

I object in the strongest possible terms to this proposed legislation to combat 'misinformation' and 'disinformation'. Democracy is founded upon everyone being able to have their say and voice their opinion without fear of retribution. Combatting misinformation and disinformation is just censorship under the guise of a different label. Thinking back to examples in history where censorship was rigorously performed, some names like Hitler and Stalin spring to mind but certainly no one I can think of that we would want to model a democratic society upon.

YouTube and other social media platforms already seem to be doing an excellent job of censorship even without the threat of fines. Recently YouTube censored the video of the maiden speech of John Ruddick, a democratically elected member of the NSW parliament (although this speech has recently been reuploaded). It would seem to me that in a democracy it would be more appropriate to fine YouTube for this outrageous censorship, not compel them to carry out even more. Let all voices and opinions be heard and let the people decide- isn't that how a democracy is supposed to work?

Exactly how will it be determined that something is misinformation/disinformation? Please remember that at one stage saying that smoking was bad for you would have been classified as misinformation and censoring these voices would have led to a prolonging of bad public health policy. Open debate about all matters of contention is absolutely essential for the advancement of science.

It is the responsibility of governments to monitor the actions of large corporations because we all know that if left to their own devices the tendency seems to be towards greed and corruption. We certainly shouldn't be using their word as the source of "correct information".

In the words of our national anthem:
"In history's page let every stage
Advance Australia fair"

This legislation is not advancing Australia, it is sending it backwards. I can assure you that history's page will not look favourably upon this censorship.