

I write to oppose the Misinformation and Disinformation Bill 2023 as this law effectively legitimises government censorship.

Here is a timely example of how government censorship is wrong. Note that critical time when robust discussions, debate and sharing of new knowledge from the wider international community of frontline doctors and highly credential experts were so needed and important to help deal with a pandemic.

According to the latest Newpoint publication dated August 2023 published by Family Voice Australia, a US judge slams the American White House on free speech.

A District Court judge has accused the Biden administration of "blatantly" engaging in "the most massive attack against free speech in United States "history" for its close relationship with social media censorship operations.

The US Government and its agencies have been handed a temporary injunction by Louisiana District Judge Terry Doughty to cease communicating with social media companies to urge or induce the removal or reduction of content containing First Amendment protected free speech.

In a 155 page judgement written by Judge Terry Doughty, "The right to free speech is not a member of any political party and does not hold any political ideology. It is the purpose of Free Speech **to preserve an uninhibited marketplace of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail, rather than to countenance monopolisation of the market, whether it be by government itself or private licensee.**"

He said the plaintiffs "have presented substantial evidence in support of their claims that they were the victims of a far-reaching and widespread censorship campaign."

"The evidence produced thus far depicts an almost dystopian scenario ..... During the Covid-19 pandemic ..... the US Government seems to have assumed a role similar to an Orwellian 'Ministry of Truth.'"

- End quote -

We believe no single entity should assume its infallibility to determine what is truth and what is misinformation. No government or its appointed agencies should impose its own brand of truth on the general public. Every human person has the right to critical thinking and express themselves freely in speech and opinions.

And we know from bitter experience that the official Covid narratives in the past few years have shown us that many things declared as "fake news" one day end up being proven truthful several months down the track.

Catastrophic policy errors are best avoided by robust debate and NOT censorship of dissenting voices.

I urge the government to refrain from stifling free speech and debate. Please therefore withdraw this communist style bill.

I agree that my submission be published.

Thank you.

Antonia Martinez

