“Jim” Mead of New York

JAMES M. MEAD of the 42nd congressional district of New York, which includes the most populous section of Buffalo and a big rural section to the west, has been re-elected to congress for the ninth time. Though his district includes a heavy Republican enrollment, his repeated elections through three Republican administrations speaks highly of the service he has given his constituents.

His public career dating back a quarter of a century as a member of the board of aldermen, supervisor, member of the New York assembly and then to congress, is outstanding and in the last session he was one of the few Northerners, and with one exception, the only New Yorker, to be chairman of an important congressional committee. He heads the post-offices committee, and is regarded as the country’s outstanding expert in legislation affecting this branch of government service. The proof of this was established in the airmail and ship subsidy hearings during the last session of congress.

In the New York state assembly he was a colleague of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Through his entire public career he has been a persistent and constructive advocate of legislation for social betterment.

“Jim” Mead, as he is known affectionately to congressional leaders, announced last summer that he was a candidate for the speakership of the house, at the coming session. The Southern congressional bloc, dominantly Democratic, seems to claim that it has an inalienable right to this responsible post of our legislative branch. The recent election, however, places 214 non-southern Democratic votes in congress and the North now feels that it is high time that it should have something to say in the selection of the speaker, as well as the distribution of chairmanships to the important committees—a right the Southerners always held religiously in their vest pockets.

New York state with its congressional bloc, representing population and industry, far surpassing the mid-west and southern congressional cliques, has not been honored with a speakership in more than a century. The great Empire state should be considered in the selection, now that there has been a swing toward northern sentiment in the running of the next congress.

The most formidable candidate for the speakership from the northern group of states is Jim Mead of Buffalo, who has a personal political record surpassed by none of his colleagues. He is an astute politician; an able leader and above all he is anti-radical. He is a self-made, robust individual, big in body and mind who rose from the ranks of a railroad switchman to congressional leadership and university degrees.