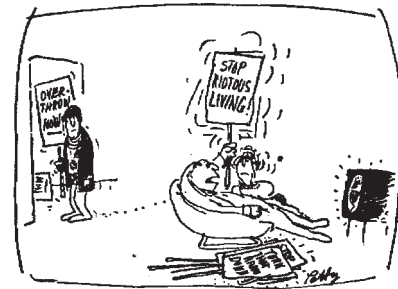


Section Four: Chunking Cartoons for year 12 (1945-1990)

Disclaimer- There could be more than one valid student response to cartoon interpretation. All student responses have to be judged in relation to the cartoon being analysed.

It's the only language they understand



CONTEXT:

- The cartoon is set in Australia on the home front during the Vietnam War, 1968.
- Australian and US troops, both regular and conscripted, have been involved in this war since 1965 supporting the anti-Communist military government of South Vietnam against the Communist north.
- Whilst visiting the US in 1966 Prime Minister Harold Holt declared that Australia would be 'all the way, with LBJ'.
- Despite public support at this time, decisions to become involved in the war, to send conscripts and to increase Australian commitment were controversial.
- Many groups within society protested against the war and conscription.
- The 1960s was also a period during which the 'baby boomers' (those born between 1945 and 1964) came of age and they, with others, began to question the so-called establishment.
- Seen as rebellious by their parents, the youth of the 1960s challenged society through their dress, hairstyles, music and behaviour.
- Communication between parents and children had become strained by different responses to the Vietnam War and social change at the time.

You may want to select video footage of the Vietnam War and protests from your school resources and show this to the students. Ask students to suggest ways the 'baby boomers' might have questioned the 'rules' by which society lived in the 1960s?

Copy 1

Highlight: Cartoonist
Date of publication
Publisher

The Cartoonist: Bruce Petty is a cartoonist and caricaturist, contributing drawings to the *London Punch*, *New Yorker*, *Esquire* and *Sydney Bulletin*. From 1964 he was the chief cartoonist for the *Australian* before joining the *Melbourne Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

- What sort of music was popular in the 1960s?
- What clothes did young people wear?
- TV was introduced into Australia in 1956, what impact might this have had?
- Australia was very much involved in the Vietnam War – what was this war?

Copy 2

Highlight: Student and doorway

- What does this image tell you about this young person in the late 1960s? (*Note long hair, style of dress. Students might like to guess what this person does... University student?*)

Copy 3

Highlight: Mum and Dad and TV

- Who might these people be? (*Mum and Dad*)
- Where might they be? (*Lounge Room in home*)
- What might be the relationship between the two groups of people in this cartoon so far? (*Young person going out, mum and dad saying goodbye – could be friendly or not!!*)

Copy 4

Highlight: Signs (all – overthrow, stop riotous living and turn that radio down)

- Look at each sign – what does each mean? (*'Overthrow Now' – change everything, no matter what it is! 'Stop Riotous Living' – stop questioning everything! 'Turn that Radio Down' – a common indication of the so-called 'generation gap'. Young people often play their brand of music very loudly. Because the music was so different many older people did not like it, or the volume!*)
- Which signs belong to which people and what might this say about the attitudes of each to each other and society? (*Look for ideas concerning the 'generation gap'...*)

Copy 5

Highlight: Caption – 'It's the only language they understand'

- Who is saying this? (*The father*)
- To whom and why? (*To son/daughter, because children did not appear to be listening to their parents anymore – seeing them instead as representatives of the 'establishment' – or old ways!*)

Questions for students to answer in writing

Candidates' responses to some of the following questions will vary according to their understanding of the symbols and captions of the cartoon. **Teachers should reward valid explanations where students can logically explain and justify their interpretations with details from the cartoon.**

Question: Explain the point of view of the cartoonist in this cartoon.

Example Answer:

- *The cartoonist is illustrating the existence of the 'generation gap': issues important to youth in the 1960s are not the same as those that matter to their parents.*
- *That the generations can only communicate through brief signs and slogans rather than have meaningful communication.*

Question: How effectively does the cartoon convey this message?

