

Our National Anthem asks Australians to rejoice “For we are one and free.”

When Prime Minister Morrison changed “young and free,” to one and free, he said the change “...reaffirms our resolve, as one of the world’s oldest democracies, while honouring the foundation upon which our nation has been built and the aspirations we share for the future.”

So what is this freedom we sing of?
What is this democracy we celebrate?

I can put it no better than has

Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:-

“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

A democracy is more than, “Government of the people, by the people, for the people.”(Abe Lincoln) A democracy also guarantees individual rights, including the rights of minorities whether ethnic, religious, or political.

So why Mr. Albanese are you intending now to introduce censorship, the antithesis of democratic freedom? Without due diligence democracy can retreat little by little, insidiously, unnoticed, as an authoritarian regime emerges, (like a frog , unaware of the heat if brought slowly to the boil.) You intend to censor social media, the last avenue for alternative views to reach the public without intervention.

The Bill would give the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) reserve powers to act, if industry efforts in regard to misinformation and disinformation are inadequate. The proposed powers would enable the ACMA to gather from or require digital platform providers to keep certain records about matters regarding mis/disinformation.

So the platform provider is being asked to spy on his own patrons, but excluding information on government sites. Shame.

By inference then, both the banned but unintentional misinformation and the deliberate disinformation could be applied to anything that failed to parrot the government line. Yet rather than causing harm some of these messages may have been generated to prevent harm, as happened during the Covid ‘pandemic’. While the government urged us to take the safe vaccine, it was neither a vaccine nor safe. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Fortunately the judge disagreed. The gradually released documents reveal the alarming number and range of adverse events, including death. Not a vaccine either, but an experimental drug that neither protected from infection nor prevented infecting others. Instead of remaining at the site of the jab, the drug invaded the cell and fused with the DNA. The body became a factory making spike proteins which invaded every organ of the body, including crossing the brain barrier causing spongiform encephalopathy. Yet any hint of these fears was labeled conspiracy theory or disinformation. (The earth was once believed to be flat. To suggest otherwise would have been regarded as disinformation.) The digital platform providers must locate, and record these harmful messages appearing on any digital platform services that are accessible in Australia. The offending material must be recorded and be available

for the ACMA if an investigation is warranted.

A few statistics should indicate the enormity, the impossibility, of this requirement, at first voluntary, but becoming mandatory if compliance was weak.

About 73.6% of Australia's population of 25 million use the social medium platform Facebook, ie 16 million active Australians on Facebook. Add to that number 62.9% of FB Messenger, 55%, Instagram. Ask yourself how ever could you monitor the flow of these messages; decide which, of any information is intended to deceive, and then make copies which you hold available for a possible ACMA investigation. Twitter has 330 million active monthly users globally 5.8 million from Australia. TikTok has 8.5 million Australians and 350,000 businesses. A staggering 93% of global traffic is driven by Google's 85.1 billion visitors. YouTube has 33 billion visiting their site. Add to these major sites the myriad of smaller sites that must also be monitored for offensive materials or that contradict the government's position, Blogging Platforms such as WordPress, Wix, Weebly, Drupal, Squarespace, and others such as CMS Hub, UnRepeat, Snapchat, Yahoo.com and Friendster. This list gives some idea of the laborious, non productive task this bill would unfairly, I believe, impose upon site managers.

And then the censorship really bites.

"In the event of non-compliance with the information gathering and record keeping rules, codes or standards, the ACMA would be able to choose from a range of formal enforcement actions." - graduated - dependent on the harm caused or the risk of harm... formal warnings, infringement notices, remedial directions, injunctions and civil penalties.

Criminal penalties would only apply to digital platforms or individuals knowingly making or retaining false or misleading records or giving false or misleading evidence under the new powers.

Maximum penalties for noncompliance with the registered code, 10,000 penalty units (\$2.75 million in 2023 or 2% of global turnover, (whichever is greater) for corporations or 2,000 penalty units (\$0.55) million in 2023 for individuals. etcetera.

The Bill proclaims it protects privacy and freedom of expression while also protecting Australians from serious harms. The bill seems to seek government absolution by claiming, "The ACMA would have no role in determining truthfulness...."

So, the government can piously claim personal good will because they have turned the site provider into a policeman to spy on his patrons and so become the accuser, else find himself liable for fines of millions of dollars. Such sneaky ways and dobbing in of others, is not the Aussie way at all.

To use such ruses so that you can claim your own hands are clean is, I believe - quite dishonourable.

You also ignore the Attorney General's Department proclamation that, "The Australian Government is committed to promoting traditional rights and freedoms, including freedom of speech, opinion, religion, association and movement, which are regarded as essential to a healthy democracy."

The ambivalence indicated reveals some hypocrisy in your government's attitude towards and implementation or not of democratic freedoms

I ask you to please abandon this proposed legislation which has nothing to recommend it.

Otherwise, at least accept responsibility for every clause within it. Then you can be held accountable and stand accused of breaking a pledge to a human right's law that Australia helped to write. The International Criminal Court can then deal with the country which breached the International Human Rights Law.

In all humility, I commend my submission to you.
Sincerely, Daphne English.

Sent from my iPad