**Fellow Australians, it is my melancholy duty to inform you officially that, in consequence of the persistence of Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her, and that, as a result, Australia is also at war. No harder task can fall to the lot of a democratic leader than to make such an announcement. Great Britain and France, with the cooperation of the British Dominions, have struggled to avoid this tragedy. They have, as I firmly believe, been patient; they have kept the door of negotiation open; they have given no cause for aggression. But in the result their efforts have failed and we are, therefore, as a great family of nations, involved in a struggle which we must at all costs win, and which we believe in our hearts we will win ...**

**It is plain - indeed it is brutally plain - that the Hitler ambition has been, not as he once said, to unite the German peoples under one rule, but to bring under that rule as many European countries, even of alien race, as can be subdued by force.**

**If such a policy were allowed to go unchecked there could be no security in Europe, and there could be no just peace for the world.**

**A halt has been called. Force has had to be resorted to check the march of force. Honest dealing, the peaceful adjustment of differences, the rights of independent peoples to live their own lives, the honouring of international obligations and promises - all these things are at stake.**

**There was never any doubt as to where Great Britain stood in relation to them. There can be no doubt that where Great Britain stands there stand the people of the entire British Bitter as we all feel at this wanton crime, this is not a moment for rhetoric; prompt as the action of many thousands must be, it is for the rest a moment for quiet thinking; for that calm fortitude which rests not upon the beating of drums, but upon the unconquerable spirit of man, created by God in His own image. What may be before us we do not know, nor how long the journey. But this we do know, that Truth is our companion on that journey; that Truth is with us in the battle, and that Truth must win.**

**Before I end, may I say this to you? In the bitter months that are to come, calmness, resoluteness, confidence and hard work will be required as never before. This war will involve not only soldiers and sailors and airmen, but supplies, foodstuffs, money. Our staying power, and particularly the staying power of the mother country, will be best assisted by keeping our production going; by continuing our avocations and our business as fully as we can; by maintaining employment and with it our strength.**

**I know that, in spite of the emotions we are all feeling, you will show that Australia is ready to see it through. May God in His mercy and compassion grant that the world may soon be delivered from this agony.**

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| Robert Menzies  1894-1966  Due Thursday week 5  jamie.wheeler2  Image result for robert menzies  Task: Discuss the political impacts that Robert Menzies had on the time period studied |

**Robert Menzies**

1894-1966

Having held office on two occasions from 1939 to 1941 and from 1949 to 1966, Robert Gordon Menzies was the longest serving prime minister to date. Menzies was a respected Australian leader; however, controversial political figure during his political career. Having laid the foundation of twenty-two consecutive years in government, Menzies had a major impact on Australian politics that would echo to the present. Menzies upper middle class upbringing had given him the ability to pursue politics as a career. During his first term, Menzies was discouraged from the position of Prime Minister after being burdened with announcing to the nation that once again, Australia would be following Great Britain into yet another war against Germany. Upon losing a vote of no confidence, Menzies went on to form the Liberal Party of Australia who later acted as the opposition to The Labor party. Menzies was again voted in as prime minister during the election of 1949 to forefeel his second term, defeating the Labor party. Menzies had a significant impact on Australian history having led Australia into the Korean War while also building strong foreign relations with nations outside of the British empire such as Japan and the United States of America. Menzies also signed the ANZUS treaty, which strengthened Australian and New Zealand relations as well as Australian and the U.S military bonds. The SEATO treaty was also signed by the Menzies government, which focussed on foreign affairs within Asia. The decisions made by Menzies during his time in leadership had significant positive and negative impacts in the way that his interests overseas reflected that of the interests of Australia on an international scale, however failed to recognise the problems developing within Australian parliament and failed to consider the consequences of his choices.