Example Answer:

- *It is effective because of the words on the signs and the clothing which both illustrate the gap between youth and parents.*
- *The cartoonist is using humour to make a serious point.*

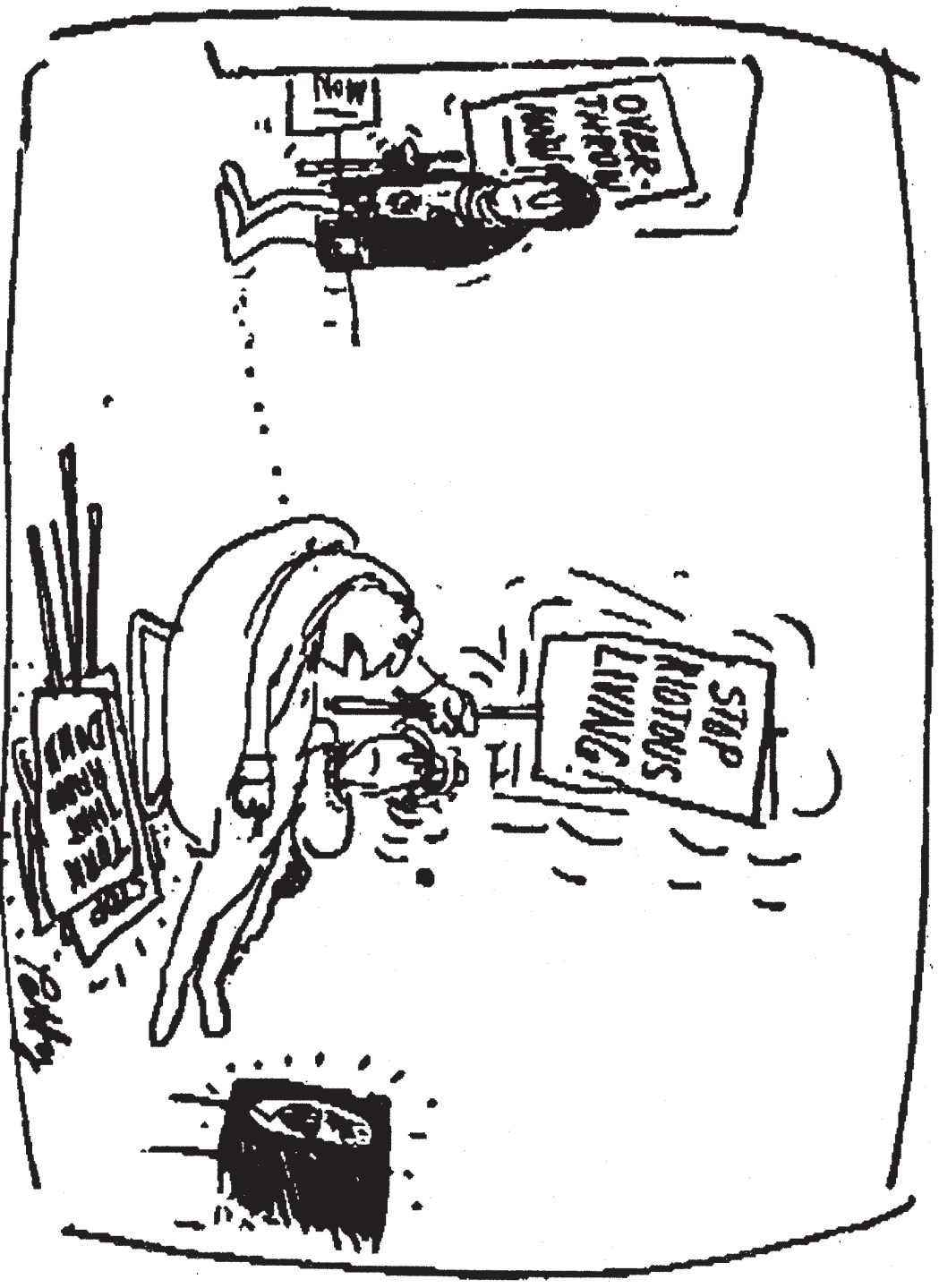
Extension Work

Class or Group Discussion:

- Why has the cartoonist chosen this setting for the cartoon?
- What two issues of society in the 1960's are drawn together in this cartoon?

