

Opposition / Submission to ACMA combatting Mis/disinformation Bill 2023

From: Georgie Hughes [REDACTED]
To: Information Integrity <information.integrity@infrastructure.gov.au>
Date: Sat, 19 Aug 2023 12:11:13 +1000
Attachments: SUBMISSION ACMA censorship.docx (35.86 kB)

Please find attached my submission regarding this Communications Legislation Amendment - Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill 2023.

I find it deeply disturbing what is being proposed, and the ramifications of such a bill would be dangerous to an intelligent and free, democratic society.

I am deeply concerned and offended that this government would even attempt to legislate such overreach and dominant powers over the people and over OUR PUBLIC SQUARE.

It is impossible to claim you can know what is truth and what is misinformation without serious time, debate, study and discussion, so what this bill intends to do is IMPOSSIBLE, IMPRACTICAL and the UTTER STUPIDITY of even suggesting this should be the place of a government, or be in the hands of social media companies to enact is quite ridiculous and is a very bad idea.

Please see my attached submission letter.

Yours sincerely

Georgia Hughes

To whom it may concern

I am writing to make a submission against the new Communications Legislation Amendment - Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill 2023.

I am extremely concerned about this new bill amendment. And I do not give my consent to this bill being passed on my behalf.

It is impossible for one body, one government, or for any social media platform to be able to determine accurately what is misinformation or disinformation.

I have written a detailed letter citing other examples based on current and recent history events where the censorship has been very concerning to me, and inform some of my concerns.

I will attempt to write a few brief points before I go in to the full detail of my objections and concerns.

Basically, you are asking for public feedback, asking if we think you have struck “the right balance”. This is LAUGHABLE AND OFFENSIVE quite frankly, you are posing the question AS IF YOU HAVE ANY PART OF IT RIGHT AT ALL. I strongly object and see that in practical application this is only an exercise of control over all messaging and THOUGHT and our freedom to debate, discuss, challenge, pose possible hypotheses on all manner of topics.

It is totally OUT OF ORDER and OUT OF PLACE for the government to think it has the right to block all thought and information other than what it says is truth.

- No, some of the terms are not clearly defined.
- No, the fines and consequences are NOT AT ALL PROPORTIONATE. They are RIDICULOUSLY HIGH.
- Fining social media platforms would effectively mean they would be forced to OVER-CENSOR just to be on-the-safe-side and avoid fines or legal battles to defend their decisions.
- It would also (and I believe this is the intended outcome) mean that, because OF COURSE social media platforms cannot be assigned the job of all-knowing truth guardians, and all-knowing mis/disinformation spotters, they will be basically forced to follow government orders about what information is to be censored. This is not merely what Australia decides, as of course, we are accessing information from all around the world, so we will be at the mercy of whatever governments in many countries decide the people can't see, so we will be funnelled through a global censorship dominated by governments.
- Truth is often not SETTLED, we are always in a state of learning and discovery, so to act like it is decided or that there is settled TRUTH, and like the government or some agency can really have final say on what is untrue is RIDICULOUS and will STIFLE SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY. It will also prevent investigative journalism from uncovering corruption within governments, because, if prevailing governments get to say what is truth, it will silence all sorts of information to help us uncover corruptions, which we have the right to find!
- Making government sanctioned organisations and bodies exempt from the same scrutiny? WHAT?! Doesn't government already have an unbalanced share of power and say over what information is broadcast? WHAT?! One rule for the little peasants, one rule for the RULERS? We are all meant to be equal under the law, so writing in that government and government recognised agencies and institutions are EXEMPT from scrutiny, is only going to have a doubling effect on this Bills UNEQUAL POWER OVER CITIZENS, because, who is “fact-

checking” the government. And in this process, anyone who does, can be shut down, because the government, as they already do, merely oppose/deny/say the opposite as if it is true, of all opponents.

