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## For or against the French revolution ?

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❶ English satirical cartoon by Isaac Cruikshank, January 1, 1793. It mocks Edmund Burke, the famous MP, who had fiercely attacked the French revolution in his *Reflections on the revolution in France*, published in 1790.



❷ Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letter from Norway*, written in 1795, published in 1796. Wollstonecraft had been in France from December 1792 to April 1795.

Here I met with an intelligent literary man, who was anxious to gather information from me relative to the past and present situation of France. The newspapers printed at Copenhagen, as well as those in England, give the most exaggerated accounts of their atrocities and distresses [...] Still the Norwegians [...] wish well to the Republican cause<sup>1</sup>, and follow with the most lively interest the successes of the French arms<sup>2</sup>. So determined were they, in fact, to excuse everything disgracing the struggle of freedom, by admitting the tyrant's plea<sup>3</sup>, necessity, that I could hardly persuade them that Robespierre was a monster.

➤ Using the documents and your knowledge, explain why the English were divided about the French revolution.

<sup>1</sup>The Republican cause : the cause of the French Republic.

<sup>2</sup>By then, the French revolutionary armies were winning the war.

<sup>3</sup>Plea : justification or vindication. "The tyrant" refers to Robespierre.