

External assessment 2024

Stimulus book

Modern History

General instruction

- Work in this book will not be marked.



Queensland
Government

QCAA

Queensland Curriculum
& Assessment Authority

Source 1

Excerpt from a statement by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam)

The decision of the Australian Government to dispatch a unit of combat troops to South Vietnam constitutes a new and extremely serious step in the collusion between Australia and the United States and dangerously increases the threat of war expansion in Indochina and southeast Asia.

This act of the Australian Government brazenly¹ violates the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam and international law, grossly infringes on [North and South] Vietnam's sovereignty and independence, and pushes the Australian people into the U.S. imperialist sinking boat in South Vietnam.

...

Undoubtedly, the Australian people will decidedly not tolerate the Australian reactionary clique's² providing of Australian youths as cannonfodder³ [sic] for the U.S. aggressors in betrayal of the Australian people's interests.

Source: Democratic Republic of Vietnam 1965, *Foreign Ministry Statement*.

Context statement

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) was a communist country supported by the Soviet Union and China. The Geneva Agreements of 1954, also known as the Geneva Accords, were a series of documents signed by Cambodian, French, Laotian and Vietnamese representatives. Amongst other things, the Geneva Accords recognised the temporary division of Vietnam along the 17th parallel in 1954.

1 in a bold and shameless way

2 a small, close-knit group of people who do not readily allow others to join them

3 soldiers regarded merely as materials to be used in war

Source 2

Excerpt from an article in *The Canberra Times*

This content has been redacted for copyright reasons.

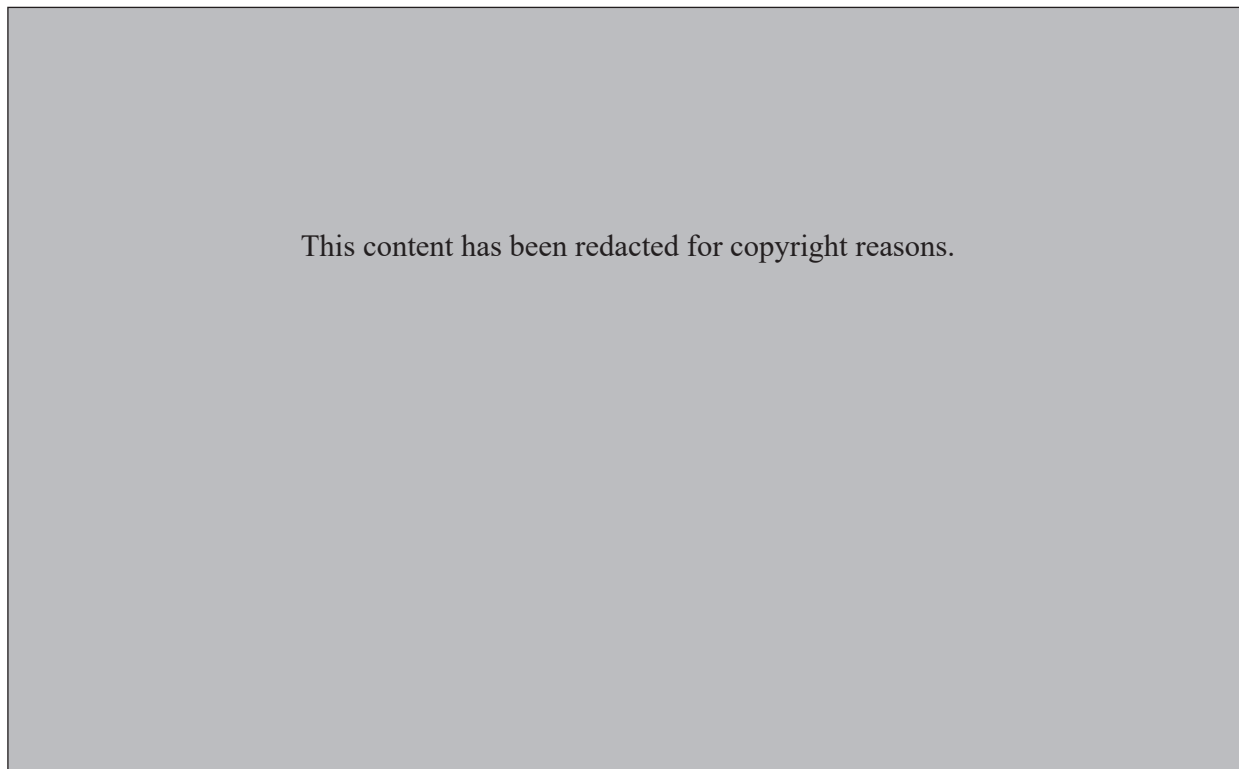
Source: *The Canberra Times* 1965, 'Lee's View: Australian move "an insurance premium"'.


