

Free essay on the nullification crisis

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The Nullification Crisis is one of major controversies which faced the United States in America (USA) in the 1830s after the enforcement of the controversial 1828 and 1832 tariffs. Although supported by the northern states which had perceived it as constitutional moves aimed at salvaging the crumbling Carolina, it was vehemently opposed by the southerners in equal measure. Even if they were initially sharing political ideologies, ' Andrew Jackson and John Calhoun split to get an opportunity to fight for the enforcement or nullification of this legislation' (Buel, 2005). In deed, this was another trying moment in the country which needed well-thought and clear negotiations to tackle.

If I were to John Calhoun, I would urge him to fight for his southern state at the expense of the general government. I would advise him to oppose these tariffs and advocate for their nullification. Although it was initially aimed at stabilizing Carolina, the tariffs were later accused of being exorbitant (Ratcliffe, 2000). It would be a very unfair legislation that would pose a big burden on the people of Carolina who had been hit by a financial meltdown. Instead of benefiting the South as intended, the new tariffs would obviously harm it. Instead, it would benefit the North whose people were not directly involved in it.

As a political theorist, I believe that Calhoun had a deeper understanding of the US constitution. Although it gives the general government a high stake over the state governments, it should at no one time, misuse its powers. As Ellis, Richard states, ' the claim that it has sovereign powers should be properly understood' (P 117). In this regard, I would advise him to advocate for the nullification of these tariffs because they were unconstitutional. Each

state government still has constitutional powers to liberate over such matters.

The constitution grants the central government powers to have a full control over commerce. However, I would advise Calhoun come out strongly and oppose its actions to impose tariffs on the Carolinas. The proponents of this legislation should be challenged that the powers given to the national government to control commercial activities does not necessarily mean protection. Therefore, Carolina should not be forced to comply with such legislation so long as it is good for its people.

Moreover, I would advise Calhoun that it was not necessary for the central government to take such measures. As protested by the Carolinas, these tariffs were so higher and would be a big burden to them. It was to be rejected because it would only worsen their situation in the long run. It would only increase the ideological rifts between the nationalist north and the state-right south. After all, 'state legislatures have constitutional powers to defend their respective states' (Brant, 2000). Thus, they can pass any legislation in opposition of any law introduced by the general government if deemed unconstitutional. Such legislations, if tolerated, can compromise the sovereignty of such states and render them vulnerable to national manipulation.

Conclusively, I would advise Calhoun to fight very hard in favor of the southerners. It is unconstitutional for the central government to purport to be having a full control over the state governments. The truth is that it has limited powers which may be subject to the approval of the legislature. Such tariffs were unacceptable and had even been opposed by the Virginia

Resolution of 1798. It would be people like Calhoun who would eventually ensure the nullification of these tariffs, but only if properly advised.

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