

I could not be more strongly opposed to this bill. It is all about censorship. Censorship is power. The one who censors takes power away from everyone else.

One of the things that I have noticed in my 64 years as an adult Australian is that there is an ever-present paternalism. Government heads and their bureaucratic employees constantly tell us what's good for us.

Are Australians are so stupid and susceptible to persuasion by others that they cannot discern fact from fiction or right from wrong?

You propose a bill to stamp out "disinformation" or "misinformation". But who says what is "disinformation" or "misinformation"? Who decides? Some bureaucrat handpicked by the minister? Are these bureaucrats or the minister assuming God-like powers?

The arrogance of this remarkable. Bureaucrats used to be called 'public servants'. Now it seems they are made public masters.

The bill draft says "Misinformation can pose a risk to the health and safety of individuals, as well as society more generally."

Well ironically, I have seen this with government misinformation about lockdowns, masks, and COVID-19 vaccines and the TGA . This is still going on, and still many Australians are not aware of this. This has truly caused much harm.

This bill, if it passes, means that those deemed to be disseminating misinformation online can be fined millions of dollars. What avenues will remain for such people to seek appeals and justice?

There is a link on the ACMA's site for people to report what they deem to be misinformation. We can see where this is going. Again, who defines misinformation? Who defines 'hates speech'?

What about the government spreading misinformation? Under the proposal the government will be exempt. So we have two classes of people: the elites who are not subject to this and the rest of us who are.

What about other politicians? The leader of the opposition? Senators Antic, Canavan, Rennick, Babet, Roberts? Other parties?

The obvious target is people who have been opposing the Covid narrative that the vaccines are safe and effective. On both counts, we know what the government tells us is untrue. There is plenty of research and data to back this up—especially in the USA and Europe. Will the government ignore data because it counters the official line, and the dogma cannot be challenged? If that is the case, what we have in Australia is a Communist-Soviet-style government where you cannot challenge the state. This is the Orwellian nightmare people have been fearing—straight out of Orwell's 1984, Ministry of Truth.

For example, Dr Paul Marik, Dr Peter McCullough and Dr Pierre Kory strongly advocated using Ivermectin in treating Covid, and they backed it up with their research.

As stated on the FLCCC website, "Dr Marik became the first to scientifically codify the strong data signal for the efficacy of ivermectin to prevent and treat every phase of COVID-19 disease". Dr Marik himself stated, "People are dying needlessly."

Dr Marik is an eminent researcher with multiple citations over many years. Is he spreading misinformation? So who knows more, a government bureaucrat who has never seen a patient or a researcher on the ground who is dealing with real, live human beings?

There are already laws on the books for someone promoting quackery that causes harm to people. If someone online promotes injecting people with arsenic, then they should be prosecuted. However, this proposed law on disinformation means censorship, pure and simple.

Within any discipline, there are a variety of opinions. The government proposes that you are not allowed to have an opinion if it differs from the government's. Here again, if someone posts something online that they refuse to take a promoted product for whatever reason, the government can prosecute that person because they are "harming the community"—in their thinking. The Covid vaccine is a prime example. Why should you care if I'm not vaccinated if I believe it fails to prevent transmission? Those who are jabbed can't transmit it, correct? NO! That's misinformation.

So what if I make statements regarding "climate change". For instance, the data shows that severe storms and bushfire deaths have decreased over the past 100 years, and one can express the opinion that there is no crisis. Is that person harming anyone by expressing that opinion? Thousands of eminent scientists agree there's no climate crisis. Are they harming anyone?

This bill puts Australia going down a dangerous path. How often have people been accused of spreading conspiracy theories, only to find that the theory was, in fact, a true conspiracy? Are you bringing us into an Australia where fiction becomes truth, and truth becomes fiction. The basic freedom of expression of all Australians is at stake—including that of government workers, even politicians.

I remind the Labor party, promoting this bill, that the freedoms, advantages, opportunities, values and liberties we enjoy in our nation are products of the Christian worldview. So will people who uphold this be accused by others of being hurtful and invite accusations of 'misinformation'. So will such people be liable to unfair accusations. Someone may accuse me, a Christian, of my views on social issues like religious freedom, marriage and family, and the sanctity of human life.

Freedom of speech is a fundamental right of every Australian. In defining what constitutes the values of Australia, the Department of Home Affairs declares "respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual" and "freedom of religion (including the freedom not to follow a particular religion), freedom of speech, and freedom of association" at the very top of its list.

Australia is a founding member of the United Nations and an original signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Article 18 spells out freedom of speech, religion, conscience, etc. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade states that:

Australia's commitment to human rights is enduring: we were an original signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. We have been a leading proponent of its consistent and comprehensive implementation.

Thus, this Bill would put the Commonwealth of Australia in breach of its international human rights obligations and at odds with its own nation's character and values. This is a threshold Australia must not pass.