Context statement

In 1965, Australia became the first country to establish diplomatic relations with the nation-state of Singapore. Prime Minister Lee made these comments while being interviewed for radio and television after a recent tour of Australia.

Source 3

Cartoon titled 'The strong stand'



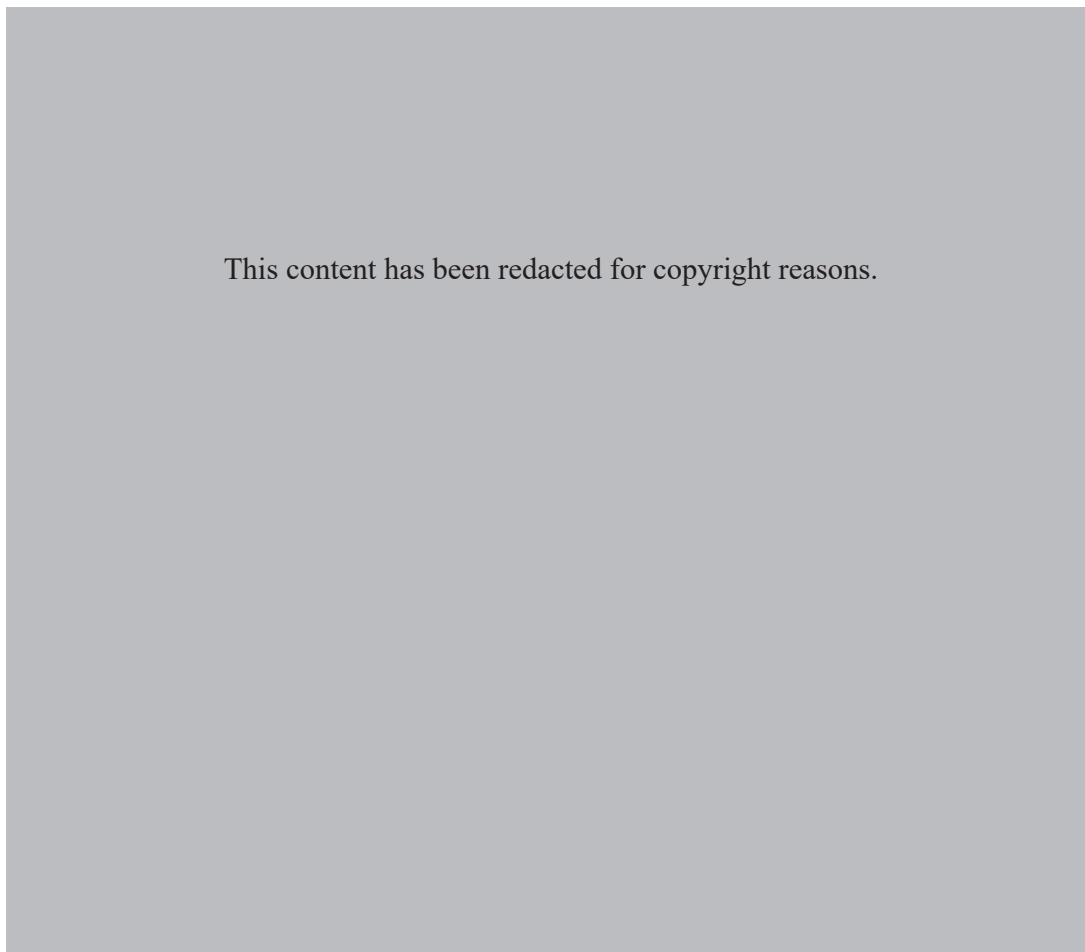
Source: Minhinnick, GEG 1964, 'The strong stand', *New Zealand Herald*.

