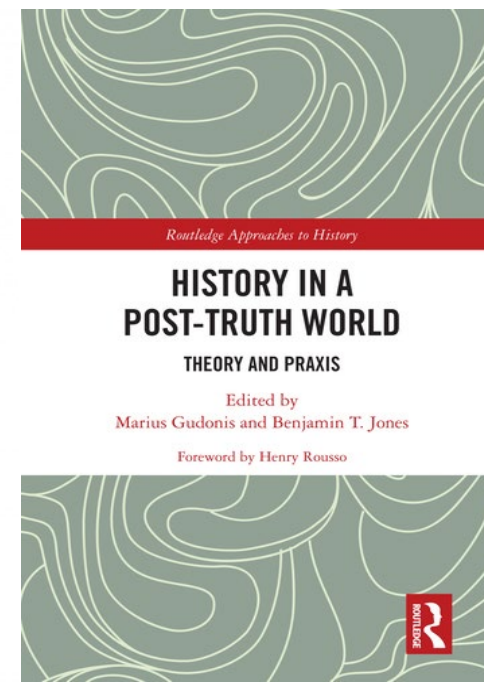
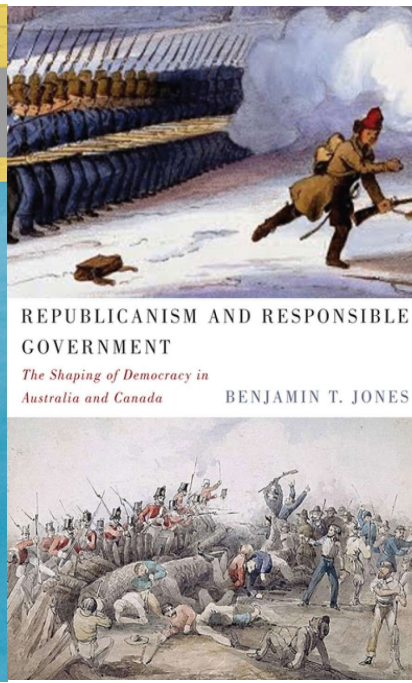
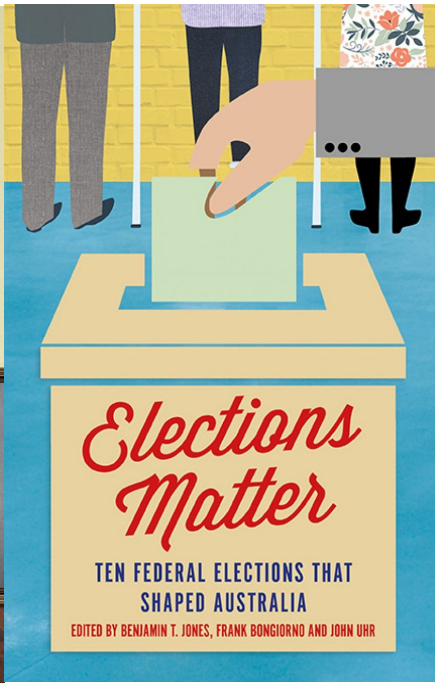
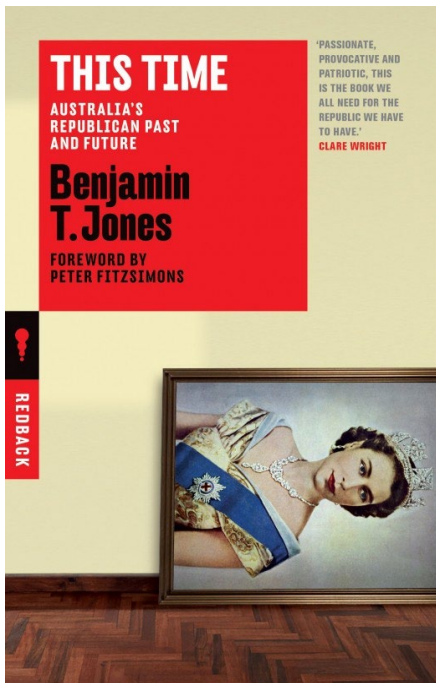




