

## **The Alien Registration Act**

The Alien Registration Act (also known as the Smith Act) was passed by Congress on the 29th of June, 1940. This act made it illegal for anyone in the United States to advocate, abet, or teach the desirability of overthrowing the government. The law also required all alien residents in the United States over 14 years of age to file a comprehensive statement of their personal and occupational status and a record of their political beliefs. Within four months a total of 4,741,971 aliens had been registered. The main objective of the act was to undermine the [American Communist Party](#) and other left-wing political groups in the [United States](#). One of the first men to be arrested and imprisoned under the act was [James Cannon](#), the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.