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22 March 2022

## MORRISON'S PROPOSED MINISTRY OF TRUTH IS AUTHORITARIAN AND DANGEROUS

Plans by the Morrison Government to [give more power](#) to bureaucrats at the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) to act against 'big tech' on misinformation and disinformation are a draconian threat to the free speech of every Australian, the Institute of Public Affairs has warned.

"This is Scott Morrison's Finkelstein moment. In the same way Julia Gillard and Stephen Conroy attempted to censor the media, Scott Morrison and Paul Fletcher are attempting to censor mainstream opinion online," said Evan Mulholland, Director of Communications at the IPA.

"It should come as no surprise that an unaccountable bureaucracy like ACMA is advocating for more power for itself, a true Liberal government would resist this at all costs.

"Under no circumstance should the Morrison Government be handing more power to ACMA. This announcement is either a stunning act of arrogance by the Prime Minister who thinks he should be in the business of censoring opinion or a demonstration of a complete lack of understanding of consequences this will have on free speech by himself and his Minister for Communications."

Under the proposed rules, social media companies would be forced increase their already overzealous censoring of mainstream opinion regardless of its accuracy.

"Big tech does not have a proud record on censorship. This would get even worse with emboldened ACMA thought police driving them to further crack down on mainstream opinion," Mr Mulholland said.

Recent examples of overreach of social media companies in censoring misinformation include:

- Facebook censoring and warning about "*misinformation*" on content to do with the Lab-Leak theory on the origins of COVID-19. In May 2021 it reversed this decision.
- Social media companies constantly flagging research or opinions about the efficacy of masks for misinformation, despite the science being contested and constantly changing.
- Twitter censoring the New York Post for posting alleged misinformation its investigative article into Hunter Biden's "*Laptop from hell*" during the 2020 US Presidential Election campaign. The New York Times now admits the laptop reporting has been "*authenticated*".

"This announcement is nothing more than government-backed censorship, it has nothing to do with accuracy; this is about the government finding new ways to filter out facts and opinions unacceptable to the elites and the political class," Mr Mulholland said.

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