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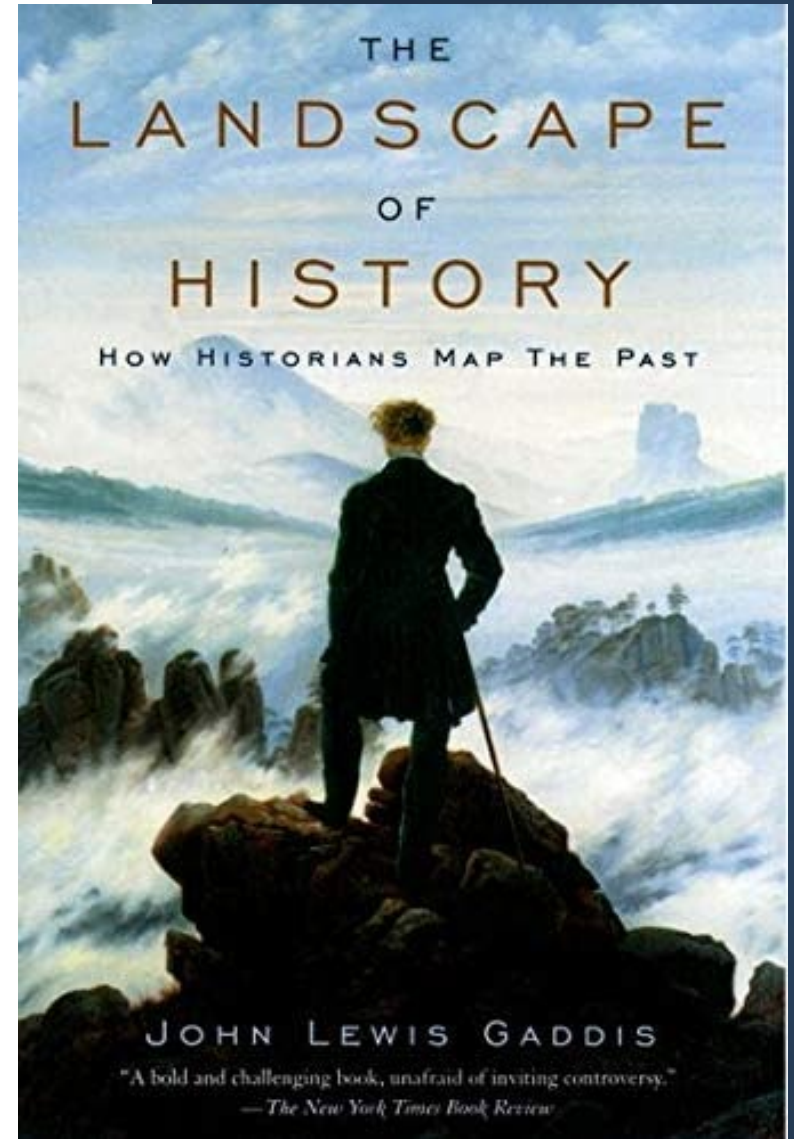
# Australia's Vietnam War

## The Hero in History and Social Forces



“Great men are thus the product of their times. They in turn influence their times, that is, their achievement influences the times. The great man is thus a medium in social change.”

William Fielding Ogburn, “The Great Man versus Social Forces”, *Social Forces* , Dec., 1926, Vol. 5, No. 2, p.230.