Research Questions:

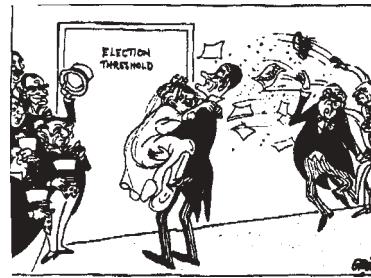
- What other protest movements developed in the 1960's in Australia?
- Examine the success or failure of these movements.
- Was this unique to Australia?
- How have attitudes to authority altered since World War Two?
- Investigate other protest movements since the 1960s (eg Green Bans, Environmental issues such as the Franklin River dam, Aboriginal land rights).



Published in the Australian, 1968

'It's the only language they understand!'

Wedding of the Year



CONTEXT:

- In 1966 Australia was in a strong alliance with the USA and involved in the Vietnam War.
- The war started when North Vietnamese Communist troops led by Ho Chi Minh crossed the 17th parallel thereby breaking the Geneva Convention of 1954.
- South Vietnam sought assistance from her non-Communist allies (SEATO).
- Harold Holt (Liberal Party) was the new Prime Minister of Australia.
- **Make and show the overhead photograph of Harold Holt on page 98 before introducing the cartoon.**
- US President Lyndon B Johnson maintained US support of South Vietnam by sending in troops to support Ngo Dinh Diem's government. Diem was assassinated in 1963. (A photograph and brief background review of Lyndon B Johnson can be found at the following website: www.cnn.com/SPECIALIS/cold.war/kbank/profiles/lbj/#top)
- Australia agreed to send troops to Vietnam. The first regular soldiers arrived in 1965. The first conscripted soldiers (National Service) arrived 1966.
- Whilst visiting the US, Prime Minister Holt declared that Australia will be 'all the way, with LBJ'.
- Despite public support at this time, these decisions were controversial.
- The Australian Labor Party led by Arthur Calwell opposed the decision to send troops to Vietnam. **Make and show the overhead photograph of Arthur Calwell. on page 99**
- Other leading politicians in Australia at the time were John (Black Jack) McEwen and William (Billy) McMahon. **Make and show overhead photographs of John McEwen on page 100 and William McMahon on page 101.**

Copy 1

Highlight: Cartoonist
Date of publication
Publisher

The Cartoonist: Aubrey Collette was a cartoonist in Ceylon for 15 years before coming to Australia. He worked for *The Australian* and the Melbourne *Herald* and won a Walkley Award for best cartoon in 1970 dealing with Bi-Centenary Celebrations and the Queen's visit to Australia.

Ask students about the information they can glean just from this introductory information, especially for questions about **CONTEXT**.

- Where is Vietnam?
- Who was involved in this war and why?
- In what previous wars had Australia been involved and why?
- What do students know about Australia/USA relationships today?
- What was the relationship in the 1960s?
- What common foreign policy objectives might the USA and Australia share? Why?

Copy 2

Highlight: 'bride' and 'groom'

- Who are the 'bride' and 'groom'? (*Prime Minister Holt and President Johnson*)
- Why are they portrayed in this way, ie Johnson as the groom and Holt as the bride? (*Possibly Johnson as the more dominant/provider....Note the expression on Holt's face! A bride and a groom form an alliance or a joint enterprise after a wedding.*)
- What might this signify about their relationship? (*note 1966 context!*) (*Think about gender relations in the 1960s eg patriarchal. Might imply that Holt is weaker/ less of a provider, ie troops and money*)

Copy 3

Highlight: Figures cheering (The Liberal Party)

- Who are these people? (*Members of the Liberal Party – students might be able to identify McMahon and McEwen*)
- Why are they there? (*Look for clues in real weddings...and note the hats!*)

Copy 4

Highlight: Figures protesting (The ALP)

