

On the “Combating misinformation and disinformation bill”

Thankyou for allowing me to have my say, ironically, on an issue that has to do with freedom of speech. I will begin with a definition taken from Wikipedia:

“Misinformation is incorrect or misleading information. It differs from disinformation, which is *deliberately* deceptive and propagated information.” (From Wikipedia)

If I understand this definition correctly, misinformation is merely information that is false, coming from someone who does not realise it is false. This use to be called ignorance, so I’m not sure why we need a new word like misinformation. Disinformation on the other hand is also information that is false, however it is coming from someone who knows that it is false but is attempting to propagate it as though it were true. Another word for this is propaganda and it is argued that politicians for example do this quite a lot. Again, I’m not sure why we need a new word to describe this. Simplicity in the use of language, as the great novelist George Orwell argued, implies sincerity, it implies honesty, whereas to quote Orwell, “Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give the presence of solidity to pure wind.” Misinformation and disinformation as this bill describes, to my mind, is another example of such political language.

In a world where our lives are to a great extent connected online, this bill is an attack on freedom of speech. It is not an attack on democracy though, as democracy is dead already, but it is a further progression into totalitarianism, that is, total subservience to the state. Present day politicians like to call their system of government democratic but this is just more propaganda, rather the current system is totalitarian, which means, centralised and dictatorial, with complete subservience to the state. The governments handling of the covid situation, using Daniel Andrews as the most extreme case, is proof that this is true. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the actions of Daniel Andrews, and others, is a separate matter, but to be truthful, these actions describe a totalitarian system of government. In a democracy, the people would have been free to debate the situation among themselves without interference from the government and would have been able to decide collectively what they should do in relation to remaining indoors, or in taking a vaccination, or in taking any other action for their common benefit. This is what happens in mature democratic societies, but when someone comes along and takes control in an authoritarian manner and says this is what we are doing regardless of what others say or think, this only creates resentment and therefore social unrest as was witnessed. This is not what a leader who abides by democratic principles would do. Therefore, this bill is not an attack on democracy, since you can’t attack something which is dead already, but rather it is further progression into totalitarianism, an extension of the situation under covid. If the politicians sign this into law, they will be taking away the people’s power to speak among themselves. Whether or not the people are saying what is true among themselves, this in itself is a separate issue, they should be free to believe what they want if we are to live in a truly democratic way. This would not be a problem though if the media was doing it’s job properly in delivering information honestly and not supressing alternative views as has become their custom. Ignorance in a populace only becomes a problem when information is suppressed. So again, this bill pleases those who want the people to become totally obedient to the dictates of the state, as it is about stripping them of power is what it’s really always been about. A ruler or a collection of rulers, regardless of whether they call themselves politicians or something else, increase their own power in proportion to the diminishing power of the people. This is also true in a reverse sense. As the power of one group grows, the other diminishes. In healthy states, the rulers fear the people as power rests more on the side of the people, whereas in unhealthy states, the reverse is true, the people fear the rulers because much power resides with these rulers.

Unhealthy states are a sign of this imbalance of power. That is what this bill seeks to do, create even more imbalance, and therefore more resentment and social unrest. Good luck.

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