Context statement

At the front of this cartoon and holding up the Australian flag is then Prime Minister of Australia Robert Menzies. Standing behind Menzies and holding up the New Zealand flag is then Prime Minister of New Zealand Keith Holyoake. Standing behind the prime ministers is a person wearing a United States of America (USA) military uniform. In the top corner of the cartoon appear words quoted from Holyoake that say: 'I am pleased that such a strong stand was taken and expressed in the communique on the Viet Nam issue'. The 'communique' — an official announcement or statement typically released to the media — is likely a reference to a declaration made by Australia, New Zealand, the USA and other members of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) on 15 April 1964 that the defeat of communist forces in South Vietnam was essential and required additional steps to be taken. At the time, international newspapers characterised the declaration as one of the strongest and most specific made by SEATO in connection with the Vietnam War.

Source 4

Cartoon titled 'GORTON: We'll go "Waltzing Matilda" with U.S.'



Source: Atchison, M 1969, 'GORTON: We'll go "Waltzing Matilda" with U.S.', [Adelaide] *Advertiser*.

Context statement

The taller person in this cartoon is then President of the USA Richard (Dick) Nixon. The smaller person is then Prime Minister of Australia John Gorton. In the top left corner are the words: 'GORTON: We'll go "Waltzing Matilda" with U.S.' A label attached to Gorton reads 'The Great Waltz'. At the bottom of the cartoon are words attributed to Gorton that say: 'Yes, Dick, we Australians must learn to stand on our own feet'. A waltz is a formal dance in which two people — one leading the dance, the other following — hold each other as they move around a room. 'Waltzing Matilda' is a song first published in 1903 that has been described as Australia's unofficial national anthem. On 6 May 1969, during a trip to the USA to see Nixon, Gorton said that 'wherever there is a joint attempt to improve not only the material but the spiritual standards of life of the peoples of the world, then Sir, we will go waltzing Matilda with you'. At this time, the military forces of both countries remained involved in the Vietnam War.

Source 5

Excerpt from *Vietnam: The Australian War*

Every city held ticker-tape parades. In the latter years [1970s] they tended to be sombre affairs, with none of the jubilation that greeted soldiers home from the world wars. 'I felt ten feet tall, I really felt good,' said John Skinner, 'but what I didn't realise was that most people were only curious. They weren't cheering us home. They were just lined up to see something.' In Adelaide, Bob Saillard marched past a crowd of silent lunchtime shoppers, 'not doing any cheering or anything. There was no welcome home at all'. The men felt like curiosities, slightly freakish, emblems of a grave mistake. Their photos show ranks of unsmiling eyes that seem to bore into the back of the man in front, as if afraid to make eye contact with the crowd. No young women ran up to kiss them.

On 17 November 1971, 500 soldiers, 450 airmen and 250 sailors marched in one of the last parades through Sydney. Emotions were mixed: relief and joy amid a deep sense of unease. From the stairs of the Town Hall, the perennially⁴ suntanned Minister for the Army, Andrew Peacock, beamed down on this scene of social dislocation like a Cheshire cat⁵ at a funeral.

Source: Ham, P 2008, *Vietnam: The Australian War*.

Context statement

Paul Ham is a historian specialising in war, conflict and politics. His books have been published in Australia, Britain, the USA and many other countries, and won several literary awards. Ham was previously a journalist for *The Sunday Times* and has a degree in economic history from the London School of Economics.

4 continually

5 a character from the book *Alice in Wonderland*, known for smiling broadly in a self-satisfied way

Source 6

Excerpt from an article in *Australian Policy and History*

Paul Ham's extremely popular book on this country's Vietnam appeared in 2007 [and was republished in 2008]. I do not have space here to discuss its intemperate⁶ and shallow descriptions of the anti-war movement nor its contribution to Australia's ceaseless culture wars.⁷ Pity. Ham sees the Vietnam veteran as a victim of a 'politicians' war', a broad concept which he does not explore thoroughly but which places the soldier as a tool of devious Canberra [the Australian Government]. But what is he saying? Are not most wars connected in some way to politics and politicians?

...

Ham's account of the public abuse of veterans was seriously challenged by Mark Dapin's 2019 publication, *Australia's Vietnam: Myth vs History*. Tom Richardson in his review of this important work wrote:

It is not that these events never happened; it is that they were less common, or happened in different contexts, than is remembered today. There were very few clashes between veterans and protestors reported during the war, but when they [happened] ... they were extremely well documented.