- Who are these people? (*The Australian Labor Party – students might be able to identify Calwell.*)
- Why are they there? (*Think about what applies to real weddings...*)
- What are they throwing? (*Hidden amongst the confetti is an old boot and the word protest. These suggest the ALP was not entirely happy with the relationship between Holt and Johnson.*)

Copy 5

Highlight: 'Election threshold' door

- Where are the 'happy couple heading and what does this imply about the future for Holt and Johnson? (*Both facing elections and thus need public support. Relate to public visits of Johnson to Australia and Holt to America.*)

Copy 6

Highlight: Title of the cartoon – 'Wedding of the Year'

- How does the title enhance the cartoonist's message? (*This was a main event for 1966 for both the USA and Australia as seen by their respective heads of government. Collette asks us to think about the significance of this event and how it might affect Australia.*)

Questions for students to answer in writing

Candidates' responses to some of the following questions will vary according to their understanding of the symbols and captions of the cartoon. **Teachers should reward valid explanations where students can logically explain and justify their interpretations with details from the cartoon.**

Question: Explain the message of this cartoon and how it is conveyed.

Example Answer:

- *That a new level of commitment is being established between the USA (represented by President Johnson) and Australia (Prime Minister Holt). This is portrayed by a wedding to demonstrate the closeness of the relationship*
- *Holt is using the alliance with the USA as part of his campaign for re-election: members of the Liberal Party support the alliance while those from the ALP are against the alliance and throw 'protests' at the happy couple.*

Question: To what extent is this cartoon an accurate depiction of the relationship between the USA and Australia?

Example Answer:

- *To a great extent, because at this stage of the Vietnam war both Australia and the US were actively engaged in the fight against communism. Holt confirmed this while visiting America in his 'All the way with LBJ' speech.*
- *Since other US allies did not become involved in the Vietnam war Australia's relationship with the US moved to a new level.*
- *At this time Australia was seen as the 'bride', that is the junior partner, and the USA as the stronger power carrying the major responsibility for the direction of the war.*
- *Some could argue that it is not accurate because Australia needed the USA (for electoral advantage and because of fear of the Domino Theory) more than the USA needed Australia at the time. Australia's commitment was not going to be large enough to determine the outcome of the conflict but was useful as a propaganda tool for the USA to demonstrate it was not a unilateral action.*

Question: To what extent is this cartoon an accurate depiction of the attitudes of the Liberal and Labor parties to the American alliance?

Example Answer:

- *Only to a limited extent because, while the ALP supported the American alliance in general, many of its members did not support Australia committing regular or conscripted (National Service) troops to serve in Vietnam.*
- *It is an accurate depiction of the attitudes of many in the Liberal party who were wholeheartedly committed to the American alliance as a bulwark against the spread of Communism in this region.*

Question: Outline the cartoonist's motive and comment on any evidence of bias.

Example Answer:

- *The cartoonist is acknowledging the popularity of the Australia – US alliance with the majority of the Australian people because of their fear of the Domino Theory.*
- *He thinks that the Liberal Party has cleverly used this alliance in its election campaign whereas the Labor Party will lose the election because it is seen as a disruptive force and possibly 'soft on communism'.*
- *The issue of bias is problematic because it is possible at the time that there was no perception of criticism in portraying Holt as the weaker/junior partner. However, Collette may be deliberately making a satirical comment about gender relationships.*
- *The depiction of the behaviour of the two political parties reflects stereotypes of the time: the respectable, well-mannered conservative Liberal Party and the rabble rousing, politically naïve, untrustworthy Labor Party.*

Extension work

Group Discussion: Draw up a table identifying all the wedding symbols in this cartoon and what they mean? Share your understandings with the class.

Question: Comment on the relationship between Australia and the USA today in comparison to that of 1966.

