Free speech is an all-or-nothing concept; there are no gradations where it can be slightly limited. When governments start determining what can or cannot be expressed, regardless of its veracity, society loses its openness and freedom.

The most effective way to combat misinformation or disinformation is through public debate, where ideas are openly discussed and the public decides what they believe to be true. In the digital age, the internet and its platforms have become the modern town square, a space that must remain unaffected by government influence. It should be left entirely to the people to use as they see fit, with very limited hindrance. The level of hinderance should also be decided by the people and not by the Government.

Governments have frequently erred by disseminating information they initially deemed true, only to have it debunked in real-time. However, the heavy censorship imposed by Big Tech, acting on behalf of governments worldwide, has created a highly biased and conflicted flow of information. As a result, people have been deprived of the ability to make informed decisions regarding critical matters such as bodily autonomy.

If the government starts dictating what can or cannot be discussed online, both publicly and privately, our democratic society would transform into an authoritarian regime. Furthermore, governments tend to increase their powers and rarely relinquish them. Therefore, we must tread cautiously and not allow any governing body, regardless of its intentions, to decide what topics are acceptable for discussion. This principle holds true for any genuine democracy.

It is crucial to remember that words themselves are not acts of violence, and feeling offended is subjective. These factors should not serve as excuses to trample on the fundamental human right of freedom of speech.

The Australian people need to develop resilience and confront ideas they may find disagreeable. They should not shy away from engaging in open debates to test their thoughts and beliefs, allowing their peers to either validate or challenge them.