



# Free Speech Under Fire

## The Shift:

We were taught to see free speech as a bedrock right. But today, censorship has taken new forms. Speaking up about injustice, naming racism, or questioning power too often leads to retaliation: jobs lost, posts deleted, books banned, entire histories erased.

## The Reality:

- **Workplace Retaliation:** Educators, journalists, and organizers are being punished for telling the truth.
- **Platform Control:** Corporations silence voices by cutting access, shadow-banning, or deleting content.
- **Policy & Law:** Entire communities are targeted by legislation that limits what can be taught, read, or said.

## Why It Matters for Us:

Censorship is not neutral. It always protects those already in power. When people of the global majority, LGBTQ+ communities, or allies speak out, we are more likely to be silenced, disciplined, or erased. The price of truth-telling has gone up — but silence is not an option.

## Montessori Parallel:

In a Montessori classroom, the child's voice is respected. Their questions are not censored; they are met with curiosity. When we erase voices in our public square, we betray the same principles we claim to teach: dignity, freedom, and truth.

## Survival Move:

- **Protect yourself:** Know the risks when you speak and build support before you do.
- **Share strategically:** Use networks and community platforms that are harder to silence.
- **Stand together:** One voice can be targeted; a chorus is harder to erase.

**Remember:** Silence may feel safe in the moment, but it feeds the system. Free speech survives only when we keep speaking — and keep protecting each other when the system tries to shut us down.