

**Volume 4**

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**The Hayne-Webster Debate - I**

**Lead: The argument over tariffs led to the Hayne-Webster debate.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: Throughout U.S. history there has been a running dispute over trade. Competing regions and political parties have tried to use the taxing power of the federal government, which alone can place a tax on imported goods, to give them an advantage. In the 1800s Northern states were often in favor of high tariffs on imported goods, particularly**

**from England, because a big tax on imports meant they would cost a lot more than items made in the USA, thus protecting American infant industry. The South with very little manufacturing, wanted the lowest possible tariff so that when southerners went overseas to sell their cotton, tobacco and grain they would not face high import tariffs imposed by foreign governments in retaliation for high U.S. tariffs. Each region was out for its own best interest. In 1828 Congress passed the so-called "Tariff of Abominations." It protected northern manufacturers, but was bad for the south.**

**Southern representatives in Congress began to look for a way to**

**defeat this tariff. In 1829 Connecticut Senator Samuel Foot, moved to cut back on the sale of cheap federal land in the west. Southerners saw the chance to forge a coalition with westerners irritated at this attempt to cut off sales of cheap government land. Together they would repeal the tariff and keep up cheap land sales.**

**In January 1830, Senator Robert Young Hayne of South Carolina kicked off the debate but suddenly listeners realized he had changed the subject. Instead of cheap land and tariffs Hayne began to talk about the constitution and states' rights. He insisted that states had entered the Union freely and could nullify federal laws, such as the Tariff of**

**Abominations, that were not in the states' best interest. In response Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts rose to defend the idea of Union. Next time: Hayne and Webster debate the Constitution.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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**Jervey, Theodore Dehon. *Robert Y. Hayne and His Times.* New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1909.**

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**Wheeler, Everett Pepperrell. *Daniel Webster, The Expounder of the Constitution.* New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905.**