

## The XYZ Affair

Britain was impressing and kidnapping American sailors French goods around 1793 during Britain - French war. To solve this issue Britain and the United States signed a Jay's Treaty in 1794. French viewed the treaty as the United States siding with Britain while Britain and France were at war. United States claimed to be neutral but they continued trade with Britain after treaty which made France angry. It retaliated by impressing American sailors. President John Adams sent three diplomats to France in 1797, to try and negotiate peace and avoid war. John Adams was trying to follow Mr. Washington's advice to stay neutral and stay out of affairs in Europe. During the meeting between French and United States



diplomats, French diplomats demanded bribe from the Americans to stop the impressment of sailors.

American newspapers published this report by referring X, Y and Z diplomats of France.

Hence this became XYZ affair.

This incident made Americans angry and were ready to go to war. Even Washington was ready to come out of retirement to fight. Months later the diplomats met again and were able to reach a peace agreement.

XYZ affair had major impact on politics. Federalists began to see immigrants from France as possible threat and spies.



## Alien and Sedition Acts

### Alien Act 1798

Alien Act was the result of XYZ affair because federalists had lost trust on immigrants. They saw immigrants as threat and spies, so they passed Alien Act in 1798.

Alien Act had three points:

1. They extended the time immigrant had to live in U.S. before they could apply for citizenship from 5 to 14 years.
2. Congress was given power to arrest or deport any male citizen from a foreign country with which the U.S. will be at war.
3. President got the power to deport any non-citizen suspected of plotting against the U.S. Deportation for two years.



## Sedition Act 1798

Sedition Act was the violation of the 1st amendment, which gave protection of the freedom of the press. Whoever sedition Act has one point.

- 1- It made illegal to publish anything that criticized the president, congress or the law it created.

As the Alien and sedition Acts were illegal, The States had the right to nullify or legal overturn these Acts.

Jefferson and Madison wrote Virginia and Kentucky resolutions which nullified the acts. This was the first instance of the doctrine of nullification.