

president

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Foreign And Domestic policies of American presidents

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George Washington

Domestic Policies

Concerning the domestic policies, there several laws and policies were passed during his reign as president to put the new nation in order. Washington as president had established several policies among which included; policies that regulated and controlled trade between Indians and non-Indians coupled with a further restriction imposed on the travel of non-Indians on Indian territories. His policies as president have provided grounds for the issuance and granting of citizenship to non-Americans.

It is important to note that some of his policies had illegalized the transportation of slaves out of the United States. He also supported some policies such as the creation of a tax on whiskey and the creation of a national bank. These policies were advanced by the federalists. (Burns, 2013)

Foreign Policies

He had assumed office during a time when the French revolution had taken a toll in most parts of Europe, and due to this reason, Washington had decided to align himself with foreign policies most of which were neutral. Washington's decision to remain and stay neutral in his foreign policies had been viewed as offering a middle ground especially when some parties thought that the US could join forces with Britain, while others thought the US could join forces with France. In his opinion, he never believed a new nation as the United States could involve

itself in the affairs of the other nations. He had tried as much as possible to maintain and apply neutral foreign policies.

President John Adams

Domestic policies

Regarding the domestic policies, Adams signed into law some legislations passed by the congress such as the ⁹ naturalization act which increased the required residency time for one ⁵ to be granted citizenship from five years to fourteen years, the alien act which allowed for the detention of those considered as aliens without trial; the alien enemies act had further given powers to the president to willfully deport aliens who were considered national security threat, the sedition act which had imposed heavy fines and imprisonment for subversive speech; the act had as well outlawed conspiracy against the enforcement of federal laws. It is noted that these domestic policies led to the fleeing of hundreds of aliens between 1798 and 1799. (Shull, 1993)

Foreign policies

While in office, it has been argued that John Adams had primarily left almost all the domestic issues for the congress to handle and in most occasions focused on the foreign policies. The foreign policies mostly focused on commerce and signing of treating with other countries;

the president has chosen this to focus on the foreign issues owing to the vast diplomatic experience he had gathered as a vice president over the years.

Some of the most notable policies during his time include the negotiation of a treaty between the US and Britain, concerning trade, he had negotiated free trade between the US and some parts of the West Indies.

Thomas Jefferson

Domestic policies

The president has focused on policies that ensured that everyone was secure and that none had the privilege to cause injury to the other. He supported all the initiatives that ensured better lives to the citizens of the United States. Jefferson, during his two terms in office, had subverted the previous federalists' policies that mainly focused on urban empowerment and instead turned to promote agriculture through the sale of western public lands. Through his policies, he had hoped to make America the world's breadbasket capable of exporting agricultural commodities; and through this, he has also believed he could help in building political freedom among the American Yeomen by making them economically ok. He believed that this was only possible by removing the oppressive taxes against the American farmers. (Burns, 2013)

President Jefferson had supported the rights of the states and insisted on limited federal government coupled with limited taxes. This was however against the will and desire of the federalists who wanted a stronger federal government. Thomas Jefferson championed for the abolition of whiskey and rum taxes, in addition to this, he managed to successfully slash the federal budget.

Foreign Policies

The most notable foreign policy during this period was the embargo act which was aimed at forcing Britain and France into respecting the neutral status of the United States in the war between France and England. The act successfully barred all importations and exports of goods from and to England and France thus hurting and wrecking the economy of England which had heavily relied on the trade with the US to support its economy.

In conclusion, Jefferson is as well remembered for the successful purchase of Louisiana from France to maintain the spirit of Pinckney's Treaty.

James Madison

Domestic policies

President Madison before his election as the president served as the secretary of state in Thomas Jefferson's presidency. Considering this fact, he had tried to do most of the things in almost a similar manner. Having been elected at a time that America was undergoing increased industrialization and trade, Madison signed several legislations that directly promoted the industrial and commercial advancements. He further supported the infrastructural developments proposed by Henry Clay among others; the American system, an economic plan that primarily

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aimed at unifying the nation through improved transport networks and restrictions imposed on imports.

Concerning the issue about the national bank, after the expiry of the charter of the first bank in 1812, Madison realized the importance of the bank and in so doing, signed a ⁸ bill to charter the second bank of the United States

Madison had, in conclusion, established the basis through which the separation of powers between the three branches of government could be done likewise between the state governments and the federal government, he further established and laid out system checks that ensured that no level of government. (Andrade & Young 1996)

Foreign policies

Madison's foreign policies had been guided by the desire ⁶ to maintain the external image of the United States. The declaration of war on Britain had been viewed as a second war for independence; the war had subsequently provided an opportunity for the United States to secure their maritime boundaries.