- NO, the whole concept of thinking you are able to control information, opens the door to ever more digital surveillance over the people> And it definitely suppresses our freedom of speech, of expression. We have the right to question and call out governments and corporates and we have the right to listen to and THINK WHAT WE WANT TO THINK. This is only going to suppress debate, discussion, intelligence, people forming hypotheses and testing, proving, or disproving them.
- It is NOT dangerous for people to hear something that may later be proven untrue. Isn't thinking and investigating and learning full of people discussing both good and bad ideas, thinking things that later are proven incorrect? But the path to knowledge and discovery is always going to include things that turn out not to be true. But how on Earth can we be free to use that process, where false things are weeded out over time, if it must be instantly decided by a government body is something is MIS/DIS-information. The mere time frame of social media, is that it is instant, it is A WORK IN PROGRESS, it is OUR PUBLIC SPACE.
- It is impossible to give ideas their DUE TIMEFRAME OF TESTING AND DISCUSSION AND DISCOVERY, if this bill's censorship is in place, it will BUTT OUT AND SILENCE valid ideas, before they get a chance to be debated. But again, I suspect this is the intended aim of this bill. Because, how dare the citizens cause any fuss, or not follow orders right? How dare we be FREE THINKERS right? How dare we even contemplate an idea that ends up to be incorrect??!! I say that in complete sarcasm. I demand my right to even think incorrect things in the process of my learning. Untrue things when properly tested and aired and discussed, will eventually be phased out. They are not dangerous. Nor are citizens who exercise their RIGHT to oppose, question, protest government dictates.
- To call things mis or dis information before it is really possible to know the whole truth, will end up being the function of this bill. The timeframe of how and when you know you can really be sure something is untrue is impossible to fit in to any function that this bill would end up being used for. It is basically COMPLETELY FLAWED THINKING to even imagine this bill could be remotely useable, fair or just. In the real-world truth is often so complex and takes a long time to discover, but yet, government is proposing that it can know the whole truth, I call, BS!
- There are numerous issues I have about the whole concept of this type of action and quite frankly, what looks like a power grab, to dominate the space of information. It is a poorly veiled attempt for the government to censor by PROXY, using social media platforms to hide behind. Social media platforms are not equipped, nor is it their expertise to know what is truth, or untruth. They will therefore be forced to consult the ONLY BODY WHO WOULD SUE THEM, OR CHARGE THEM these massive fines, in order to find out what the government of the day wants them to censor. Something governments have been doing more intensely throughout the past couple of years, now you are just putting laws in place to lubricate this kind of behaviour and make it legitimate and legal. This bill would ensure that government bodies would be employed to control and dictate to social media platforms what is ALLOWABLE information. This bill reveals your true intent to DOMINATE AND EXERT CONTROL OVER THE PEOPLE. It reveals ever more your tyrannical attitude to the people YOU ARE MEANT TO SERVE, you are meant to CONSULT US, but more and more, you RULE OVER US, serving big corporate interests and ignore the people you are meant to seek advise and find out the wishes of.

- Government bodies deciding what is true/untrue will only seek out its own authorised/favoured sources. So, by default they will NEVER SEEK OUT OPPOSING VIEWS! This will always result in a self-reinforcing bubble. Government's approved sources, will only ever serve to support the government and its agendas. It will never seek alternate, differing, opposing views, and therefore the stream of what is truth will only ever NARROW AND LEAVE OUT MAJOR CHUNKS OF INCONVENIENT INFORMATION. Therefore, it will reinforce an endless cycle of calling any information it chooses to ignore or leave out as being untrue.
- I am deeply concerned at the ever-increasing reach of artificial intelligence and digital surveillance in to ordinary citizens lives. This bill also opens the door to increased spying on citizens and collecting data on what we think, our attitudes, who we choose to listen to. It is overreach and unwelcome encroachment in our privacy!
- The ridiculous and HIGHLY unfair position that you could demand for individual or independent investigative journalist's post to be removed, with NO CHANCE FOR APPEAL. You clearly have contempt for the citizens, if you think this is an ok way to operate, and reasonable power to STEAL for yourselves, OVER THE PEOPLE YOU ARE MEANT TO BE UNDERNEATH AND TO SERVE. The attitude of anyone who would come up with this kind of bill is clearly one of wanting to dominate and one of contempt for the citizens. The people! It is indicative of an attitude of disdain and disrespect for us!
- I have listened to lawyers who are much more qualified to examine and speak about the potential legal ramifications of this bill and I have heard them speak about many concerns, also I have heard politicians speak about the potential misuse and dangers of the government having this kind of power. Quite frankly, IT IS NOT YOUR PLACE to take control of all elements of our lives.
- This BILL and the very idea of what it proposes to do is WAY MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY FALSE INFORMATION!

You may claim it is about protecting people from harm, but even within the bill the definition of what serious harm is remains unclear. Too many parts of this bill could be interpreted by whoever is at the helm, and it should not be, up to a small handful of people to dictate what is harm, especially in a day and age where there is very little LISTENING that occurs, mainly REACTING, and mislabelling people's attitudes and concerns with labels that are not accurate. Way too many people discussing concerns about immigration for example, are mislabelled, racist. People speaking up about their concerns about accuracy of data around climate change are labelled climate deniers. People discussing concerns about children being introduced to adult concepts and sexual information that may not be age appropriate, are mislabelled, ****insert term - phobic**** not listened to for the real reasons about their concerns. People who love and respect Indigenous People of this land, but who are concerned about some of the possible ramifications and legal implications of the current referendum are labelled racist. So many of these labels slapped around BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS who should know better, OR THEY DO KNOW BETTER BUT ARE USING IT TO SILENCE OPPOSITION AND SCORE POLITICAL POINTS.

