legalistic meaning were the same, but every day that the Union had existed had made it a greater folly, a greater wrong, a greater crime to breach it. The states had lost or lessened some original rights by non-user for forty years. The excessive states rights position of the Calhoun Democrats brought about a revolution and a new aspect of the question. Yet Jackson stood unqualified for the rights of states within their province and for a limited but powerful federal government within its proper province.

Jackson in complete control of his party named his successor. He turned over to him a thoroughly organized, loyal, and enthusiastic party strong in numbers and in faith.

CHAPTER XIII

VAN BUREN, STATESMAN AND POLITICAL STRATEGIST

1837-1841


Martin Van Buren was in many respects the antithesis of his predecessor and sponsor. His views and general principles, his political tenets and policies closely approximated Jackson's. But whereas Jackson was gaunt he was round; Jackson rugged, he smooth; Jackson vehement, he diplomatic; Jackson raw, he done to a turn. Jackson had no more force of his convictions, but Van Buren had a keen appreciation of opposing opinions, and a disposition to outflank rather than run over, to convince rather than demolish, his opponents. Jackson's natural qualities were toned down and held in restraint; Van Buren's natural talents were carefully built up and added to, and trained. The two acting together on sound principles were invincible; Jackson made Van Buren President; Van Buren helped to make Jackson a great President—and Jackson never failed to feel the obligation.

Born at Kinderhook, New York, in December, 1782, the son of a small farmer, an innkeeper some say, little is known of Martin Van Buren's early days. The curse of politics still pursues him in that practically all writings about him begin with, and are restricted to, his political career. He must have had some good schooling for he knew a little Latin and all his letters, speeches and papers betoken more than average culture, though his campaign biographer in 1834 rather stresses his humble beginnings. He studied law under W. P. Van Ness, a leading attorney in New York, and was himself a lawyer of unusual ability and success.

Delegate to a Republican (Democratic) convention at eighteen, in 1808 he was Surrogate of Columbia County, and in 1812 State Senator. From 1815 to 1819 he filled the office of Attorney General of the state, being State Senator part of the time, and
VAN BUREN, STATESMAN AND POLITICIAN

Chapter 1

The Transformation of a Gentleman into a Politician

Born in a log cabin in 1782, Vander Lippe Van Buren was the son of a Dutch farmer who had emigrated to the United States from the province of Zeeland in the early 18th century. His family had settled in the Hudson Valley of New York, where John Van Buren grew up in a rural, agrarian environment. Despite a lack of formal education, Van Buren displayed a natural aptitude for learning and a deep curiosity about the world around him. His thirst for knowledge and his inclination toward practical wisdom were evident from an early age, as he spent much of his youth exploring the surrounding countryside and helping his father manage the family farm.

As a young man, Van Buren was drawn to the world of politics, inspired by the democratic ideals of the American Revolution. He was particularly influenced by the political philosophy of Thomas Jefferson, who encouraged ordinary citizens to become involved in the affairs of government. Van Buren's political awakening coincided with the rise of Andrew Jackson, whom he initially supported as a way to gain influence within the Democratic Party. However, as his political career progressed, Van Buren found himself at odds with Jackson on several key issues, including the Bank of the United States and the annexation of Texas.

Despite these disagreements, Van Buren remained a loyal supporter of Jackson's administration, serving as Secretary of State from 1829 to 1831. His tenure in this position was marked by a number of controversies, including the controversy over the recharter of the Bank of the United States. Van Buren's efforts to secure its recharter were unsuccessful, and he eventually resigned from the post in protest.

In 1832, Van Buren ran for President as the candidate of the Democratic Party, challenging the incumbent, Andrew Jackson. In a bitter campaign, Van Buren was narrowly defeated, but he emerged from the election with a strong following among the party's rank-and-file. This support would prove crucial in the years to come, as Van Buren worked to rebuild the Democratic Party and prepare for his next run at the presidency.

Throughout his political career, Van Buren was known for his pragmatic and务实 approach to governance. He was a master of the political art, skilled at building coalitions and navigating the complexities of Washington politics. Despite his political successes, Van Buren was also a man of principle, who refused to compromise on issues he believed were of fundamental importance to the nation's well-being.

Van Buren's legacy is complex, marked by both achievements and setbacks. As a statesman and politician, he played a crucial role in shaping the Democratic Party and its role in American politics. His influence extended beyond the political arena, as he also made significant contributions to the development of the law and the administration of the United States government.

I N P R I N C I P L E S
Favour the extension of the Federal Government to the States so as to prevent the encroachment of the States upon the Federal Government.

The following points were the main issues discussed:

1. **The Importance of a Strong Federal Government**
   - The necessity for a strong central government to ensure national unity and stability was emphasized.
   - The proposed measures would strengthen the Federal Government's role in managing internal affairs, thereby reducing the need for local intervention.

2. **Military Preparedness**
   - The call for increased military spending and readiness to prevent foreign aggression.
   - Emphasis on the importance of a strong military to protect the nation's interests.

3. **Economic Policies**
   - The proposal for a balanced budget and economic reforms to combat inflation.
   - Support for tariffs and protective trade policies to support domestic industries.

4. **Social Welfare**
   - The need for a comprehensive social welfare system to address the needs of the less fortunate.
   - The establishment of a national system of education and healthcare.

5. **Infrastructure Development**
   - The importance of investing in infrastructure to promote economic growth and development.
   - The proposal for a national transportation system to facilitate trade and commerce.

The Democratic Party's stance on these issues would appeal to a broad base of voters, seeking a balance between federal and state authority, economic growth, and social welfare.
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