[Dapin's] argument is complex but stresses that veterans who had themselves inflicted major violence while in Vietnam, and who then flew back to a divided society, turned themselves into victims rather than protagonists⁸ ... It is important to note that this point of view had been advanced in this country, at least in part, as early as 1994 by Ann Curthoys.

Source: Trembath R 2021, 'Aftermath: Vietnam veterans and their historians', *Australian Policy and History*.

Context statement

Richard Trembath taught history at Victorian universities for many years and is the author of several books, mostly in conjunction with colleagues. Trembath's current research interests include the history of military veterans' organisations. Mark Dapin, Tom Richardson and Ann Curthoys are historians who have focused on various aspects of recent Australian history.

6 showing anger that is too extreme and/or not well controlled

7 a cultural conflict between social groups and the struggle for dominance of their values, beliefs and practices. Australia's culture wars are closely related to its history wars — disagreements about competing understandings of the interaction between First Nations Australians and other peoples during the colonial period in Australian history (1788–1901)

8 lead characters

Source 7

Excerpt from a speech by then Prime Minister John Gorton on Vietnam

Following a review of the situation in Vietnam which led to the earlier United States decisions to reduce the level of its forces by 115 000 by the middle of this month, President Nixon yesterday announced his decision to introduce a new and long range programme of United States troop reductions involving the withdrawal of 150 000 men over the next 12 months. On 16th December last [year] I announced the Government's decision that when the military situation in Vietnam permitted a further substantial withdrawal of allied troops, then some Australian units would be included in the numbers scheduled for withdrawal.

...

The development that gives encouragement is the progress in what has been called 'Vietnamisation' — the movement towards South Vietnamese self-reliance. We see one result of this in the progressive reduction of allied forces. But it must be understood that 'Vietnamisation' means much more than the assumption by South Vietnamese forces of a greater share of the combat burden. Behind it lies a massive programme of expanding and modernising those forces. And behind that again is the progressive assumption by South Vietnam of the responsibility for all aspects of the war — a war fought across the widest fronts, embracing a complexity of military, political, psychological, social and economic factors. In all these areas much still remains to be done by South Vietnam, assisted by its allies across a wide civil and military spectrum. Yet progress has been such that important qualitative changes are being made, and will continue to be made, in regard to the assistance required by and given to the Government of South Vietnam in pursuit of the objective shared over the years by that Government and its allies.

Source: Gorton, J 1970, 'Speech by John Gorton on Vietnam', *PM Transcripts*, 22 April.

Context statement

This speech was the first announcement from then Prime Minister of Australia John Gorton confirming the departure of Australian military troops from the Vietnam War.

Source 8

Excerpt from an article in *The Canberra Times*

This content has been redacted for copyright reasons.

Source: *The Canberra Times* 1970, 'Mr Gorton's good news', 23 April.

Context statement

This excerpt comes from the editorial of *The Canberra Times* — the editor's commentary on a topical issue.

Source 9

Excerpt from *Australia and the Vietnam War*

After the October 1969 election, the conflicting pressures on the government over troop withdrawals mounted. [Malcolm] Fraser [in his role as Minister for the Australian Army], supported by civilian officials in Defence and External Affairs, pressed his military advisers to end their opposition to the withdrawal of one of the three battalions in the task force. The military chiefs, led by Generals Wilton and Daly, maintained their stance. Although Gorton had said in his policy speech [for the federal election of 1969] that Australia would be 'phased into' any further American withdrawal program, he had generally supported the army's 'one out, all out' approach ... Much depended on Nixon's intentions ...

In December [of 1969] Gorton sent a personal message to Nixon asking for high-level discussions, hinting at a personal meeting between the two of them, so that Australian withdrawals could be based on joint planning rather than on Australian reactions at short notice to American announcements. The response came not from Nixon but from Marshall Green, a senior State Department official, who said that officials from both countries could begin talks about troop strengths ... Days later, when Nixon announced a further reduction of 50 000 American troops, Gorton stated that some Australian troops would be withdrawn at the time of the next major American withdrawal. It was embarrassingly obvious that Australia was reacting to American announcements of which it had no prior notice ...

