

Hello,

I am writing to express concern regarding the Misinformation/ Disinformation Bill that has been put forth for consideration by the Albanese Labor Party. I agree with Aristotle when he said "It's the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." That being said, I believe everyone has the right to freedom of thought, freedom of speech & the freedom to accept & implement ideas that may be different to the current consensus.

As an example, I will relate the story of Ignaz Semmelweis, a German/ Hungarian physician who was suppressed & disgraced for spreading misinformation. This dear doctor worked in a hospital where he observed that the deathrate from childbed fever was 3x greater when delivered by doctors instead of midwives. After careful observation he discovered that that the doctors came straight from an autopsy to deliver a baby, never washing their hands whilst the midwives always washed theirs. After trying to educate his colleagues he was moved on to another clinic where he had the opportunity to implement his ideas – the death rate dropped from 18.3% to 2.2% then to 0% the following year. It remained the same at the previous clinic.

His colleagues responded with outrage, insisting that the medical establishment couldn't possibly be the cause – it was caused by an imbalance of the 4 humours! In 1865 his colleagues had him committed to a mental asylum, where he was put into a straightjacket & beaten. He died from his injuries 14 days later. So the deaths continued for years to come, until the idea of hand washing was finally accepted. The dear doctor was 100% correct but had died a terrible death for 'spreading misinformation'.

If we are to be treated like children in a 'nanny state', being censored & denied information, what opportunities may we miss? It's vitally important to be open to ideas that we may not all agree with, that we have the freedom to choose ourselves, without Government overreach.

I watched a program on SBS during the week where a lady was describing life in Nazi Germany & one of the first things to appear was censorship. Censorship poses a threat to our personal liberties & freedom & to our democratic society. I sincerely hope that this bill will be nipped in the bud before it has the opportunity to take root & possibly do much harm.