James Monroe

Domestic policies

One of the domestic policies adopted by James Monroe as president was the revival of the national tours, an activity that was first undertaken by President George Washington. The national tours were aimed at inspecting the defence fortifications however the main underlying reason was to act as a reach out a mechanism to the people around the country. Due to the national tours, his presidency was regarded as ⁴an era of good feelings for the United States. As a president, the national tours ensured that he remained familiar and popular among the people.

During the economic downturn that occurred in his second year in office, Monroe supported the ⁴relaxation of payment terms on mortgages for lands purchased from the federal government ⁴proposed by Secretary of Treasury William Crawford.

In the spirit of the American system that advocated for the internal improvements and developments of the nation, Monroe signed the legislation passed by the congress that allocated funds for the repair of the Cumberland ²Road. In 1825, he signed a bill that provided funds for the extension of the Cumberland Road from Wheeling to Zanesville. President Monroe encouraged the scrapping off of political parties, he subsequently held a belief that the government could operate without the political parties.

Foreign policies

Having gained re-election into the office for the second term, Monroe was convinced to let the world feel the ever-growing power of the US. The Monroe doctrine had pronounced an end to colonization by the Europeans in the western regions. The Monroe doctrine initially

created a formal ² relationship between the US, South America and Central America further preventing the European powers from interfering with any of the American continents. (Mandelbaum, 1996).

John Quincy Adams

Domestic policies

The president had the desire to improve and develop the American society, and through this, he supported the federal government's role in supporting projects and institutions aimed at improving the conditions of the people. He too supported the American system that was first proposed by Henry Clay; an action that was primarily meant to make America a self-sufficient national economy.

Foreign policies

John Quincy Adams' presidency substantially opened up trade opportunities through the signing of commercial treaties between the US and other countries such as Austria, Brazil and Denmark.

Through his foreign policies, he was able to resolve some issues some of which included the disarmament of the Great Lakes thus giving the nation a strong ownership claim to the pacific coast. (Mandelbaum, 1996).

Jackson Andrew

Domestic policies

President Jackson disliked the ideas revolving around the national bank and hence refused to sign the national bank bill in 1833 and instead he deposited the Federal Reserve deposits in state banks which led to widespread rumours of corruption.

President Jackson operated the policy of politically rewarding his followers by awarding them jobs for political support. Jackson introduced a new system of vetoing legislation based on policies; he vetoed a road bill passed by congress on grounds that it would benefit only a single part of the country, as opposed to the earlier presidents who only vetoed bills based on constitutional requirements. (Shull 1993)

Foreign policies

Jackson's administration was not focused in foreign affairs, however, he was somehow concerned with the signing of treaties to help secure new trade openings and to subsequently settle the outstanding damage claims between the United States and the other countries. For example, he wanted the French to pay for claims that dated back to the era of Napoleon. Jackson was however not successful in most of his foreign dealings and he ended up failing; for example, his attempts to disassociate Britain and South America were a strategy that failed.

Martin Van Buren

Domestic policies

In response to the economic panic of 1837, the president adopted policies that established an independent treasury system; this he had hoped would help return the financial situation to normal. He had continued to support Jackson's federal policy that had sought the removal of Indians through the Indian Removal Act of 1830; his government oversaw the removal of Indians to the west of Mississippi. (Burns, 2013)

Foreign policies

In the international scene, president Buren had tried to maintain America's neutrality, for example, the Canadian independence issue especially after the endorsement of the neutrality law which had required the United States to remain neutral in international conflicts.

President Buren had practised patient diplomacy which successfully maintained a mutual relationship between the United States and Great Britain despite the tensions which could have easily led to war. To avoid imminent with other countries, the president used diplomatic negotiations to solve issues some of which include border disputes. The continued display of non-aggressive behaviour by the president was enough indication that the president was committed to maintaining neutrality and peaceful settlement of disputes.

William Henry Harrison

Domestic policies

During his inaugural speech, President William had indicated some of the issues that his administration would act to ensure we're not interfered with. Some of these issues included; the non-interference with the bills passed by the congress; he believed that the president could only use the veto power in situations when the bills passed by the house were unconstitutional.

He had also pledged support to the financial policies adopted by the congress stating that the president had no fiscal responsibility in checking financial budget excesses. Concerning the issue about slavery, he had left this at the discretion of each state to define their rule of operation to avoid unnecessary confusion. (Burns, 2013)

Foreign policies

Considering the short duration he had been office before his untimely death, he had formulated no foreign policies because America was faced with no external aggression at this point but rather his focus had been channelled to address the issues back home; clues that were only obtained from the inaugural speech.

