

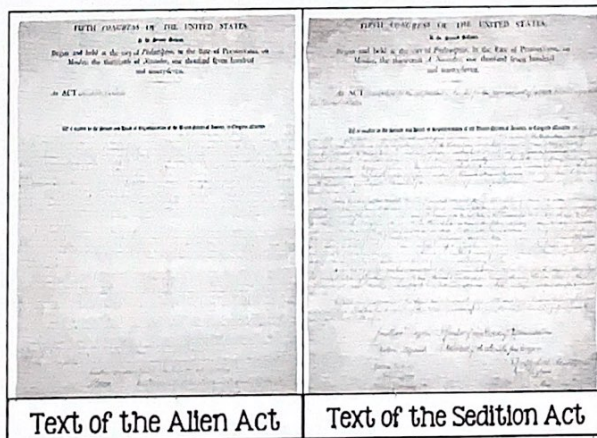
### Document #3

# The Alien & Sedition Acts

The conflict with France made Adams and the Federalists popular with the public. Many Democratic-Republicans, however, were sympathetic to France. One Democratic-Republican newspaper called Adams, "the blasted tyrant of America." In turn, Federalists labeled Democratic-Republicans "democrats, mobcrats, and other kinds of rats."

Angered by criticism in a time of crisis, Adams blamed the Democratic-Republican newspapers and new immigrants. Many of the immigrants were Democratic-Republicans. To silence their critics, the Federalist Congress passed the **Alien and Sedition Acts** in 1798. These acts targeted **aliens** - immigrants who were not yet citizens. One act increased the waiting period for becoming a U.S. citizen from 5 to 14 years. Other acts gave the president the power to arrest disloyal aliens or order them out of the country during wartime. A fourth act outlawed **sedition**, saying or writing anything false or harmful about the government.

With these acts, the Federalists clamped down on freedom of speech and the press. About 25 Democratic-Republican newspaper editors were charged under the act, and 10 were convicted of expressing opinions damaging to the government.





*Questions:*

1) How did many Democratic-Republican editors of newspapers express their feelings towards President Adams?

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2) Who did Adams blame for negative criticism?

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3) What party were most new immigrants from?

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4) Define **alien**.

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5) Define **sedition**.

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6) How did the Alien Act make it dangerous being a new immigrant during this time?

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