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Subject :- **New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation**

[A Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to communications, and for related purpose

1 Short title :- This Act is the *Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Act 2023.*]

Dear Sir,

I will start this response with a few question with reference to the legislation, which will (with common sense) reveal major deficiencies.

1. Who in this chain of delegation (as written into the legislation) **decides** and **rules** what is misinformation and disinformation ??
2. Where can the entity so judged and condemned have right of reply and challenge the ruling and with proof of the correctness of the information, have it reinstated on the platform ?
3. Where is there a mechanism for public scrutiny and testing of this action on specific instances ?
4. Why would you hand such important power, this delegating, to vested interests ?

From what I know added to my lifelong experiences , this amending legislation (and even the original) is completely out of order, plus looking to the structural nature of **ACMA** , with reference to their web site “Code of Conduct for Authority members and associate members June 2023” and “Our role in compliance and enforcement” , **there is no mention of them being given a brief for interfering with Freedom of Speech or for adjudicating on what is Truthful or Not**

Therefore the whole concept of further defining and regulating “misinformation and disinformation” for ACMA to adjudicate on is a misconstrued concept from start to finish.

I put it to you that the mere introduction of “misinformation and disinformation” into the brief of an independent Commonwealth statutory authority is unfair for them as it is an entirely subjective situation and absolutely politically motivated !!

It opens the door for the government of the day to set and cultivate whatever narrative it chooses for the political climate of the moment.

This is why we are living in such dire times owing to **Freedom of Speech not being defined at law** and so therefore **massively compromising open and honest Debate and a truthful conclusion .**

This diminishes the integrity of many of our institutions and sound honest debate in our Parliaments, and also more importantly in our universities.

To wit :- try organising an **open an honest debate on gender dysphoria** in an Aussie university or on Auntie ABC !!!

& 2ndly in the same institutions, why highly esteemed medical practitioners and nursing staff have been deregistered and/or dismissed from their workplace **for challenging the Establishment Narrative on Covid 19 issues**, their reasons and stance denied justification ?? !!!!

Going **back to my Q4**. – delegating to vested interests and the connection thru DIGI and using Microsoft as an example :-

Quote from their document

“Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation Microsoft and LinkedIn Annual Transparency Report May 2023 “

(Page **31** of their document)

“Democracy Forward Program

Microsoft believes technology companies have a responsibility to help protect democratic processes and institutions globally. Though threats to democracy have always existed, the tactics of adversaries are constantly evolving. Microsoft is protecting open and secure democratic processes by providing services and technology to secure critical institutions, protect electoral processes from cyberattacks, and build public trust in voting procedures. Microsoft’s Democracy Forward Program is an innovative effort to protect democratic institutions and processes from hacking, to explore technological solutions to protect electoral processes, and to defend against disinformation.

- Microsoft works closely with our elections-related customers to provide security guidance and tools to improve their cyber-resilience and protect the integrity of the electoral process.
- In 2022, Microsoft supported the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to strengthen the cybersecurity practices of investigative journalists who are reporting on abuse of state resources in elections. We also partner with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to strengthen the cybersecurity support infrastructure for political parties and campaigns internationally.
- In March 2023, Microsoft, USAID and Internews announced a new public-private partnership to develop a Media Viability Accelerator to help independent media outlets around the world become more financially sustainable through access to market insights and business solutions. The new web-based platform will pool data from media organisations globally to enable independent newsrooms to discover what works for others and apply those learnings to their own business. Once launched, independent news organisations in more than 100 countries will be able to use the Media Viability Accelerator to support their mission to provide the public with reliable, trustworthy information.

Objective 7: Signatories publicise the measures they take to combat Disinformation and Misinformation.

Outcome 7: The public can access information about the measures Signatories have taken to combat Disinformation and Misinformation.

Our reporting under this code is available on the Microsoft Australia News Centre and on DIGI’s website.

Microsoft also releases other information about our initiatives globally to combat disinformation:

This is where the bag of worms needs to be unpacked (not left for example in the muddled mix above)

- a. The technical search engines are obviously the realm of the IT players to hone and maintain

b. However all the actual intercepts and removals from any of the platforms must be saved/recorded and stored by the ACMA for the public record and publicly available for retrospective dispute resolution.

Maintaining FREEDOM of SPEECH is the most important issue at stake here and is severely compromised if b. above is not implemented and maintained .

As to be seen in Microsoft's Democracy Forward Program above, the actual take down information is never going to be revealed for public scrutiny that which is actual censored.

Also like Microsoft , all the other digital industry players in the **Digital Industry Group Inc. (DIGI)**, maintain their "voluntary code" which in reality only **answers to the Deep Establishment Power of the Multinational Corporate world.**

Why would we expect them to be reliable and honest custodians of **Freedom of Speech, honest Debate and the Truth** when they are delegated this open ended task of **online censorship where they are controlled by the Multinational Corporate world always motivated by money/power grabbing.** Time and again the **Multinational Corporate world** has abused its inherent power . Its only motivation in the face of **Democracy is to manipulate and rot our Democracy** at the expense of us citizen tax payers as has happened so regularly you can almost set your clock by it.

In conclusion , many of us know this is all adding up to the thin edge of the wedge (about half way down that wedge I fancy) , for causing the downfall of Democracy.

Without sound boundaries for **online censorship** which this legislation certainly does not deliver FREEDOM of SPEECH, then DEMOCRACY will inevitably transition into Dictatorship and so I absolutely reject the substance and direction of

the *Communications Legislation Amendment*

(Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Act 2023.

as it will prove ultimately to be a major legislative tool towards **shutting down**

FREEDOM of SPEECH and DEMOCRACY

regards Roger Chapman

ps. Almighty God (El Shaddai)

HE will prevail for ever and I humbly pray I answer to HIM always Amen