John Tyler

Domestic policies

During his second term in office, he vetoed two bills passed by the house for higher tariffs. Tyler while exercising his constitutional rights indicated that a president who lacked the party support could still exercise the presidential powers and privileges

In his first term in office, Tyler had objected a bill meant to revile the second Bank that had been dismantled by President Jackson terming it as unconstitutional. He further questioned the rights of the federal government to operate such an institution. (Andrade & Young, 1996)

Foreign policies

In his last days in office, Tyler signed for the annexation of Texas into the union.

In 1842, his administration successfully ended a war between America and the British North American Colonies in Florida. This was possible through the signing of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Subsequently, he ⁵signed the Treaty of Wanghia with China which gave the United States access to the ports of Asia.

James K Polk

Domestic policies

After assuming office, Polk was committed to ensuring the reduction of tariffs imposed on imported goods. He held a belief that the taxes were supposed to be only high enough to cater for the federal government's expenses and in 1846; the congress passed a bill which successfully reduced the tariff rates from 32 % to only 25 %.

Polk was also interested in ensuring the re-establishment of the independent treasury system which had been previously abolished in favour of the state banks. His ambition became a

success in 1846 as the congress approved the independent treasury act. (Andrade & Young, 1996)

Foreign policies

Polk initiated negotiations with Britain that resulted in the signing of the Oregon treaty subsequently leading to the annexation of Oregon without the occurrence of war. Polk signed a commercial treaty with the New Granada, a treaty that ²promised to ensure the neutrality of the Isthmus of Panama ²and for the upcoming construction of the Panama Canal in 1914. He had also initiated similar discussions with Spain with a primary aim of purchasing Cuba; unfortunately, Spain was in interest to sell off the territory.

His decision to complete the annexation of Texas to become the 28th state led to a diplomatic showdown between the US and Mexico leading the American-Mexican war

Zachary Taylor**Domestic policies**

Taking office at a time when the people needed solutions to the issue of slavery in the western regions. Everyone looked at him for the solution; he later decided to adopt antislavery policies.

Foreign policies

One of the most important foreign policies adopted by President Taylor was the diplomatic negotiations between the US and Britain with very positive plans to build the

Nicaragua canal; the resulting treaty Clayton-Bulwer was an agreement between the US and Britain as they agreed to denounce over the territory and the canal that would be built later.

The president took some decisions among which included the confrontation of Spain over the arrest of several Americans who were subsequently charged with piracy issues and the further assistance of England to search for the British explorers who were lost in the arctic. (Burns, 2013)

Millard Fillmore

Domestic policies

Fillmore can be remembered for his insistence on the federal government to enforce ⁶the Fugitive Slave act of 1850 which required the federal government to help in the recapture of escaping slaves and consequently return them to their previous owners. He publicly announced that he would provide military assistance to ensure the statute was adhered to incase required.

As part of his ambition to expand the economy of the US, he favoured the support of the federal government to build the transcontinental railroad followed by the subsequent opening of market avenues in Japan and the restoration of diplomatic relations with Mexico. (Loss, 1989)

Foreign policies

He advocated for the commercial trade expansions and due to this, he sent Mathew C Perry to Japan to convince the government to enter into trade and diplomatic relations with the US successfully resulting into the treaty of Kanagawa in 1854.

In 1851, as part of his foreign dealings, he ratifies a commercial treaty with El Salvador. He, however, became strict on some issues like for example, he invoked the Monroe doctrine at a time when France wanted to interfere with the independence of Hawaii in 1851.

Franklin Pierce

Domestic policies

After his election, Pierce was more concerned with ensuring that the anti-slavery agitations came to an end for the general purpose of peace and trade. To achieve this, he tried to promote sectional unity in his cabinet through the inclusion of both anti-slavery individuals together with those who supported slavery. He also laid the preparation policies for the establishments of railroads to open up the Northwest Territories for settlement. The signing of the Kansas-Nebraska act led to sectional tensions in Kansas as thousands of antislavery individuals came in from Missouri further undermining the popular sovereignty. (Burns, 2003)

Foreign policies

In the international arena, his main aim was to expand the territorial and trading interests of the US abroad; this could be seen in his attempt to purchase Cuba from Spain. His administration initiated the Gadsden Purchase which enabled the purchase of over 30,000 square miles of Mexican land to help in opening up the southern territory of California. The Ostend manifesto concluded that in case it was determined that the occupation of Cuba by Spain could have posed a security threat, and then it was just to forcefully take the island from Spain. (Moore, & Lanoue, 2003)

James Buchanan

Domestic policies

After assuming office, Buchanan hoped to maintain peace between the groups of those that supported the slavery and those that were against it. Just two days after his swearing-in, the Supreme Court passed the Dred scot case which indicated that the federal government had no absolute responsibility in the regulation of slavery.

