



30 July,2023.

FREE SPEECH IS THE CORNERSTONE OF ANY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

George Washington (March 15, 1783)

"For if man are to be precluded from offering their sentiments on a matter which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences, that can invite the consideration of mankind, reason is of no use to us; the freedom of speech may be taken away, and dumb and silent we may be lead, like sheep, to the slaughter."

Benjamin Franklin 'Letters of Silence Dogwood'

"Reason and free enquiry are the only effectual agents against error."

Why is it that this legislation is only applied to digital platforms - why not all media outlets and politicians being held to account for mis or disinformation?

Recent experience has shown very starkly that mainstream media, politicians and bureaucrats are just as likely, if not more so, to spread mis and disinformation that has caused huge harm to a large number of people.

'Safe and effective' was widely publicised in relation to Covid 19 vaccines. Many people who believed this and acted accordingly have suffered serious, often life long (in some cases life ending) harm to their health. To add insult to injury, these injections were not even effective in stopping the spread or stopping infection!

Those who publicly questioned this 'safe and effective' mantra have been heavily censored, censured, ridiculed and maligned, despite there being proof that their claims were correct, right from the start – think Craig Kelly.

Another anomaly in this Bill is that if the average citizen believes mainstream media and trusts the Government narrative, why would they bother to search other opinions on digital platforms? Isn't it just the conspiracy theorists that seek out these differing opinions, and if so, where is the harm in a small fringe community sharing information? Maybe there is a fear of the average citizen starting to look for other opinions as they become increasingly disillusioned by what they are seeing and hearing around them.

If this Bill is passed, this means that anytime we may wish to debate/discuss a subject where we may diverge from the Government narrative, digital platforms will be too afraid to allow open discussion for fear of huge fines. It is claimed in the draft that ACMA will not have the power to remove content, but instead they leave the dirty work up to the digital platforms.

There is no way that a Legislation such as this should be passed in what is proclaimed to be a democracy.

Please consider allowing this once great country to continue being a place where different opinions are respected and can be voiced on any platform. Give your citizens the right to hear all opinions and use their own discernment as to what they consider to be mis or disinformation.

It seems strange that while there is such a push for a 'Voice to Parliament' for the Indigenous Community, another section of the community are losing theirs!

I am a disillusioned and disgruntled [REDACTED] year old woman who has never previously been motivated to take a political stand.

Judi Sandri

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