Harold Holt

Prime Minister of Australia (1966-1967)



Prime Minister Harold Holt c. 1966. Reproduced with permission of National Library of Australia nla.pic-an12266436

Arthur Calwell

Leader of the Australian Labor Party



Arthur Calwell, Leader of the Australian Labor Party, 1966. Reproduced with permission of the National Archives of Australia. A1200, L54110

John McEwen

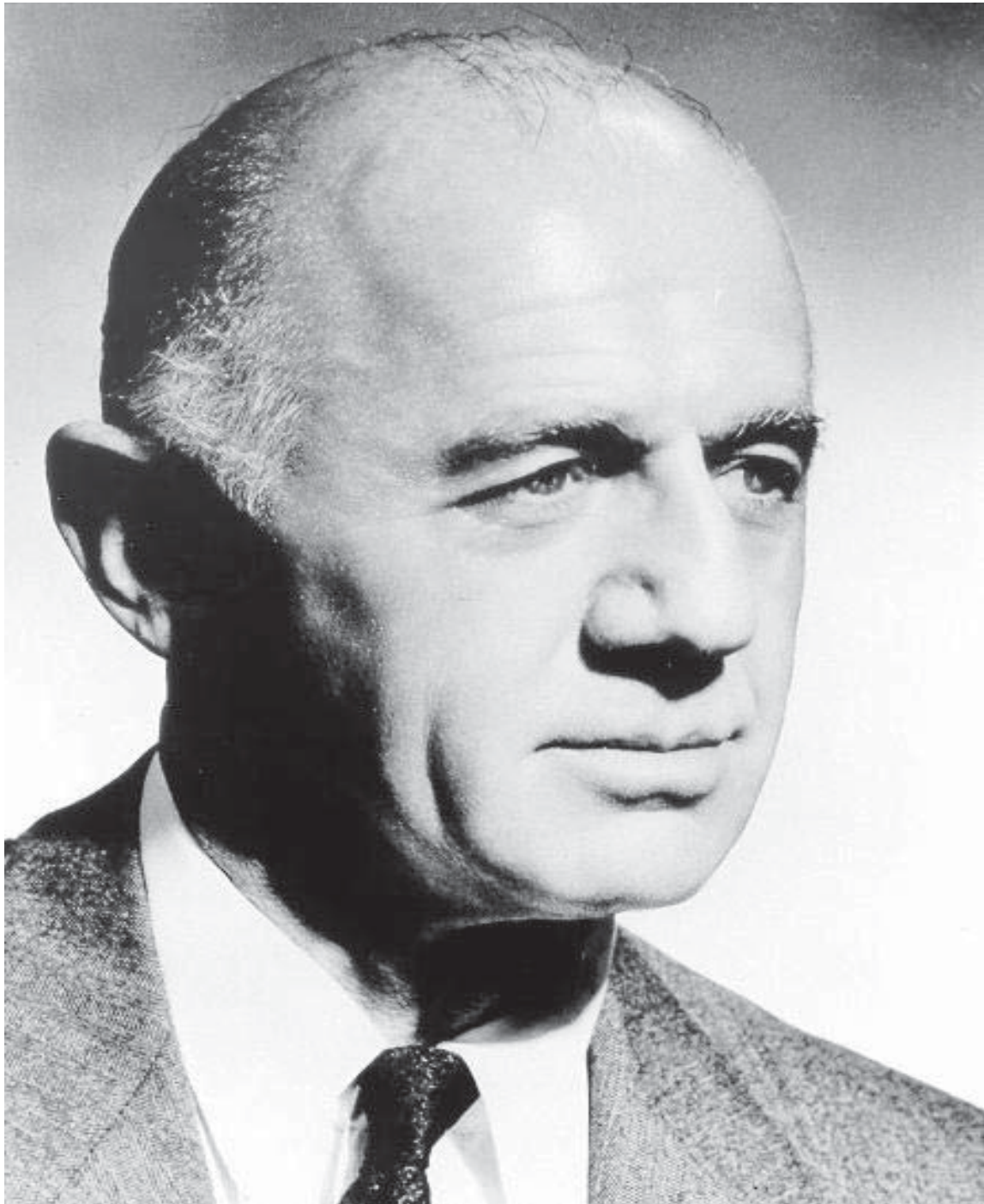
Prime Minister of Australia (1967-1968)



