

1 Summary

The scientific process relies on the testing of all available data and retaining the most credible model based on an unbiased analysis of the results. Unless ACMA has perfect knowledge of the entire universe, this bill will make science illegal.

Academia and all research similarly require access to any and all information available to select the best model based on unbiased analysis. Unless ACMA has complete and perfect knowledge of everything, this bill makes research illegal.

When people learn, they compare new information with currently held beliefs and test both to determine if the new knowledge is worth retaining. This bill could prevent people from accessing any and all information, making learning illegal.

Most teaching presents students with several models of the subject matter, as the history of the development of knowledge is as relevant as the knowledge itself, and often understand why bad ideas do not work informs the understanding of the good, so limiting what can be taught makes teaching illegal.

Balanced journalism relies on the unbiased presentation of “both sides of the story.” While it has been some time since we have seen that in the mainstream media, this bill will restrict explaining “the other side”, making unbiased journalism illegal, turning it all into “propaganda”.

2 The ACMA bill

2.1 “The issue”

The opening statement on the web site for comment submission states that “Misinformation and disinformation pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Australians, as well as to our democracy, society and economy” and then suggests a bill that would make Josef Stalin blush, eliminating free speech, unbiased research or teaching of any kind, proposing giving censor powers to an unelected bureaucratic body (appointed by the Labor Party) to silence any dissent, critique or even data that would challenge any policy or position – the most direct attack on democracy, and providing clear indication as to the motives behind this disgusting proposal. This statement and bill seems to suggest that individuals do not have the ability to test information, compare opposing ideas and make a personal judgement as to what constitutes “the truth.” In reality, democracy CANNOT FUNCTION without the free sharing of ideas and information and therefore this assertion is patently false, even creating the impression that this bill and associated materials has the objective to deceive.

2.2 The premise

The Bill proposes to give powers to ACMA to “combat disinformation and misinformation”, new words in the English language basically indicating “unacceptable information”, the question is “to who?” For the idea of giving ACMA these powers, it logically follows that ACMA must have complete and full knowledge and understanding of everything in the universe, which is a ridiculous premise.

2.3 The unaffected

It is curious that parties excluded from the provisions of this bill are:

1. The government and its organisations
2. The mainstream media

This gives a sole “license to lie” (propaganda) those that are to be held accountable by the media in a democracy (government), and the mainstream media who is responsible for holding such individuals accountable, indicating a coordinated framework for communist-style propaganda.

It precludes private individuals and independent media from questioning public issues, and coming from a communist country I can assure you that this rings very familiar.

2.4 The empowered – and undermining democracy

ACMA is an unelected bureaucratic institution. That means that citizens have no say in who serves on its management. As with all unelected bureaucratic institutions, this creates the opportunity to, for example, the Labor Party to appoint individuals sympathetic to its cause, and for ACMA to then wield power and silence opposition on behalf of the Labor Party even when such party is not in power. This is a REAL threat to democracy, and the way autocratic dictators deny their citizens access to information to control them.

2.5 Harm

Included in the definition of “harm” in the proposed Bill is:

- (a) “hatred”, which is an emotion experienced within the mind of an individual. Pray tell how a court and / or independent observer should examine such “evidence”.
- (b) “Disruption of public order or society in Australia” – does this mean that demonstrations are not allowed? Would exposing corruption then undermining the credibility of the government be interpreted as a “disruption of public order or society?”
- (c) “Harm to the integrity of Australian democratic processes or of Commonwealth, State or local government institutions” – this seems to confirm the comment on (b)
- (d) “Harm to the health of Australians” – could include questioning the efficacy of experimental gene therapies.
- (e) “Harm to the Australian environment” – really? Information can do that?
- (f) “Economic or financial harm to Australian, the Australian economy or a sector of the Australian economy” – how can information do that? Certainly, any such occurrences would be covered by Defamation Law?

If information is not true, and such information causes harm to any person or institution, such individuals or organisations have access to the courts through defamation laws, where truth is the most potent defence – where it follows that information that may be damaging to the reputation of an individual or organisation, but which is true should be shared in the public interest if true.

3 Conclusions

The “harm” covered in the proposed Bill mimics that covered by Defamation Law. This raises the question as to why this Bill is required – defamation law is well established in Australia. Some potential reasons could be:

1. Establishing a bureaucracy that can continue to promote the agenda of the Labor Party only.
2. Since this bureaucratic institution is unelected, this body would continue to promote the interests of the Labor Party even if an alternative party comes to power - a gross abuse of power and public resources.
3. This same unelected agency could be used to censor all political opponents or challenges to Labor policies or any information that could lead to a negative impact on the Labor Party.
4. As the unelected bureaucracy would be supported by public funding, challenging such body would pitch opponents against ACMA with access to the entire revenue of Australia at their disposal – a predetermined outcome.
5. The proposed censorship mechanism would make it impossible to report on political misdeeds or corruption, removing all means of holding government accountable.
6. As the mainstream media companies are owned by the same companies that lobby government (and sometimes pay “development fees”), the selective “license to lie” will have predictable, atrocious outcomes.

There is no positive outcome of this legislation. This should NOT be allowed to pass, and the individuals who developed, sponsored and supported this should be named so that voters can make an informed decision with the next election. It is likely that this originated from outside Australia based on the fact that at this time similar legislation is proposed for Canada, South Africa, the USA and so on. In any case, the citizens and voters of Australia should be informed who in our government do NOT govern in the best interests of Australia, but

If this is allowed to pass, it will send Australian to the Dark Ages, if not the Stone Age.