I think that in the midst of a very oppositional landscape at time in history, to rush in to stamp out anyone speaking up about their concerns about all sorts of controversial topics, is RASH and UNNECESSARY. We need to encourage MORE DEBATE, MORE DEEP, SLOW, CONSIDERED DISCUSSION, not less. Instead of trying to silence things that don't fit with whatever side of issues

governments decide is TRUTH, we...YOU...need to grow up and take it slow and use intelligence to really hear and respect all the valid points and concerns about topics.

It is clear that in science and other similar fields, there will be a process of discovery, that will be ongoing, perhaps no science is ever SETTLED. Yet during the pandemic for another example, the so-called science was claimed to be SETTLED and KNOWN for sure, at such a rapid pace, that it was SACRILIGIOUS to even talk about ANY OF THE REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES, AND DATA, AND DISCOVERY, that was being looked at and seen by many well qualified people around the world. How dare anyone QUESTION, HOW DARE ANYONE BE HESITANT to put a very rapidly made, very short-term tested, still in TRAIL, drug in to their body. HOW DARE ANYONE DECIDE FOR THEIR OWN BODY how they want to protect their health, and possibly more importantly, WHAT RISKS THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE for their own body. I mean, no matter what the real truth is about how many deaths or injuries are caused by a drug, they have occurred, and for those they have occurred to, they, and their families have their lives altered, and they have to LIVE WITH THOSE CONSEQUENCES AND THROUGH THAT PAIN AND TRAUMA. If there is ANY RISK at all, no matter how small, THESE STATISTICS AREN'T JUST NUMBERS, THEY ARE PEOPLE'S LIVES!! If there is ANY RISK, it is a person's RIGHT TO DECIDE for themselves. Yet, there was such heavy-handed force and coercion. There was bullying, targeting of those who dared to question things being touted by politicians, officials, there was a PUSH TO CENSOR AND SMEAR DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS WHO DARED TO SPEAK UP ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE SEEING, DATA, EVIDENCE AND THEIR EXPERT KNOWLEDGE.

Perhaps most importantly, governments already misused their position to target DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS and made social media companies actively suppress certain information. AND NOW YOU WANT TO GIVE YOURSELVES EVEN MORE POWER TO DO THIS. Probably because it is now coming out that governments have overstepped their legal rights by doing this. In the USA a judge recently ruled that governments were not to contact social media companies to instruct them to take down posts and shadow ban accounts, so now, instead of checking themselves, governments around the world, as if in LOCK-STEP, following the exact same rule book, are all trying to increase their powers to "OWN THE MEDIA", changing laws so previously perhaps illegal, but certainly unethical methods used, are now legal for them.

This bill fits right in to that category.

The other reason I am making all these points about the detail is because, now, so many facts are coming to light and we are starting to find out more of the ACTUAL TRUTH about how GOVERNMENTS SET RULES AND MANDATES often without enough scientific evidence behind those decisions, that governments actively broke the tenets of things like medical ethics and the Nuremberg Code principles, in coercing the population to enter in to a medical drug trial. Now there is a lot of data coming out, that is showing that the governments themselves have definitely been participating in proliferation of MIS & DIS information, whilst actively suppressing information that was starting to prove that governments had data, but made public statements and decisions that negatively impacted the population, based on lack of evidence, or where the available evidence showed they were wrong. Yet, still no admission, no transparency, you are happy to just keep on talking and doubling down on the smearing of those who won't shut up, and will keep questioning you. You are happy to misinform the public, cherry pick what truth to allow and focus on, avoid

questions about the data and your evidence and reasons behind all the decisions you made on the public's behalf, as long as you can get away with it, who cares how many people know.

So, to ensure that as small a percentage of the population know the other information that is coming out, you now want to have a power lever to really silence independent media, and individuals who are respected and being listened to.

Sure, I bet there is plenty of false information that seeps in, but intelligent people, are listening to qualified, legitimate voices who are proving themselves to be legitimate, proving themselves to be rational, reasonable, opinions backed by evidence, and yet, so many of these people, have been targeted. People who are very grounded in facts, evidence, data, science, have been labelled spreaders of misinformation. So, this is how I know for sure that this bill will be used to silence truth. Because governments have already been using their influence to smear, censor, discredit, label THESE VERY FINE, VERY QUALIFIED, VERY MEASURED, VERY EVIDENCE BASED, FACTUAL, LOGICAL, RATIONAL, INTELLIGENT voices. This is how I know for sure this bill is not only planned to be used for ACTUAL LIES, FOR ACTUAL MIS and DIS information. Because already, governments have been trying to suppress TRUE INFORMATION by calling it MIS AND DIS information.