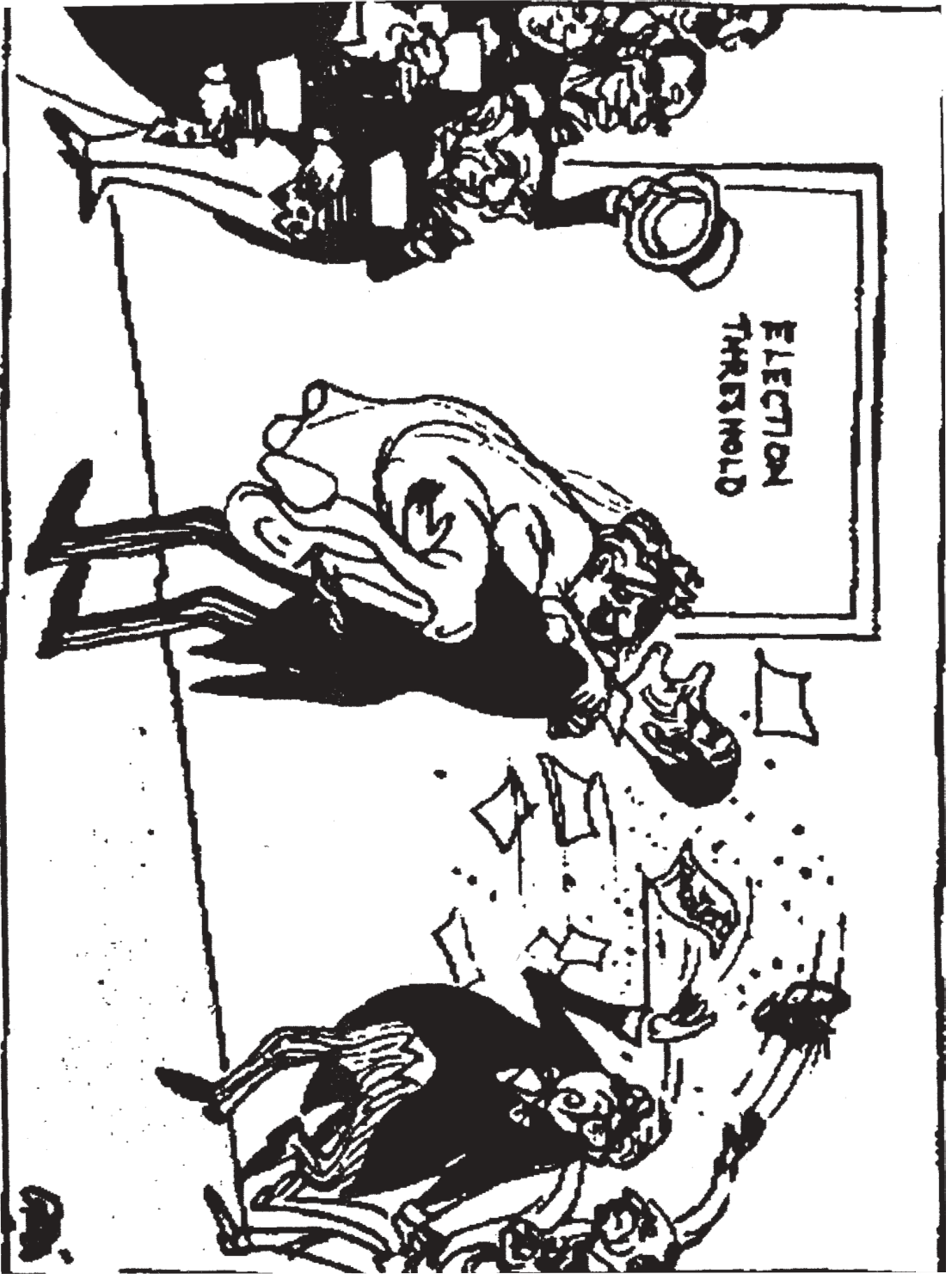
Prime Minister John McEwen, c.1967 JCPML00036/17

Sir William McMahon

Prime Minister of Australia (1971-1972)