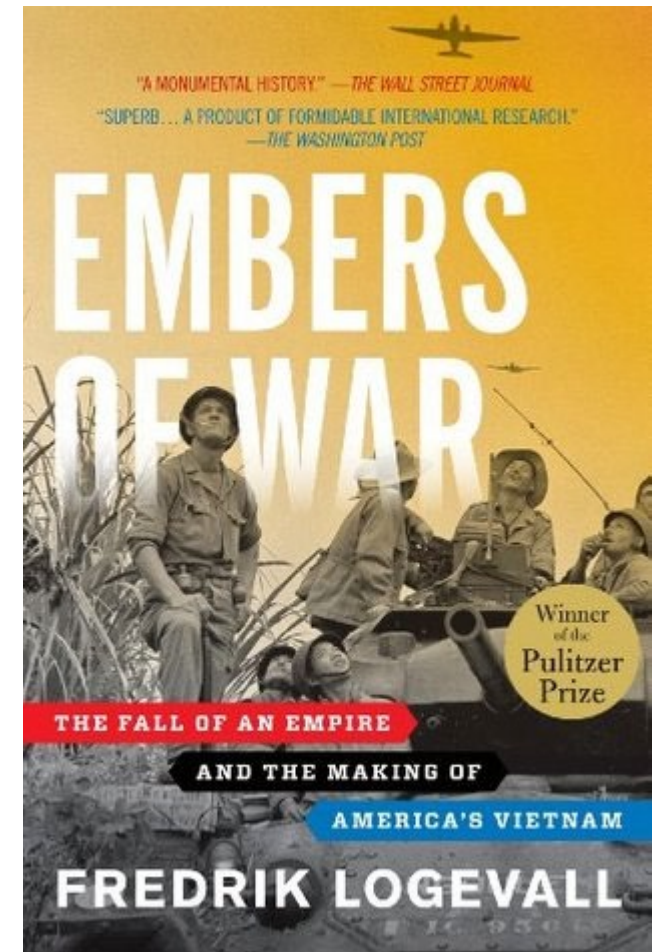


# Vietnam Wars

First Indochina War – 1946-1954

Second Indochina War – 1955-1975 – Australia's involvement (1962-72)

Third Indochina War – 1975-1991



Battle of Dien Bien Phu - May 1954.

Geneva Conference - July 1954. (Division of Vietnam at 17<sup>th</sup> Parallel; promised national elections in 1956; Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia to be neutral).

International Control Commission (Canada, Poland & India) 1954-1973.

USA refused to endorse accords and walked out on them.



“I am frankly of the belief that no amount of American military assistance in Indochina can conquer an enemy which is everywhere and at the same time nowhere, "an enemy of the people" which has the sympathy and covert support of the people.”

JFK, 1954 (JFK library website)



“I just stayed awake last night thinking of this thing, and the more that I think of it I don't know what in the hell, it looks like to me that we're getting into another Korea. It just worries the hell out of me. I don't see what we can ever hope to get out of there with once we're committed.”

LBJ, 1964 (telephone conversation with McGeorge Bundy, Tape 64.28 PNO 111.)



