

Malcolm Vivian

Phone [REDACTED]

Mail to [REDACTED]

3rd July 2023

With Reference to :-

Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

Dear [NAME]

As a member in my area, I am writing to you to address my concerns about the above subject, as a member representing your constituents; I have the following concern regarding the impingement of free speech that this proposed bill would introduce. Free speech, freedom of expression, and freedom of association is vital to a vibrant society and development of social and political life in a Constitutional monarchy such as Australia.

Where governments and bodies in the past have sort to suppress these freedoms, this has led to the imposition of punitive suppression and even imprisonment for people that have dared to speak against official narratives and conventions of the time.

A case in point would be Nicolaus Copernicus's publication in 1543 of "Six Books Concerning the Revolutions of the Heavenly Orbs "(That planets of the solar system revolve around the Sun). Move forward nearly 100 years to Galileo and his improvement of the telescope which enabled him to observe more fully the motion of planets and moons and the confirmation of the theory put forward by Copernicus. However, the Catholic Church at the time suppressed this information and even imprisoned him under house arrest until his death in 1642.

Galileo was also responsible for developing The Scientific Method, whereby by the process of observation, asking questions, seeking other opinions, testing and peer review; have enabled the greatest breakthroughs of the past in the fields of science, and of course, Social Science.

I therefore point out when governments, religious bodies, or other foundations seek to limit the freedoms of expression, association, and speech, it is to the detriment of society.

History is there to provide lessons from the past, let's not make the same mistakes by stifling healthy debate just because it does not seem to fit in with the "mainstream" thought and expression (narrative). Governments should never be the sole arbiter of information.

I have also attached separately an article on 19th Amendment to UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) of which Australia is a signatory.

I have also attached DIGI (Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation) This is a voluntary code that could be strengthened with consultation in the industry.

Yours truly, Malcolm Vivian