Prime Minister William McMahon, c. 1971. JCPML00036/19



Published in the Australian, 1966

Wedding of the year

Gallipoli to Vietnam



CONTEXT:

- Anzac Day/Remembrance Day, 1965
- Australia has just become involved in the Vietnam War by sending troops
- Robert Menzies (Liberal Party) was the Prime Minister. **Show overhead of Robert Menzies from page 65.**
- Despite public support at this time, the decision to become involved and to commit both regular and conscripted soldiers was quite controversial.
- The 1960s was also a period where many social and political 'norms' were questioned by the public, especially by the so called 'baby boomers' (those born between 1945 and 1964).

Copy 1

Highlight: Cartoonist

Date of publication

Publisher

The Cartoonist: Paul Rigby was born in Australia. He moved to Perth in 1949 and joined the West Australian Newspapers as a press artist, with his first daily cartoon appearing in the *Daily News* in 1952. He is one of Australia's best known cartoonists, winning the Walkely Award five times.

Ask students about the information they can glean just from this introductory information, especially for questions about **CONTEXT**.

Copy 2

Highlight: Memorial and wreath

- What is a memorial? (*Shape is called an obelisk – have students seen similar styles?*)
- What is the purpose of memorials? (*Note the writing on this memorial – what is written and how is it written? Why are the words 'Korea' and 'Vietnam' written differently?*)
- What is a wreath? (*Teachers might like to discuss the materials that traditionally made up the wreath – olive leaves. Today wreaths combine flowers and other materials. The olive branch is a symbol of peace. Rosemary is often worn as a sign of remembrance.*)

Copy 3

Highlight: 'Ghosts' / spirits of past soldiers

- What do these four soldiers represent? (*Past wars...*)
- How do you know this? (*The different styles of uniform – students might like to look more closely and carefully identify the differences – can they pick which war is which? Suggest from left to right – Korea, WW1, WW2 and Vietnam.*)
- Are they real people? (*No.*)
- How do you know this? (*You can see through them.*)

Copy 4

Highlight: Crowds and sky

- Who are these people? (*Crowds at the service.*)
- Why are they there? (*Look for a variety of responses both positive and negative, e.g. people attending ANZAC service at dawn for a variety of reasons*)
- What happens at these services? (*Build up student general knowledge. Copies of programmes for these services can be obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Commemorations.*)
- In reference to the sky what might it suggest about the timing of this situation? (*Morning...dawn*)
- What is the tone of the cartoon? (*Mournful, sombre, a sense of foreboding suggesting more deaths will come as a result of the Vietnam War.*)

Questions for students to answer in writing

Candidates' responses to some of the following questions will vary according to their understanding of the symbols and captions of the cartoon. **Teachers should reward valid explanations where students can logically explain and justify their interpretations with details from the cartoon.**

Question: What is the message of this cartoon and how is it conveyed?

Example Answer:

- *That in 1965 Australia, following in the tradition of past wars, has committed troops to the Vietnam war.*
- *This is shown by the recent addition of the Korean and Vietnam wars on the war memorial*
- *That Australian soldiers will die in this war*
- *There is a sense of mateship linking the dead soldiers of each of the wars, shown by the hand on the back of the last soldier.*
- *Students may make reference to the background 'people' as attendees at memorial service, as protesters against Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war or as soldiers waiting for embarkation.*

Question: What might be the cartoonist's motive?

Example Answer:

- *Rigby is concerned that in committing to this war more Australians will die, as in past wars.*
- *Rigby sees himself as an alternative voice, a 'reality check', to the prevailing enthusiasm for Australia's participation in the war*

Question: What might be the cartoonist's purpose?

Example Answer:

- *To draw Australians' attention to the fact that there is another side to war and that we should remember the impact of past wars. Is it worth the cost?*

Extension Work

Group Discussion: In your group discuss a possible caption for this cartoon. Justify your caption to the class.

Questions:

Why was the decision to send Australian troops to Vietnam so controversial?

What aspect of Australian identity is being reinforced in this cartoon?



Published in the *Daily Mirror*, 1966