If governments had only been using these measures to really find and dispel myths and lies, I might trust that the intention behind this bill, and that the application of these powers would only be used in a very measured and cautious way. But instead, I have already seen SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE that some of the most qualified, most measured voices speaking up and calling out government mistakes, and speaking out about the things they are seeing...things they know people need and HAVE A RIGHT TO BE INFORMED ABOUT have been the target of government, so I know for sure it will be misused to try and block the reach of these people, even more fully than has already been actioned.

The insane censorship and heavy-handed controlling of the messages, the complete utter mislabelling of people with legitimate concerns, with valid SCIENTIFIC DATA analysis etc, that has been seen over the past few years has been disgusting. And now, as a clear continuation and clear effort to give yourselves MORE RIGHTS TO DO THIS, you are trying to bring in this bill, confirming your MENTALITY & POSITION that somehow you ought to be ABLE AND ALLOWED TO SHUT DOWN CERTAIN INFORMATION. Now that more evidence is coming to light just how much INCORRECT CENSORSHIP of TRUE INFORMATION has gone on, it is clear these laws would be misused, and it is way too much power to have.

It has been revealed that much of the so-called misinformation that governments have been using resources to suppress and silence over the course of the pandemic, turned out to actually be true information. Therefore governments & government agencies, colluding with social media platforms worked to censor many people who were qualified to give an opinion. People who were qualified to analyse data and share their concerns. People who were reporting on what they were seeing.

Over the past 3 years, it has been revealed that governments around the world, operating in lock step, censored many people who were delivering information that the public has a RIGHT to know.

Often the information was true, but it did not suit the narrative that was sanctioned by the government, so these people were targeted, which has been proven now, given research in to “Twitter’s” files revealing the government intervening in the sharing of information throughout the pandemic. Also, Facebook or Meta have now admitted they had censored true information.

It has now been revealed and proven how much interaction between social media companies and government agencies went on, in order to silence people who were sharing information, this even went as far as to delete individual people’s stories of serious injuries they acquired and suspected to have been caused by the vaccine. The rationale for this was that if the public were to hear these accounts, it might cause “hesitancy” to take the vaccine in others. This was deemed “dangerous” or potentially “harmful” to public health. So, instead of people being allowed to hear and see TRUE information, about REAL HARMS either definitely, or most likely caused by the vaccine, there was significant effort put in to removing these posts, reducing their ability to be shared and seen.

To me, the censoring of this information was the dangerous and harmful thing, not the information itself.

The reason I immediately discuss the censorship that has occurred through the pandemic, is because, it is very clear that governments were participating in this, and that this is also DIRECTLY THE REASON this Bill is being proposed.

This Bill is the action of a government that seeks to CONTROL what information people are allowed to see. Of a government that acts as superior to its citizens. A paternalistic response, treating citizens as if we are incapable of coping with some pieces of information, so you better control it all for us, you better filter it, so we don’t think the “WRONG THING”

Since when is it your role or right to decide what it is people are allowed to think, question and contemplate? It is NOT.

Contemplation and questioning the current things thought to be true, also part of the realm of discovery, education, and we must be able to hear things, discuss things, even things that may not end up being true, we actually must be able to navigate, discern, chew through numerous things, to broaden our understanding, even in the finding out that things were not true, or a theory not correct, we learn something. Even in sorting through and culling some of the false things, we might still work out what something isn’t, by discussing it. It is NOT DANGEROUS to allow even incorrect information to be shared and discussed. It is healthy for society to be able to think through all facets of debate and through doing this, learn how to think and question and challenge ideas that need challenging and updating.

Believe it or not, you, the government DOES NOT GET TO DECIDE WHAT WE ARE ALLOWED TO THINK, WHAT WE ARE ALLOWED TO HEAR. We don’t need you to micromanage every part of our minds.

Discovery is a slow, in depth, evolutionary process, you can't decide, NO THIS OR THAT THING IS MISINFORMATION AND THAT'S THE END OF THAT TOPIC, NO FURTHER INFORMATION IS ALLOWED TO BE ENTERED.

It is only a concept of the STUPID who can't think critically, to try to SHUT DOWN AND SHUT OUT debate, as they must be weak of mind, that they can't contemplate that people might be able to handle hearing something false. I don't advocate for falsehoods, but I do advocate for our right to hear and think for ourselves. False things won't stand up to rigorous debate, they won't last, but it is not for you to make the judgement that they are false.

