

## “General Jackson Slays the Many-Headed Monster”

This cartoon is making fun of Andrew Jackson's plan to destroy the Bank of the United States and its support among state banks. Jackson often referred to the Bank of the United States as the “Monster Bank” and in this cartoon it is shown as a serpent. All the various heads represent the various branch banks of the Bank of the United States that existed all around the country. The biggest head in the middle in the top hat is Nicholas Biddle and he is the president of the bank. Nicholas Biddle's top hat is labeled "Penn" (for Pennsylvania) and "\$35,000,000." This refers to when the Pennsylvania legislature went against Jackson's wishes and rechartered the Bank. The idea is that Jackson is slaying the monster bank by vetoing the re-charter bill and then removing the deposits (all the money).

In the cartoon, Jackson, Martin Van Buren, and Jack Downing (a Jackson supporter) struggle against a snake with heads representing the states. Jackson (on the left) raises a cane marked "Veto" and says, "Biddle thou Monster Avaunt!! [*Go away!*] avaount I say! or by the Great Eternal I'll cleave [*slice*] thee to the earth, aye thee and thy four and twenty satellites [*other banks*]. Matty if thou art true...come on. if thou art false, may the venomous monster turn his dire fang upon thee..." Van Buren: "Well done General, Major Jack Downing, Adams, Clay, well done all. I dislike dissensions beyond every thing, for it often compels a man to play a double part, were it only for his own safety. Policy, policy is my motto, but intrigues I cannot countenance." Downing (dropping his axe): "Now now you nasty varmint, be you imperishable? I swan Ginerall that are beats all I reckon, that's the horrible wiper wot wommits wenemous heads I guess..."

### Analyzing Political Cartoon – Questions

1. What does this cartoon suggest about Jackson's attitude toward the Bank?
2. What opinion does the artist of this cartoon have about Jackson? About the bank? Why do you think so?