

24 JEFFERSON AND HIS COLLEAGUES

Federalist New England. The hostility to Jefferson in this region was no ordinary political opposition, as he knew full well, for it was compounded of many ingredients. In New England there was a greater social solidarity than existed anywhere else in the Union. Descended from English stock, imbued with common religious and political traditions, and bound together by the ties of a common ecclesiastical polity, the people of this section had, as Jefferson expressed it, "a sort of family pride." Here all the forces of education, property, religion, and respectability were united in the maintenance of the established order against the assaults of democracy. New England Federalism was not so much a body of political doctrine as a state of mind. Abhorrence of the forces liberated by the French Revolution was the dominating emotion. To the Federalist leaders democracy seemed an aberration of the human mind, which was bound everywhere to produce infidelity, looseness of morals, and political chaos. In the words of their Jeremiah, Fisher Ames, "Democracy is a troubled spirit, fated never to rest, and whose dreams, if it sleeps, present only visions of hell." So thinking and feeling, they had witnessed the triumph of Jefferson with genuine alarm, for Jefferson they held to be no better than