Enacting this bill would require someone, or some groups of people to think they are able to make the FINAL CALL on if something is true or false, PREMATURELY. They would have to stop something before it has the chance to be properly debated and studied and contemplated. They would by necessity, have to call something a CONCLUSION PREMATURELY. This bill would force an urgent decision to be made, before you can really know the truth.

It may be argued that it is only about DIS/MIS-information after all, but there are many topics that have many sides, that have a huge amount of legitimate information that needs to be included in the big picture. Science, for example, is an ongoing process of discovery, is something that cannot have a CONCLUSION reached in an absolute, or 100% certain way. Science has so many facets, there are differing voices, because there are many people with their specific area of study and discovery, seeking answers but they can only add to the pool of knowledge, and there are differing opinions. But the opinions of scientists and Doctors who have real data, real valid points to make that go against the narrative, do form their educated, expert opinion based on very rational, legitimate evidence and data, they don't just come to their opinions based on nothing. They have reasons and have often spent many years studying in their field, and wouldn't be speaking out against the loudest voices, the narrative, unless they could really back their statements and their thinking with REAL VALID EVIDENCE AND DATA.

I have been very surprised over the last 3 years at just WHO has been smeared and labelled as spreaders of misinformation. Because when you actually take the time to LISTEN to some of these people, you see that they are qualified for their opinion, they are very rational, they are looking at evidence, they are highly intelligent. They are also brave, braver than many, as they are willing to speak up when what they see, the FACTS AND DATA they see and analyse shows them something other than the DOMINANT narrative. Or when they see evidence that they recognise as an aspect of the discussion that is being left out, or that calls in to question some of the conclusions reached, in the DOMINANT narrative.

To me, these are brave and perhaps more intelligent, because it is easy to go along with the loudest, dominant narrative, it's easy to just fit in, not rock the boat, it is much harder to speak up and say, actually, I see something different here, and if this is true, it means that what others are calling truth, is not necessarily correct.

My point is, these are the intelligent thinkers we need. It is NOT in the interest of a healthy, democratic society to have only one main narrative, that other voices cannot debate. And the reason I am sure this bill WOULD end up silencing these types of people, is because we have already seen the government doing exactly that.

You have demonstrated that instead of allowing or encouraging questioning of the narrative, you will go to great lengths to silence it. I have heard many Doctors' stories and it is clear that the government will behave in ways that seek to CONTROL, RULE OVER, exert force, intimidate those that dared to speak up about legitimate concerns.

Government has behaved in ways that were heavy handed, aimed at tight control, now this bill seeks to give yourselves more power to do this.

It has been proven that governments around the world, including Australia, already behaved in a way that was overreach, that instructed social media platforms to remove even true information. It also has been shown that some information was removed, people's accounts and posts banned, who shared information that was said to be MIS/DIS-information, that then turned out to be true.

True information has been falsely labelled misinformation, and now you seek further powers to enable you to do this more.

The thing about this is, it is not possible for ONE INSTITUTION or ONE BODY, to actually be able to assess all information and know WHAT TRUTH IS, it is impossible for all truth to be decided by government. Even with input from various sources, it is IMPOSSIBLE to have one ARBITER OF TRUTH.

Which information do you listen to and include in your assessment? Which do you discount and disregard to come up with what you will call misinformation? You are setting something up that can only, and will only ever be a self-reinforcing echo chamber, as you will only ever consult certain voices, and you will always discount others, and therefore the only information you will get, will be the stuff you want to hear, and you will be default censor other advice, so it won't be included. This may sound like it is going around in circles, but that is exactly my point, if you censor things you don't wish to promote, you will never ask the advice or input from anyone who could BUST THAT BUBBLE.

This very process proves that you can have no good or correct outcome. Who decides what is true information, especially if certain opinions are deemed INCORRECT, then these voices will be left out of the analysis? It is not possible for government to know or decide what is true. And in the fast-paced, A.I. driven world of social media platforms, it is impossible to give any alternative arguments the full weight and slow pace for discussion, contemplation, testing theories, or analysis if you

already have told A.I. what are the parameters are, you have already BIASED A.I. by inputting data in that supports the chosen narrative.

The more you silence and censor other opinions, the less information people have, or A.I. has, available to include in the analysis, or to incorporate in the modelling, the more it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, the more it creates a system with INBUILT CONFIRMATION BIAS.

This is a dangerous direction to push us in.