Concerning secession of states from the union, he asserted that states did not have the rights to secede however he also believed that constitutionally he had no rights to stop them. While trying to maintain the support of the pro-slavery Democrats, Buchanan advocated for the pro-slavery constitution by sending ² a message to Congress urging for the acceptable of Kansas as a slave state.

Considering the threats of civil war and the sectional divisions, Buchan did not pay much attention to international issues. His foreign policies were focused on strengthening America's influence in the outside world, especially to the south. (Andrade & Young, 1996)

Foreign policies

As president, his main ambition still focused on the annexation of Cuba and the Caribbean region. The assertion of American sovereignty came at a time when the British came into conflict with the US in Central America. Focused to maintain America's sovereignty, he sent naval forces with one primary aim to limit the influence of British in Central American Countries. Buchanan believed in military excursions to recover or acquire new territories.

Abraham Lincoln**Domestic policies**

Lincoln held beliefs that the states had accepted unconditional sovereignty to the national government as colonies and territories and could therefore secede, the union was therefore permanent. In his answer to the southern, he stated that the justification of secession was only possible in case of stringent violations of rights; he considered secession as an *unconstitutional act of treason*. Lincoln signed into law the thirteenth amendment that sought to guarantee the practice of slavery in the states that already practised it. (Shull, 1993)

Foreign policies

Lincoln granted belligerency status to the confederacy to British which served as antislavery sentiment into strong political opposition to the Confederacy.

Andrew Johnson

Domestic policies

Johnson's domestic policies saw him clash with the radical elements in the Republican Party with a subsequent impeachment by the congress. In 1866, Johnson vetoed the Freedman's Bureau bill and the Civil Rights bill that was meant to protect the blacks. During this year, the congress passed the fourteenth amendment that granted citizenship to the blacks; Johnson, however, urged the southern states not to accept it. (Burns, 2013)

Foreign policies

Johnson had forced the withdrawal of French from Mexico, this he did by sending 50,000 us soldiers who had been tested in battle. This was an application of the Monroe doctrine of non-interference. Johnson through his foreign policies repaired the bad relation between the US and

Britain; he enforced neutrality laws against the Irish who attempted severally to take over Canadian territory, a property owned by Britain.

Ulysses S Grant

Domestic policies

Grant assumed office at a time when the country was grappling and trying to recuperate from the impacts of the civil war, as president he sought to follow Lincoln's approach to addressing the reconciliation with the south. He was also determined to ensure that the federal government protected the newly freed slave states and to further ensure that the confederates did not gain power in the south.

In the question of black suffrage, Grant continued to apply the legislation passed by the congress together with the federal laws to protect the black citizens.

In response to inflation, the president vetoed the inflation bill that was aiming at increasing more paper money in the economy. (Shull 1993)

In conclusion, he supported the civilization and ultimate citizenship of the Indians.

Foreign policies

Grant presented a treaty to the senate which sought to annex the Dominican Republic however the treaty was rejected. The congress did not want to get involved in what they considered as an unstable and foreign land. Fish, however, tried to initiate the purchase of lands intended for the building of canals in either Nicaragua or Panama also failed.

Concerning trade, the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 signed in Hawaii allowed the US to import sugar, native crops and duty-free goods, the same treatment was also to be given to industrially manufactured goods in the US in Hawaii; this increased the economic bond between the two regions. The involvement of Grant in the negotiation of peace in Liberia during the revolution by the local Grebo people can as well be considered as a notable foreign engagement.

Rutherford B Hayes

Domestic policies

Some of the domestic policies during his reign include the civil reformatations which required the president to give top federal appointments to the top people in his party, Hayes however a different opinion and felt that the appointments were to be given based on merits.

Hayes advocated for the return to the gold standard where all money would be backed by gold reserves. This is he made possible by signing into law Specie Payment Resumption Act of 1875, which had required the US treasury to convert paper money for gold. (Burns, 2013)

He subsequently made available the federal currency for improvements in infrastructure in the southern territory.

Foreign policies

Hayes acted as arbitrator in the Triple Alliance War between Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay and Paraguay; solving the case in favour of Paraguay by giving the Chaco region to them.

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