

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Indian Removal: Two Points of View**

In 1830 John Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee, went to the Supreme Court to fight Indian removal. In the early 1830s, he warned members of the Iroquois Nation of the dangers of the U.S. policies. In 1835 Andrew Jackson, the popular President of the United States, made Indian removal one of the key points of his annual address to Congress.

Read the words of these two statesmen, and then answer the questions below.

**Excerpts from John Ross's words to delegates of the Iroquois League:**

"Brothers: The tradition of our Fathers . . . tells us that this great and extensive Continent was once the sole and exclusive abode of our race. . . . Ever since [the whites came] we have been made to drink of the bitter cup of humiliation; treated like dogs . . . our country and the graves of our Fathers torn from us . . . through a period of upwards of 200 years, rolled back, nation upon nation [until] we find ourselves fugitives, vagrants and strangers in our own country. . . ."

"The existence of the Indian Nations as distinct Independent Communities within the limits of the United States seems to be drawing to a close. . . . You are aware that our Brethren, the Choctaws, Chickasaws and Creeks of the South have severally disposed of their country to the United States and that a portion of our own Tribe have also emigrated West of the Mississippi -- but that the largest portion of our Nation still remain firmly upon our ancient domain. . . . Our position [sic] there may be compared to a solitary tree in an open space, where all the forest trees around have been prostrated by a furious tornado."

**Excerpts from Andrew Jackson's Seventh Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1835**

"All preceding experiments for the improvement of the Indians have failed. It seems now to be an established fact they can not live in contact with a civilized community and prosper. Ages of fruitless endeavors have at length brought us to a knowledge of this principle of intercommunication with them. . . ."

"No one can doubt the moral duty of the Government of the United States to protect and if possible to preserve and perpetuate the scattered remnants of this race which are left within our borders. In the discharge of this duty an extensive region in the West has been assigned for their permanent residence. It has been divided into districts and allotted among them. . . ."

"Such are the arrangements for the physical comfort and for the moral improvement of the Indians. The necessary measures for their political advancement and for their separation from our citizens have not been neglected. The pledge of the United States has been given by Congress that the country destined for the residence of this people shall be forever "secured and guaranteed to them."

"A country west of Missouri and Arkansas has been assigned to them, into which the white settlements are not to be pushed. No political communities can be

formed in that extensive region, except those which are established by the Indians themselves or by the United States for them and with their concurrence. A barrier has thus been raised for their protection against the encroachment of our citizens, and guarding the Indians as far as possible from those evils which have brought them to their present condition."

1. What do you think was the goal of each speaker?  
Ross:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jackson:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What does Ross say has happened to other Indian groups?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What reason does Jackson give in favor of Indian removal?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What effects does each speaker expect Indian removal will have?  
Ross:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jackson:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

You may download, print and make copies of these pages for use in your classroom, provided that you include the copyright notice shown below in all such copies.

Copyright © 1999 Houghton Mifflin Company. All Rights Reserved.