I have listened to various voices, particularly over the last 3 years. Because I saw that people I previously did not like or agree with on many topics, were speaking up about issues I too was greatly concerned about, I started listening to them, actually giving them the time of day, where I once might not have paid them much attention. I have been able to see their valid points, even on topics I once strongly disagreed with them about. It turns out, when you actually listen to people you disagree with, you often see that in fact they have valid points, that in fact, they often are intelligent, and they often have reached their differing conclusions, using very valid reasons and facts you had never heard about. They often highlight things you never considered, and you realise they actually do have some very important points, that can't simply be ignored. Governments and many people are often caught up in sitting firmly in their camp, when, in the real world, in reality, the issues actually WILL impact the outcome, the issues raised by some of the few who dare to speak up and say, hold on, we can't ignore this fact that exists. People, governments acting like it isn't true, or doesn't exist, is somewhat like the adult version of sticking your fingers in your ears and saying "la la la la la not listening, la la la la la la can't hear you". You simply cannot ignore some facts that are inconvenient to the DOMINANT NARRATIVE.

Voices that are inconvenient, instead of being listened to, are currently too often smeared, people are personally targeted, painted out to be some lunatic, discredited, so that people don't listen to them.

Now, with this Bill the government seeks to give themselves even more power to silence those it deems incorrect, however, so much in this world is not MATHS. Only maths can have ONE CORRECT ANSWER AND NOTHING ELSE IS CORRECT. All other intellectual pursuits, all technology, all science, all medical and other advancement is a continual work in progress.

It is completely IMPOSSIBLE for the government body/bodies to be able to know ALL TRUTH.

It is not even your job or your role. Government is stepping over a line in the sand of what its role in society must be. It is not your RIGHT to decide what we are able to hear and discuss and know about.

The Bill has very poorly defined terms, like, who decides what information is HARMFUL. Who decides what a harm is?

During the pandemic, it was said that it was HARMFUL for people to talk about a well-established medical / physiological phenomenon like NATURAL IMMUNITY. This was one of the flagged topics being banned and censored during the pandemic.

To me, and I'm sure many critical thinkers and Doctors, discussing this topic would be a vital part of keeping people safe. If you had had an infection and your own immune system had already done the job of what a vaccine is administered to try and make the body do, then perhaps those people who already had formed a natural immunity could have been free to choose if they wanted to also take the experimental medical treatment. Natural immunity is now proven to be higher in efficacy to that from vaccine, and also proven to be longer lasting, and to be much more BROAD-SPECTRUM due to not being created from one small part of a virus, the spike protein, but made from exposure to the actual virus, therefore much more broad and able to defend against many variants of the virus as it evolves new variants.

Why on Earth was that deemed to be both MIS-information, when it is pretty basic medical knowledge, and also, deemed to be dangerous or harmful to talk about natural immunity.

If people who already had an infection were able to go and assist their sick or dying family members, they would have provided much needed support to those in need of help. To me, it is more harmful to make people be sick or die alone without family support, or to make sick people at home be quarantined, possibly unable to take adequate care of themselves, when a person with natural immunity could have safely had some amount of contact with them, assisting them, giving them vital care, helping them medically, emotionally and psychologically. To me the ACTUAL HARM in this example was administered by the government, who made sick, isolated, elderly or dying people be alone.

To me the HARM done by so many measures taken by the government outweighs any benefit. Yet anyone speaking up against government measures, questioning the validity or the science or logic behind certain rules, many of which were arbitrary, and it has come out there was often no scientific data to back many government decisions. All the harms, medical, economic, psychological that have been caused by government decisions and dictates, has been horrendous, and we are now living through crisis in many areas from the after effects of these dictates.

Government is not being held accountable for all the harms they caused people. They are not apologising or admitting where they got it wrong. They are not being held accountable for all the MISINFORMATION they themselves spread.

Now government wants to take more power to silence people, to stop people hearing and accessing data, discussion and questioning of the government sanctioned narratives. This Bill claims to be about misinformation, but the terms are overused, and there is proof that the term MISINFORMATION has been misapplied, in order to stop dissenting opinions in society. The term is falsely used to silence the most important RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY of people.... their right to free speech, freedom of discussion, ideas, debate, scientific DISCOVERY, the government has no place in taking power over thought and information. It has proven that it cannot be trusted with such power, yet in order to silence any dissent, it is trying to put laws in place that give it more powers.

The danger with asking social media platforms to censor mis/disinformation, is, again, this is not their role, this is not something they have expertise in, it is not something they can even know how to do, so how do they enact that? The government tells them what to ban. If they are in position of receiving MASSIVE and DISPROPORTIONATE fines for not banning and censoring information, then they would only be forced to err on the side of excessive caution, banning anything that could even have any chance of being taken as them not abiding by the government sanctioned version of truth, the one narrative that is ALLOWED. They would be forced to censor excessively, as they would have to protect themselves from fines. So, they would effectively become just a version of state-run platform, not, what they currently can be used for, as a public square, for questioning authority and legitimacy of government over reach.

