

## **SECTIONAL POLITICS: NORTHEAST** © by Ghere/Spreeman

### **SITUATION**

It is the 1830s. The country is confronted by a series of divisive issues. In town squares and village meeting halls lively debates have arisen around such topics as slavery, Indian removal, the national bank, the protective tariff, the sale and disposal of public lands and national subsidies for internal improvements. Emotions are running high among the population and the gravity of these issues is not lost on the senators from each section of the country.

The Northeast is a diverse area with a mixture of rural and urban constituents. Much of the population is made up of small farmers but their political influence is limited and many national political issues are of little interest to them. A growing number of factory workers are emerging in the cities but these are often women or immigrants who have little political influence. In the past, merchants and shippers had been the most dominant political influence (and they continue to be important) but, manufacturers have emerged as the new political force in the northeast. As a US senator from the Northeast, you would usually be most concerned about the interests of the merchants and manufacturers but an occasional vote on some national issue important to small farmers would solidify their support for you in the next election.

### **POLITICAL GOALS AND SCORING INSTRUCTIONS FOR NORTHEAST**

5 points for PASSING a tariff of more than \$.30 on the dollar.

3 points for PASSING a tariff of \$.11 to \$.30 on the dollar

1 point for PASSING a tariff of \$.01 to \$.10 on the dollar

4 points for PASSING the rechartering the United States Bank

4 points for PASSING federal subsidies for canal building

3 points for a law excluding slavery from the territories

0 points for legislation on the removal of Native Americans

0 points for legislation on Western lands

### **EXPLANATION OF THE ISSUES**

Protective Tariff - The most important national political issue for you is a high tariff to protect the growing manufacturing industry from British competition. Manufacturers demand this high tax on imports while shipping interests are mildly opposed to it. The tariff will have little effect on most of your constituents

and you realize that the Southeast (due to its dependence on exports and imports) will bear the greatest burden of paying this tax. Since the tariff is the major revenue source for the national government, it would provide funding for other policies beneficial to the northeast such as a national bank and internal improvements. What could be better than protecting Northeastern manufacturing, providing federal funds for canals and banks to help the Northeast and having the Southeast pay for it.

Bank of the United States and Internal Improvements - The National Bank and Canals improving the transportation network between the Northeast and Northwest are of great concern to your region. The National Bank will provide a source of investment capital for the manufacturing industry as well as the booming shipping industry revitalized by the Asian trade. Canals will facilitate opening up the west as a market for northeastern manufacturing goods as well as the transportation of Western farm products to the Northeastern cities. These developments will greatly benefit both manufactures and merchants in the Northeast. Some struggling small farmers and urban poor support canals to promote their emigration to fertile western lands. Northeastern farmers failed to recognize that improved transportation would create competition with Western grain farmers that would eventually force most Northeastern farmers to shift to dairy and vegetable farms.

Slavery - Slavery is a less important issue for Northeasterners at this time but one that is very emotional for many of your constituents. Some of your most vocal and aggressive constituents totally reject the institution of slavery as a moral abomination that should be immediately abolished. Other constituents strongly oppose abolition fearing that the result would be an influx of freed slaves into the Northeast. The one thing that can be agreed upon is opposition to extending slavery into the territories. For some this is due to moral reasons, for others due to the unfairness of having small farmers competing with slave agriculture and, for Northeastern politicians, due to concern for the national political balance.

Western Lands and Indian Removal - Disposal of Western lands and Indian Removal are of limited concern to you. Northeastern farmers anticipating future migrations and abolitionists seeking to limit the spread of plantation agriculture would both prefer cheap land in small plots in the west. On the other hand, large landowners and manufacturers would prefer that their labor supply not be lured west by the promise of cheap land and the sale of land in large tracts would facilitate speculative buying by wealthy Northeasterners. Most Northeasterners are unconcerned about the plight of Native Americans but a small, very vocal group have a romantic image of the "Noble Savage" and object to Indian

Removal on moral grounds. Both are issues that you can bargain with the West to get the things that you want.