

Private Submission Re: **Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023**

In Australia's longstanding democracy, the concept of freedom of speech should remain sacrosanct. The freedom to hold a differing view should not be tampered with. Whilst it is agreed that hate speech have no place in Australian society, it would seem that the proposed Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 "*the Bill*" may constitute an overreach by Government.

Perhaps the issue of most concern, is that ACMA says it will have "*no role in determining truthfulness, nor will it have a role in taking down or requesting action regarding individual pieces of content*". This raises the inevitable question... "Who determines '*truthfulness*'?" Who determines what constitutes "*serious harm*"?

Who determines what constitutes "*misinformation*" or "*disinformation*" and how can anyone be sure that real truth is not suppressed simply because of some hidden agenda dictated from behind-the-scenes, such as Globalist Agenda, World Economic Forum, IMF, WHO, Blackstone, Vanguard, House of Windsor, elites, Big Media, Big Pharma etc. wish to suppress the real truth, and possibly impose sanctions on governments and citizens who do not fall into line?

The mainstream media's use of so-called "*Fact Checkers*" has dramatically increased in recent years, yet these fact checkers are largely anonymous unelected propaganda or spin doctors commissioned to "*influence*" the public's views on various issues. This was evident during the Covid19 Pandemic State of Emergency, where anyone, including highly respected scientists and doctors who raised cautioned or spoke against the dangers of Covid19 mRNA vaccines, were cancelled. No one was permitted to promulgate an alternative view. The Australian Government based its imposition of lockdowns and pandemic measures mandates on health/scientific advice from so-called "*experts*" who largely remained anonymous, with the mantra being spruiked to the public via the State and Federal Governments, Health Ministers, Chief Health Officers and the mainstream media. Economic sanctions on any detractors arguably brought about a greater degree of compliance, especially when incomes were at stake.

Divergent views were cast as "*misinformation*" or "*disinformation*" and were only available on alternative sources of media. History has since shown that many of the original concerns about vaccine induced injuries, which were dismissed as "*conspiracy theories*", have now actually come to be proven correct. Despite these revelations become so common these days, and therefore harder to suppress, they still tend to be dismissed as "*misinformation*" or "*disinformation*". Why is that?

This is certainly not to suggest that all alternative views were correct, nevertheless there appeared to be a concerted effort to censor anything that ran contrary to the official line.

The powers proposed under the Bill "*would apply to a broad range of digital platform services. This includes search engines, news aggregators, instant messaging services, social media, web-forums, dating sites, and online peer-to-peer marketplaces*"...with private SMS and MMS messages being amongst the very few exemptions. As such, the majority of current alternative digital sources of information would be effectively blocked if their message was deemed not to comply with the "*official*" view.

Thus this is why the Bill is a dangerous overreach. It completely destroys the concept of democratic freedom of speech, where anything that is deemed to not conform to the official "*truth*" is banned. Examples of issues that may invoke a variety of views are: climate change, health directives, renewable energy, AUKUS, LGBTQI+, gender diversity issues, the Indigenous Voice to Parliament, handing over sovereign rights on health decisions to the WHO etc...

It seems incongruous that Australians face losing their democratic right to *freedom of expression, rather to be dictated to by Governments and or anonymous behind-the-scenes entities, effectively shutting down transparency and opportunity for objective discussion and personal decision-making that causes no harm to anyone else. [*Despite the Australian Constitution not explicitly protecting freedom of expression, the High Court has held that an implied freedom of political communication exists as an indispensable part of the system of representative and responsible government created by the Constitution. The principles enshrining freedom of expression and opinion are extremely well set-out in the following web link.]

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/freedom-information-opinion-and-expression#:~:text=Constitutional%20law%20protection,government%20created%20by%20the%20Constitution.>

One of the stated aims of the Bill is to remove content that is considered to undermine the Australian democratic process, yet those very powers arguably undermine the Australian democratic process. Surely Australia needs to carefully preserve its status as a Democracy as opposed to a Dictatorship.

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