It is our RIGHT to do this, but you are proposing an avenue of potentially being able to censor anything some government body decides it will label misinformation from entering the public debate.

You are basically doing something similar to Nazi Germany, who took control of all media, so the people could only hear what the government wanted them to hear.

This Bill has poorly defined terms, so, in law, people have the ability to know what is legal and what is illegal. They know, if I do this, it is legal, but if I step over this line, it is illegal. But this Bill seeks to make it up to the government of the day to decide what is "harmful", what is misinformation, even though, on many in depth, complex and scientific topics, it is IMPOSSIBLE to know the whole complete truth. It is impossible to reach truth of scientific discovery if certain voices and experts are silenced because they don't fit in to exactly what supports the government narrative.

In history, Galileo was deemed a MISINFORMATION spreader, a heretic, saying DANGEROUS and untrue things.

But often history shows us that it is the minds of people who can see things beyond whatever the mass agreed truth is, that are the MOST INTELLIGENT. That are saying the truth before other scientists and bright minds can see it.

It is a DANGEROUS and truncated society that seeks to destroy those, quite probably BRIGHTER MINDS, from seeing things that some others aren't seeing. Or facts that aren't fitting in with the easy, go along with the crowd, position.

Another important point I wish to make is, I am perfectly capable of listening to viewpoints of others I disagree with, or agree only in part with, and taking in to consideration their views. I am capable of hearing things and using my critical thinking mind to question some of the ways people are framing their information. I am capable of listening to people who are standing up for things I agree with, who are broadcasting information, and both disagreeing with some parts of what they say and agreeing with other parts of their arguments. I might seek numerous informed people all sharing different pieces of the puzzle, and I get to be informed on complex topics, and I get to consider how these pieces interplay with one another. We are never going to be 100% aligned with others, so it is essential that we do hear all sorts of views on topics and we have the right to decide and think for ourselves.

I have been enjoying listening to some of the people who have indeed been targeted and censored over the past 3 years, and I always find that these people say so when they don't know the answer to something. They say what the evidence shows, and they also say when there are things they don't know. They have shown themselves many times to be measured and cautious about what facts they say, yet, these are some of the voices that governments have been using their heavy hand of force to try to censor and block their reach on social media. Some already had followers, but their platforms have been de-monetised. This has been the behaviour of governments bullying their way in to social media platforms and telling them what is misinformation and what is harmful for people to hear.

This has been the mode of operation about censoring SO-CALLED MISINFORMATION. So, from what there is proof of, it is clear that this kind of Bill is dangerous to free speech and freedom of information, and that the Bill is a power grab, an act of dominance, OVER THE CITIZENS. Governments have lost their place; they act more and more like they RULE OVER the people. They say what is allowed and what is not allowed.

This is the most dangerous Bill, as it seeks to control what we are allowed to say and think and what controversial topics we are allowed to hear thorough, rich and challenging debate on.

It has the ability to be misused, and I have no doubt that it will be, as governments have already shown their true colours in this regard.

It seeks to reinforce the types of global control measures that are being enacted all around the world. Because social media gives us access to information from around the world, beyond our own borders. Right now, all around the world, governments are acting in lock step, many countries

creating similar laws that are seeking to block questioning and block voices that aren't government sanctioned. Obviously, social media platforms are global in their reach, so what one government forces them to censor and remove, will impact what other people in other countries are able to see also.

It seems that these are crazy authoritarian times we are wandering in to, governments globally working to suppress information it doesn't want us to have, we are losing our ability to engage with people around the world, when many individual countries create laws akin to this one, it will have an impact not only in our own country, but the entire world will have many voices suppressed, so that they can't reach anywhere in the world. People who are doing important work to bring to light where there is government overreach, corruption.

THIS IS THE DANGEROUS THING, WAY MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY INFORMATION.

The complete surveillance state that is enabled by A.I. technology, the global arms that are all acting as one force to RULE OVER the PEOPLE. WHO, I WILL REMIND YOU, YOU ARE MEANT TO BE UNDERNEATH, YOU ARE MEANT TO SERVE! Now, this Bill seeks to apply scrutiny to all individuals, and independent media, with a measuring stick made by the government, to measure what is truth. Yet the Bill only seeks to scrutinise individuals and independent media/journalists, yet it actually states on PAGE 5 that EXCLUDED FROM THIS SAME SCRUTINY is content produced by or for an educational institution authorised or accredited by government bodies, or those recognised by the commonwealth.

If you are concerned about the dangers of misinformation, then apply the same scrutiny to all. In the eyes of the law, we are all equal. If you are concerned about the damage information could do, then why would you exempt these bodies and institutions from scrutiny on these platforms.