In March [of 1970] Cabinet decided that the first Australian withdrawal would take place in November, when 8RAR⁹ would end its tour and not be replaced [However, Cabinet also decided to not make this announcement until April.] ... The government was ... surprised and embarrassed, once again, when Nixon announced on 20 April the withdrawal of a further 150 000 American troops. In a ... hastily prepared speech to Parliament [on 22 April 1970], Gorton announced that 8RAR would not be replaced in November and that Australia's training program for the South Vietnamese forces would be increased ... [Gough Whitlam, the leader of the Australian Labor Party and the Federal opposition] responded vigorously, asserting ... that the government was reacting not to the situation in South Vietnam but to the efforts of the United States government to extricate itself from what is now regarded as a tragic mistake.

Source: Edwards, P 2014, *Australia and the Vietnam War*.

Context statement

Peter Edwards is an Australian diplomatic and military historian.

9 the 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment

Source 10

Excerpt from *The Vote for Cambodia: Australia's diplomatic intervention*

[Australian Ambassador to South Vietnam Ralph Harry] gave an unrealistically optimistic assessment from the perspective of Saigon. He asserted that there had been a vast change in South Vietnam since [the Tet Offensive of] 1968,¹⁰ when many Vietcong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers were killed. They could no longer attack across the countryside at will. The government had re-established administrative control over almost the entire population. The armed forces now had over a million men under arms, and the regional forces were giving effective security to the hamlets. Police forces had been established at village level everywhere, and the signs were good that their control would continue during the withdrawal of American forces. Morale among the ARVN [Army of the Republic of Vietnam]¹¹ was high since they had received M-16 rifles. Vietnam was now remarkably stable, and in coming elections, the people were sure to re-elect a non-communist government. The Vietcong were diminished and 75 to 80 per cent of communist forces in the South were now North Vietnamese.

Harry's assessment was used by Canberra to justify the partial withdrawal of Australian troops. Australia did this in lockstep with 'Vietnamisation' as US troop withdrawals were called. On 22 April 1970, Prime Minister Gorton announced the repatriation¹² of one Australian battalion.

Source: Broinowski, R 2021, *The Vote for Cambodia: Australia's diplomatic intervention*.

Context statement

Richard Broinowski is a former Australian public servant and diplomat. He was once the Australian Ambassador to Vietnam.

10 a coordinated attack in 1968 by the military forces of the North Vietnamese and communist Viet Cong against a number of targets in South Vietnam

11 the main military force for South Vietnam

12 the return of someone to their own country

References

Source 1

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Source 2

Canberra Times 1965, 'Lee's View: Australian move "an insurance premium"', 6 May, p. 5, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/105842086?>

Source 3

Minhinnick, GEG 1964, 'The Strong Stand', *New Zealand Herald*, 17 April, <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23235071?>

Source 4

Atchison, M. 1969, 'Gorton: We'll go 'Waltzing Matilda' with the U.S.' [*Adelaide*] *Advertiser*, 9 May, in Peter Edwards, *A Nation at War: Australian Politics, Society and Diplomacy during the Vietnam War 1965 – 1975*, St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1997, p. 203.

Source 5

Ham, P 2008, *Vietnam: The Australian War*, p. 563, Harper Collins, Australia.

Source 6

Trembath, R 2021, 'Aftermath: Vietnam Veterans and their Historians', *Australian Policy and History*, 22 April, https://aph.org.au/2021/04/aftermath-vietnam-veterans-and-their-historians/#_edn9. Used with permission of Australian Policy and History.

Source 7

Gorton, J 1970, 'Speech by the Rt Hon JG Gorton MP on Vietnam (Ministerial Statement)' *PM Transcripts*, 22 April, <https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-2219>. Licensed from the Commonwealth of Australia under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence.

Source 8

The Canberra Times 1970, 'Mr Gorton's Good News', 23 April <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/107921318?>

Source 9

Edwards, P 2014, *Australia and the Vietnam War*, UNSW Press, Sydney, pp. 220–222.

Source 10

Broinowski, R 2021, *The Vote for Cambodia: Australia's diplomatic intervention*, Australian Institute of International Affairs, Canberra, pp. 31–32, <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/publication/the-vote-for-cambodia-australias-diplomatic-intervention/> CC BY-NC-SA 4.0



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