

## Abstract: Union Forever

This paper examines South Carolina's argument for nullification of the Tariff of 1828 as it compares to the original justification for nullification laid down by the Founding Fathers. At the beginning of the 1830s, the United States of America faced political disunion. Coming out of the War of 1812, the Union's economy had suffered immense distress due to British blockade and sought to rebuild its economy more resilient to foreign interference. This led to the enactment of several tariffs on imported goods to increase native industry. While initially created to be protective in nature, political engineering drove the tariffs higher and higher until their original purpose became nothing more than memory, spawning a movement in the Southern states which were less benefitted by the new tariffs to find a way out of them. The government of South Carolina took the lead in this movement and chose to base their claims off the writings of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. In their own time, the writers of the Constitution of the United States and Declaration of Independence, fought against the expansion of Federal authority through the unconstitutional Alien and Sedition Acts. To eliminate this unlawful expansion, Madison and Jefferson established the principle of nullification which was to serve as the State's last line of defense against a runaway federal government and preserve the Union of States. While the two political debates were similar, South Carolina took one step too many and stretched its arguments into unlawful territory of its own and doomed her cause to failure.