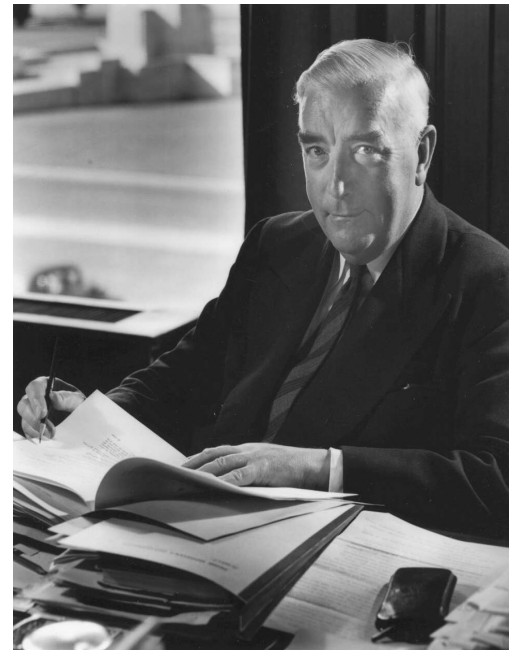


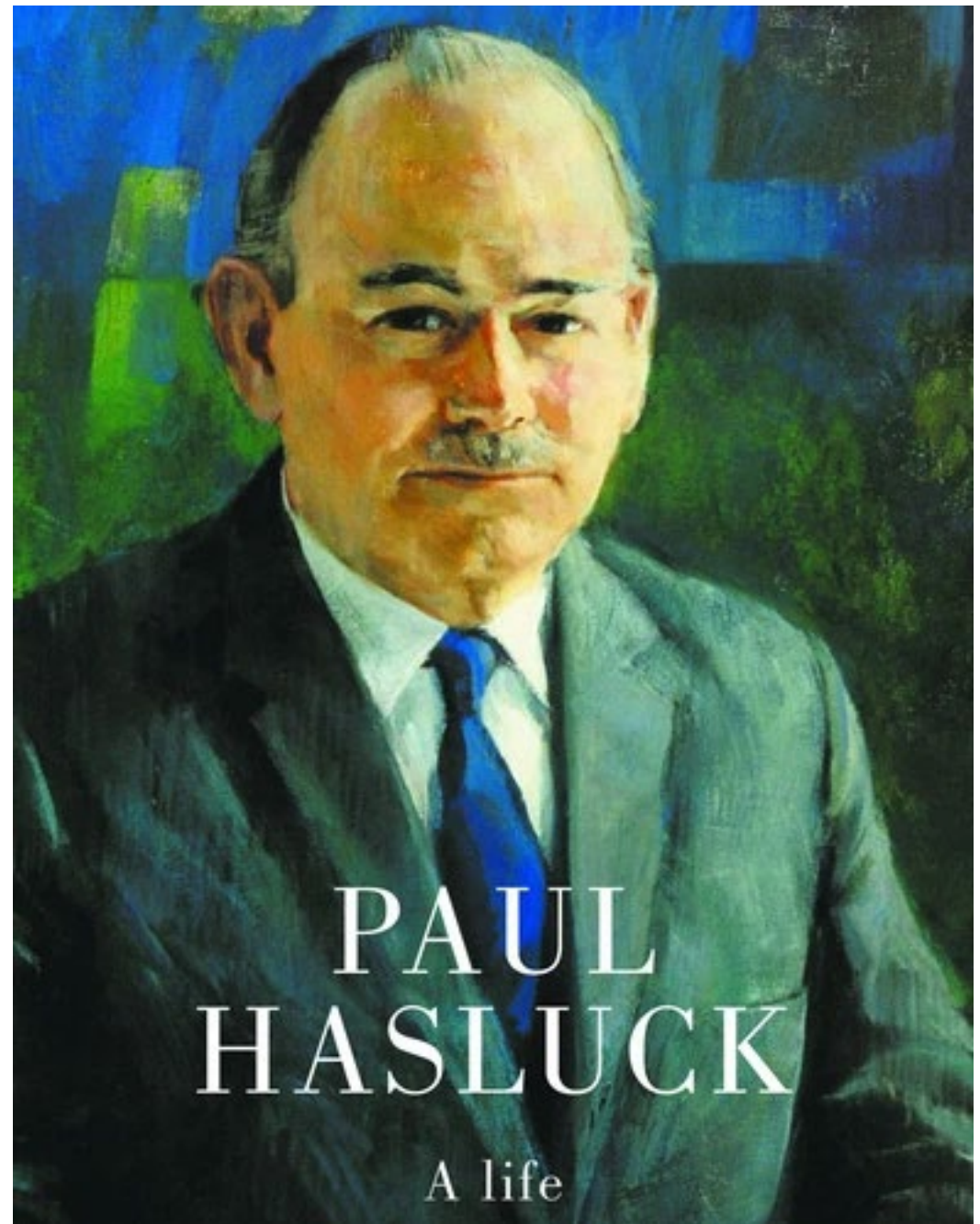
We do not think it is a wise decision. We do not think it is a timely decision. We do not think it is a right decision. We do not think it will help the fight against Communism ... or is consistent with, the immediate strategic interests of Australia.

