

The Trail of Tears is the name given to the forced migration of the Cherokee people from their ancestral lands in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and North Carolina to new territories west of the Mississippi River. Jackson supported Georgia's aggressive actions toward the Cherokee and had no intention of interfering to protect the nation, even after the Worcester ruling. Georgia's state government asserted jurisdiction over the entire Cherokee territory, annulled the nation's laws, annexed the land, and began distributing plots by lottery. The Cherokee Nation took its case to the United States Supreme Court. The legal battles that ensued raised profound questions concerning states' rights, the status and sovereignty of indigenous nations, and the separation of powers between branches of the federal government. This law authorized the president to designate lands west of the Mississippi for tribal use and to negotiate treaties ensuring their movement. The expansion of white settlements in North America started encroaching on Native-American lands, ultimately creating the pressures that led to the removal of Native Americans. However, in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), Marshall held that Georgia could not extend its law over the sovereign lands of the Cherokee nation, and had no authority to displace the indigenous people. Many of them adopted Western dress and gave up hunting and gathering for a market economy based on export-oriented agriculture and became literate. Nonetheless, the prevailing sentiment in Georgia favoured expelling the Cherokee. Earlier in his career, Jackson had defeated the Creeks and Seminoles on the battlefield, leading to the appropriation of their lands. President Thomas Jefferson and others proposed setting aside tracts of the western lands for the indigenous nations.