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Freedom of speech is our unalienable right and why it is enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which Australia helped to draft in 1948

: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

You do not have the right to take this away from us - and to set this up to be able to censor anything that doesn't serve the government or your corporate owners of the day. If there is misinformation then publicly refute it along with the sources from which you have gained your stance - and who funded the research that you base it on so that it can be credible and in seen in full light.

But do not take the away the right to proffer a differing opinion. We do not live in a totalitarian state - and I for one do not want to - but with this legislation we are rapidly heading towards that. Anyone who doesn't agree is not allowed to voice their own opinion without punitive actions - this is so wrong.

Many times that which has been knocked down by the powers to be is later on found to be true and at least brings in decent and open debate. We need to be teaching people to be critical thinkers - not pawns in a game of lies and deceits that lead back to money and power.

Think Thalidomide as one example. When it was released it was a wonderful drug - then when it was first touted to be a cause of birth defects the information was said to be untrue - until it was finally realised that it was an awful drug for unborn foetuses. What has ensued from there has never been compensated nor 'fixed' yet and those who were harmed by it still struggle everyday with what it did to them and the lies that were told that allowed to affect so many due to not listening and immediately making changes as soon as the truth was known.

We are looking at similar problems now with people who have been damaged by the 'safe' covid vaccine or policies that were made and enforced during the pandemic that trampled on our rights to chose. The only way we can make things safer is to encourage open and varied speech from all quarters and to subject it to independent, proper and objective scientific and true statistical rigor - not cover ups, and censorship and covering backsides.

The fact that the bill explicitly exempts any government communication, of any level of government, from being considered misinformation or disinformation, shows how Orwellian this law will be.

While the bill's penalties won't apply to individuals, it will enforce a regime of suppression of any speech on social media that undermines government claims.

It would not just apply to protecting public health, as we have already witnessed in the mass-censorship of contrary analysis relating to COVID-19, including of qualified doctors and scientists.

It would also apply to debates on foreign policy, such as whether Russia or China are “threats” to Australia, which the government claims to justify committing almost \$1 billion to arming NATO’s proxy Ukraine against Russia, or promising \$368 billion to buy US and British submarines to deploy against China.

If these powers were in place in 2002, when the US, UK and Australian governments lied about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction, they could have been used to suppress public opposition to invasion and war.

You as our government are there to ‘serve the people’ and at the moment you are not doing that - you are building a system to cover backsides and hide inconvenient truths, Yes some information proffered will be rubbish - but critical thinking and independent research will always shine through in the end.

The greatest enemy of good science is a closed mind. We do not pay you as our representatives to have a closed mind or to legislatively close anyone else’s mind. Free speech is one of the basic tenets of a free society. It is expected that you will honour that and do your job that you were elected to do or hired by our elected government to do in protecting OUR individual interests and rights. Please make sure Freedom of speech is preserved.