon an inherited body of Republican thought, Ohio Democrats explained their policies by means of rhetoric stressing the
importance of a particular form of economic occupation to the success of the Republic. This rhetoric was not limited to vague reminiscences of the better days of the Jeffersonian era, days which had been ended by the influence of the "monster" Bank. Rather, Democrats encompassed in their public appeals a complete program of economic policy, which they justified as part of an attempt to secure the republican experiment against the wiles of what they presented as a corrupt, moneyed "aristocracy." Just as early Republicans had stressed the independence and industry of the farming classes as essential for thwarting these attempts at political and economic influence, the Democrats did the same, and presented their policies as part of an effort to reduce the influence of the "aristocracy," while securing those conditions most likely to encourage the dominance of agriculture.

Their program consisted of both positive and negative elements, and, again like that of the Republicans, changed over the course of time. The encouragement of agriculture by means of agricultural societies, cheaper land policies, and the provision of easier transportation of its surplus production were among the most constant elements of their plans, while equally positive in nature was their concern to find an appropriate market for the surplus, whether at first by encouraging American manufactures, or later by returning to a favor for overseas trade. This latter switch in emphasis reveals one of the more negative aspects of their policy, their rejection of the protective tariff as a safe way of providing a market. However, their opposition to barking provides the most obvious example of a negative reaction against a form of economic occupation deemed dangerous for the
survival of a republic based upon virtue. The Newark Advocate made clear the main outlines of the type of developments which Democrats wished to see. Asking to what source the prosperity of the United States could be attributed, the Advocate suggested, "To a protecting Tariff? To the Credit System? No—-but entirely to the freedom of our institutions, to the fertility of our soil, to the salubrity of our climate, and to the indomitable energy and activity of the American people." It was to the "American people" that Democrats turned for the success of the Republic: their industry would be rewarded by prosperity, as long as special privileges were not allowed to interfere, and their independence would ensure against a predatory financial and manufacturing aristocracy gaining influence over them and the nation.

History had revealed that Democratic efforts to prevent the introduction of the sort of developments which they regarded as a threat to their view of the importance of the "American people," largely failed, both on a national and state level. Ohio, like the United States as a whole, was not to be rid of banks or public debts, and similarly, instead of seeing a reduction, or at least a limit on the amount of manufacturing industry, the Democrats in the 1850s witnessed a boom in manufacturing to levels unknown until then.

However, even in the face of these developments, and the emergence of a national issue of much more immediate importance, namely that of the expansion of slavery into territories won in the Mexican War, Democrats still expressed their concerns for a specific type of political economy, based on free trade, and regulation of banking. In the midst
of the Civil War they would deplore attempts to centralize the economy and banking system, using terms consistent with their Jacksonian background. The legacy of Jeffersonian political economy remained
NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

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8Weisenburger, Passing of the Frontier, p. 88.

9Sharp, Jacksonians, p. 160.

10Lancaster Ohio Eagle, 12 March 1846.

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