

Submission COMMUNICATIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (COMBATTING MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION) BILL

From: [REDACTED]
To: Information Integrity <information.integrity@infrastructure.gov.au>
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Dear Misinformation Bill Review,

SUBMISSION

Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

• As a citizen of this wonderful Nation that has valued freedom – I strongly oppose the passing of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill.

• This Bill is a subtle attempt to stifle the voices of the majority of Australians at a time when 'woke' agendas that were never publicised to the electors of Australia are being implemented with little or no consultation and with an arrogance by the present government which is unprecedented in Australia's history.

• The Bill is a form of 'wobble words' and 'politics' – attaching the social media giants, who have abused their power to censor freedom of speech in elections and in social dialogue and need to have their power (greater than all national governments) reigned in. However to use this concern about these organisation as a sly attempt to bring about even greater abuse of power and sleight of hand to implement punitive silencing of public debate and stifling and muffling of truth and public debate – which is essential in a democratic society – is deceptive and misleading in itself.

• This Bill is intended to bring about a shut down of any form of dissent from the 'woke' and anti-Christian agenda of the current Labor Government. Its punitive aspects spell prison sentences and punishments of diverse kinds for a citizen or groups of citizens speaking freely about what concerns them.

• I recall the history of the Tolpuddle Martyrs - six agricultural worker from the village of Tolpuddle in Dorset, England in 1834 - who, together, sought to form a union of members to seek better working conditions. The law found a way to silence them – and to prevent what became a major voice for working people – trade unions – they were convicted of 'swearing secret oaths' as member of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers. For attempting to join together to form a union of workers they were sentenced to seven years transportation to the then penal colony of Australia. The conditions were harsh. There were campaigns to free these men who exercised a universal freedom, which a parliament found a way to enact or interpret a law which could shut their voices for justice and freedom and a living wage.

• Australia has always led the way in speaking up and opposing tyranny, from every source, are we now so dull, or so indoctrinated with various deceptions and doctrines, that we can deny our own history or even indeed the history of the brave Tolpuddle Martyrs. They are now commemorated in Britain – yet their bravery meant, harsh imprisonment, transportation and privation, just for seeking to speak together, to join together to bring about justice and freedom. Rightly there were people who stood up and opposed their plight. If the current Bill were enacted, the Tolpuddle Martyrs would be punished, possibly have no jobs in this woke culture – and those who stood for them and for freedom of conscience and freedom of speech and freedom to assemble, indeed freedom to join together for a common good, eg Friendly Societies, Co-Operatives; Unions, people's banks and the like. - These would also be punished, ostracised and possibly be imprisoned.

• The Bill is a mirror of totalitarian regimes where the 'harm' that is spoken of in this Bill - has come from foolish and failed polices that led to economic failures, crop failures, and for the populace in the many, many millions - death from hunger, torture, imprisonment in inhuman conditions and state arranged murder. Apparently mild now, but a slippery slope. Consider Germany in the 1930's – who knew how slippery the slope would be and the war, death and genocide that would follow – nice policies!

• The Bill is opposite to the kind of Australia, freedom of thought, and conscience and the right to protest against government policies and tyrannical actions. This is what our ANZACS fought for – could the Australian Parliament, (blinded by their own power and polices that do not reflect the majority of the population) allow such a Bill to become law? In the weakened environment of our parliamentary representation this is a horrible possibility and the end results will be akin to the paths of other totalitarian governments. Woke laws ending in a very slippery slope of communism and its consequences.

• There is even a suggestion that a citizen or group of citizens could not challenge the results of an election if there was a suggestion of fraud in the process.

• It goes without saying that the Bill which gives unprecedented powers to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) to silence, stifle dissent and democratic freedoms – known in our civilization since the Magna Carta and embodied in International Laws – cannot be passed in a democratic society. What a disaster that would be!

- This Bill would be in breach of Australia's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other Instruments that protect human rights and guarantee freedom of speech.

- o Australia is an original signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Article 18 of that declaration reads: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.² Article 19 takes this right even further: 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.

- The power to decide which speech constitutes 'misinformation' and must be censored is, at heart, totalitarian. By giving government agencies increased power over the words that Australian citizens are allowed to utter, the Albanese Government tempts tyranny.

- History demonstrates to us that when peoples in times of uncertainty have given their government unprecedented power, including and especially over the speech of their citizens it has been a disaster. Communist and Fascist leaders alike won the trust of the masses with grand promises that could only be fulfilled by making every aspect of life the concern of government. Horror followed; control of the population by starvation and death and imprisonment; death by starvation caused by killing leaders and skilled workers; foolish agricultural policies led to famine and millions died of starvation and imprisonment and execution.

- The passage of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 would put the Commonwealth of Australia in breach of its international human rights obligations and at odds with its own nation's character and values. This is a threshold Australia must not pass.

- The Bill is a 'snide' attempt to halt any kind of dissent, freedom of thought or speech or action. It is supposedly targeted at international social media organisations, who themselves stifle and cut freedom of speech and at the same time 'turn blind eyes' to horrific pornography and child sex trafficking and support of totalitarian regimes, yet this Bill does not target these organisations, who are almost above national governments, it attempts to 'piggy back' overall dislike of these organisations and their policies to cut freedom of speech, whilst still seeking public use of their facilities.

- This Bill is a totalitarian government's attempt to thwart and prevent freedom of speech, freedom of religious belief, freedom of conscience and freedom of action. I repeat the Tolpuddle Martyr example as a 'law or interpretation of a law' was made – to bring about this end – and whilst appearing to be 'just and right' it was in fact a lie – a deception – a means of using "laws" to gain power to stop any dissent and thus to remain in power for an endless period – like the totalitarian governments we have seen come and go – and Australians in most of our Nation's history have fought against these falsehoods.

- I quote a Scripture as my conclusion:

- o 20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
- o 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
And prudent in their own sight! Isaiah 5:20-21 NKJV

