

## “Making the World Safe for Democracy”: Free Speech During World War I

“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” **What is the story behind how each of these historical figures challenged law and authority during the Great War?**

Historical FIGURE	Reputable SOURCE?	QUOTE? (brief/relevant to violation of the law)	ARGUE: Violate <a href="#">Sedition Act</a> ? Fair punishment? Constitutional?
“Red” Emma Goldman	<a href="https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/special-collections/primary-source/emma-goldman-restriction-civil-liberties-1919">https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/special-collections/primary-source/emma-goldman-restriction-civil-liberties-1919</a>	”The conscience of America wanting peace, was stifled in the folds of the national emblem, and its voice drowned by the martial beat of a thousand war drums.”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. sedition act: This violates the sedition act because in her book, she speaks against what the U.S. government is doing by going into the war. The Sedition act states that one can’t “print” any “scurrilous” language. Scurrilous means making claims about someone with the intent of ruining their reputation.</li> <li>2. The United States government refused to recognize Goldman as a citizen, meaning she wasn’t subject to the laws that other citizens were subject to. However, that meant that the government still had the right to deport her, which they did, for violating the Espionage Act by speaking against the draft and the government.</li> <li>3. This sentence and jail was unconstitutional because she is allowed to speak her mind and speak freely due to the first amendment saying, “Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech... and to petition the Government for redress of grievances”</li> </ol>



	scholar source: Chicago Unbound, University of Chicago Law School		which the first amendment, freedom of speech, allows him to do. By punishing him, it is a violation of the first amendment, in turn making it unconstitutional.
Historical FIGURE	Reputable SOURCE?	QUOTE? (relevant to violation of the law)	ARGUE: Violate <a href="#">Sedition Act</a> ? Fair punishment? Constitutional?
John White	<a href="https://erenow.org/modern/give-me-liberty-american-history/644.php">https://erenow.org/modern/give-me-liberty-american-history/644.php</a>	"A court sentenced Ohio farmer John White to twenty-one months in prison for saying that the murder of innocent women and children by German soldiers was no worse than what the United States had done in the Philippines in the war of 1899-1903"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. John White violated the sedition act when he made the claims that the German murder of women and children was no different from what the United States perpetrated in the Philippines, due to the disloyal nature of these claims to the "form of the United States government".</li> <li>2. Though this was in violation of the Sedition Act, the first amendment says that the government cannot make any laws "abridging the freedom of speech", which means that the sedition act in itself is unconstitutional, and he cannot be imprisoned under its statutes.</li> <li>3. Unconstitutionally sentenced to twenty-one months in prison, so there is no basis for imprisonment of any kind</li> </ol>

<p>"Big Bill" Haywood</p>	<p><a href="https://www.famous-trials.com/haywood/221-haywood">https://www.famous-trials.com/haywood/221-haywood</a></p>	<p>"In 1918, Haywood was convicted of violating a federal espionage and sedition act by calling a strike during wartime"</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. William Haywood broke the sedition act as he urged his fellow union members to strike during wartime. This is in violation of the sedition act which: "made it a crime to 'willfully urge, incite, or advocate any curtailment (stoppage) of the production of [anything] necessary or essential to the prosecution of the war". His union was in control of textiles and other necessary materials, so by urging for a strike he attempted to hurt the production of items necessary for the war effort.</li> <li>2. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison for his efforts, a draconian punishment for his actions. This sentence is not only extreme, but it also violated the first amendment, as it abridged upon his freedom of speech and his right to hold a strike.</li> </ol>
<p>Eugene Debs</p>	<p><a href="#">National Archives - Free Speech on Trial</a> by Glenn V. Longacre, an archivist with bachelor's degree in history and masters degree in public history</p>	<p>"They have always taught you that it is your patriotic duty to go to war and slaughter yourselves at their command. You have never had a voice in the war."</p>	<p>He is in violation of the sedition act because he is criticizing the draft and urging people to question it. Soldiers are necessary for "the prosecution of the war" and he is "curtailing the production" by telling people they shouldn't have to fight in the war.</p> <p>He was sentenced to ten years in prison and only served two. We think it is a fair punishment based on the sedition law, but the sedition law itself is not constitutional because it violates his First Amendment right. Under freedom of speech, he should have the right to criticize the government.</p>