

President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress- "On Indian Removal"

English 3

Ms. Ruff

1829/1830

It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the **benevolent (charitable, kind)** policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy **consummation (completion)**. Two important tribes have accepted the **provision (law)** made for their removal at the last session of Congress, and it is believed that their example will induce the remaining tribes also to seek the same obvious advantages.

The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. The **pecuniary (financial)** advantages which it promises to the Government are the least of its **recommendations (favorable outcomes)**. It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large **tracts (areas)** of country now occupied by a few savage hunters. By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of the whites it will **incalculably (immeasurably)** strengthen the southwestern frontier and render the **adjacent (neighboring)** States strong enough to **repel (resist)** future invasions without remote aid. It will relieve the whole State of Mississippi and the western part of Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the states; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will **retard (delay)** the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good **counsels (advisors)**, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.

The waves of population and civilization are rolling to the westward, and we now propose to **acquire (get)** the countries occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to land where their existence may be **prolonged (lengthened)** and perhaps made **perpetual (everlasting)**. *Doubtless it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but what do they more than our ancestors did or than our children are now doing? To better their condition in an unknown land our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects. Our children by thousands yearly leave the land of their birth to seek new homes in distant regions.*

Can it be cruel in this Government when, by events which it can not control, the

Indian is made **discontented (unhappy)** in his ancient home to purchase his lands, to give him a new and **extensive (widespread)** territory, to pay the expense of his removal, and support him a year in his new **abode (residence)**? How many thousands of our own people would gladly embrace the opportunity of removing to the West on such conditions! If the offers made to the Indians were extended to them, they would be **hailed (greeted)** with gratitude and joy.

The policy of the General Government toward the red man is not only liberal, but generous. He is unwilling to submit to the laws of the States and **mingle (associate)** with their population. To save him from this alternative, or perhaps utter **annihilation (destruction)**, the General Government kindly offers him a new home, and proposes to pay the whole expense of his removal and settlement.