I guess my point becomes irrelevant if the scrutiny is only applied to whatever the "MINISTRY OF TRUTH" decides is misinformation anyway, it won't really need to censor bodies that are already really good at weeding out any people who are not on board with the main stream, "allowed thinking" anyway.

I guess there would be no need to scrutinise these as they will already be self-censoring effectively. But still same scrutiny ought to be applied to all.

But, indeed, if this is only going to be applied to what a "MINISTRY OF TRUTH" would INSTRUCT social media companies to call misinformation and ban, delete and censor, this MINISTRY will never flag these officially sanctioned institutions anyway, so I guess the fact is, social media companies would only ever be acting under government directives to find out what is deemed misinformation.

Again, this Bill is seeking to reinforce an echo chamber of ideas, that will never ask for scrutiny to be applied to its own agenda, to its own narratives. And its own narratives will only ever reinforce its own correctness and its own power, so this bill will ONLY EVER BE USED TO SILENCE VOICES THAT COULD CALL OUT GOVERNMENT'S AND OTHER POWERFUL INSTITUTION'S corruptions. Therefore, this Bill creates an inherently flawed system.

One that will silence critical thought, that will dumb society down, in the very areas we need serious debate and need to FACE DIFFICULT FACTS that aren't always going to be easy. These are the very areas that need the MOST OPEN DEBATE. These more controversial topics are precisely where we need to listen to many AND ALL OF THE BEST MINDS, including different sides of the debate different analysis of data and facts.

The governments and powerful corporations of the world don't seem to want us to be intelligent and work together to really learn and know things. They seek to put measures in place that reinforce their own power, that never allow anything to be brought in to the mass consciousness of society that might cause us to question the validity of the rules made on our behalf. This Bill seeks to create conditions that suppress human intelligence and freedom of speech and thought.

In a democratic society, it is essential that power be held to account. And if power decides what is truth, and creates laws, that allow it to silence and stop the spread of information that goes against its own definitions of truth, then it is seeking to give itself more power.

It is seeking to control the people, not work FOR THEM, not be ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE.

This Bill is effectively giving government power to be sole arbiter of truth, that will only allow what it decides is truth, to be said. In effect it can have the impact of shutting down information that could serve to hold government to account.

It is therefore a highly insidious bill, with potential to destroy what DEMOCRACY actually means.

Democracy is easy when all people agree on topics, it is hard when people don't agree. Yet WE, THE PEOPLE are who government is meant to seek advice from, WE, THE PEOPLE, are who the government is meant to FOLLOW THE WISHES AND DEMANDS OF. The difficult topics where people don't agree, are the exact places where we need freedom of information, and for governments NOT TO BE ABLE TO CRUSH OPPOSITION by labelling it misinformation. They are the exact places we need truth to be aired out, where we need complete transparency, and the full rigour of debate and voices. The difficult topics and the difficult times are precisely when this Bill will destroy free speech, and destroy democracy, and destroy advancement of ideas and discovery. For it will say, this is too

dangerous, we have to keep it from people. These more difficult issues and moments are when we need the MOST OPENNESS and the most welcome of all voices to the table.

It's not for the easy topics and easy times that this Bill is being proposed though, it is going to be used when there is confusion and uncertainty and that is EXACTLY THE TIME WHEN the powers proposed by this bill are MOST DANGEROUS AND DAMAGING. It is so far beyond ok for this bill to be passed.

There is also no proposed independent oversight. But even if there was some tick-box exercise, putting in place some "oversight" body, I don't think this is adequate, because who elects them, who decides who these people are, you cannot put in to the hands of a FEW people, the power to make that call, as deciding what is true and not is too big a task for an oversight body also.

The whole premise of this bill, is flawed, there would be no way to have a real body with oversight, even if one was proposed in this bill, because, TRUTH IS TOO VAST, TOO BROAD, TOO COMPLEX. TRUTH in all fields is in a continuing process of slow, in depth, discovery. This bill is seeking to cut off large sections of our ability to really discover.

Powerful forces with economic interests already have too much power, already infiltrate and control too much of the decisions that are made FOR US, OVER AND ABOVE US, ON OUR BEHALF, but that basically always keep themselves growing ever richer and more powerful, and behaving like they OWN HUMANS and like we have to be RULED OVER with no right to say no.

The balance is already way too corrupted, and this very dangerous bill seeks to reinforce and shut down the people's power of speech in the public square even more, and make us even less powerful than the systems already leave us.

You need to remember your place of service, of ASKING US what we want you to do for us, what we want you to provide for us, with OUR POOL OF MONEY. This bill seeks to give you even more power to track down, crush and silence any voices that would really question you. Giving all power to decide what is truth to a few, is highly dangerous. Way more dangerous than any information could be!