

To: Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Re: Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2024

From: Rod Caddies – Leader of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Western Australia

Dear Senators

Pauline Hanson’s One Nation WA is completely opposed to the proposed Misinformation and Disinformation bill. The idea that a democracy can have a “ministry of truth” is offensive and violates the principles which our nation was built on.

There is a disturbing trend towards accepting surveillance and thought control which is being pushed in our country by people who claim to have our best interests at heart. This is what all totalitarian regimes claim.

In China citizens are monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, at home, at work and when they are out in public. This monitoring is done via huge amounts of facial recognition cameras, the storing of all personal internet usage data and mobile phone data which contains information about what movements people make. All of this data is then stored forever in huge databases, which use artificial intelligence systems to identify what the communist party considers to be undesirable, and issue social credit scores to citizens to influence their behaviour.

In China the official propaganda extolls the virtues of this dystopian system, pointing out that crime and bad behaviour are being very effectively managed. Of course they have a point, just like in George Orwell's book 1984, a system of total control where the state can control the thoughts and actions of individuals is very effective.

Australians will think that the Chinese system could never be implemented here, however we are building the infrastructure for it at the state level. In WA, Police already gather all data created in WA, internet searches, mobile phone records, surveillance and road traffic cameras, and government health records, and all of this data is stored forever, and analysed using AI.

This misinformation and disinformation bill would allow the government of the day to decide what is acceptable thinking and what is not, and have the means to identify and punish those that do not comply.

The erosion of our democratic principles of free speech, freedom of association and privacy are under significant attack by bills such as this one, this sort of legislation is the infrastructure that allows for authoritarian tyranny to be implemented at the flick of a switch.

This bill must not pass, and needs to be scrapped.