Arthur Calwell, 4 May 1965, Hansard HoR Debates.

We don't go in against the will of the government of South Viet Nam and we haven't done so. In the same way, the United States of America hasn't gone in against the will of the government of South Viet Nam but is there by invitation. All this is an expression in action of the SEATO obligations.

Robert Menzies, 13 July 1965, PM Transcripts.





Garry Woodard (2017) Australia's war in Vietnam: debate without end, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 71:2, 216-230.



Australia's longest war (1962-1975) until Afghanistan.

About 60,000 ADF served.

1962 – 30 advisors.

1964 – Menzies government introduced conscription for overseas service.

1965 – Committed a battalion (1RAR) of combat troops (800-1000).

1966 – Harold Holt committed 2nd battalion, including conscripts.

1967 – 8000 troops.

521 killed. About 3000 wounded.

First military commitment in which Britain was not involved.

Birth of the protest movement?

Would the 1971 anti-apartheid demonstrations have happened if there had been no Australian involvement in Vietnam? 1971 BLF 'Green Bans'?







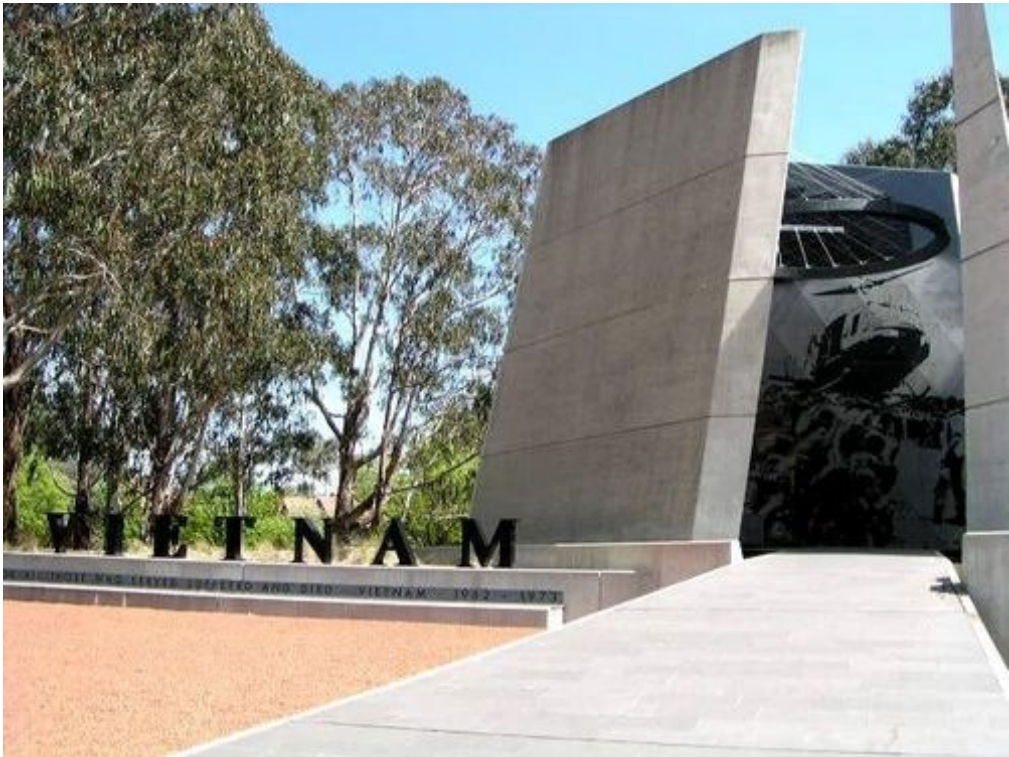
Permissive context (parliament, media, public opinion).

+

Short-termism (focus on winning the next election)

=

Unnecessary wars.



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