Following the death of Joseph Lyons on 7 April 1939, Earl Page of the Country party, took the temporary role of prime minister until a new leader was elected by the United Australian Party (UAP) in which Menzies was voted in, automatically placing him in office eight days following. The successful election immediately created issues within Australian politics. The first problem arose from Page’s disapproval of Menzies leadership and refused to serve under him. Page attacked Menzies’ leadership and personality, targeting Menzies for not enlisting in the First World War. In response, Menzies formed a minority government and absorbed the country party back into his government as a full-fledged coalition upon Page’s disposition. Another challenge Menzies was faced with during his first term was the Second World War. On 3 September 1939, both France and Britain declared war on Nazi Germany following the German invasion of Poland two days prior. Acting as a loyal follower of the British empire, Menzies responded immediately by declaring that Australia was too going to war in support of Britain. The announcement was made to the public via radio broadcast. Many Australians were torn by the announcement given that the Great War continued to resonate within society. The possibility of war left Menzies with enormous burdens to which it would lead him to ask for general support at a recalled parliament meeting. He gained the support of Curtin and Page surprisingly. At the age of only 44, Menzies was faced with the heavy responsibility of leading Australia into a catastrophic war era. This created immense pressure on Menzies which effected his leadership negatively, the lack of support from other party leaders created instant doubt in Menzies ability to lead the nation, Page used the fact that Menzies had never fought for Australia in order to discourage supporters and followers. This rough start would go on to force Menzies out of office and lead to formation of a new anti -Labor government.

The second world war had approached rather suddenly and Menzies was placed in a position of enormous pressure. His priority was that of protecting Australia from outside military threats, with Germany in Europe an attack from them seemed unlikely. Japanese Military power became the most evident threat. Japan had a better, larger and more efficient army and navy due to its larger population and aggressive foreign policies; historical mistrust had also played a significant role in the tension between the two nations following billy Hughs’ rejection of the racial equality act during the Treaty of Versailles. Any hopes of appeasement would be impossible. Meanwhile in Australia, Menzies offered to the majority parties the opportunity to form a war coalition, however John Curtin’s Labor Party refused the offer in opposition of sending Australian troops for a European war rather than stationing them in Australia as a defence; however, did agree to participate in the advisory war council. Menzies sent a majority of the army to join British forces in the middle East and Singapore, He also arranged a meeting with Winston Churchill, the prime minister of Great Britain, in London during 1941 to discuss the strengthening of the royal navy in the far eastern forces. Following the first meeting, Menzies continued his stay in Britain for another Four months to continue debating strategy with other empire leaders. Meanwhile, Menzies position at home deteriorated and his supporters both in society and Australian politics had grown inpatient. Upon Menzies return to Australia, Society was conflicted by his efforts overseas, some welcomed him by hailing him as a hero while others were discouraged from support. The parliament was less certain of his efforts overseas which resulted in the decrease of coalition MP support and popularity. The Labor Party had continued to sabotage Menzies leadership, his presence in Britain seemed as if he was not investing in the interest of Australia, but more so dealing with overseas issues. His loyalty to Australia mother nation was also seen as a weakness, making the people feel that Australia was not considered priority.

Menzies first term in office was nearing its end due to popularity loss and fresh political strategies that had been developed while Menzies discussed approaches to the war with Churchill. A majority of the MP’s believed that a national unity government was the only long-term solution to the war time crisis. The Cabinet voted to have Menzies return to England to speak for Australian interest, however Labor refused to support another trip to London, without the support of Labor, Menzies was not Able to Travel and his own Party began to buckle. In August of 1941, Menzies announced that his new intentions would see him step down from the role of PM and have the governor general of the time, Lord Gowrie, commission John Curtin as the Next Prime minister. The cabinet discouraged Menzies from going ahead with his decision and instead urged him to prelude to Labor a national unite government, in which he did with no success. Menzies position was untenable, causing him to resign from leadership on 27 August 1941. Menzies was bitter about the treatment received from his colleagues and almost left his political career, however he was resilient and became minister of defence co-ordination in Arthur Fadden’s Cabinet. The significance of Menzies exit from office later motivated Menzies to defeat Labor due to the grief it had caused him during his time as prime minster, the political climate would begin to tense.

After Leaving the UAP, Menzies continued to lurk in the shadow of Australian politics, resenting the Labor Party’s efforts in ensuring that he was removed from the position of prime minister. As a result, Menzies called a conference of Anti-Labor party’s in Canberra on 13 October 1944. The formation of the liberal party, Australia, began to merge from fourteen Party’s, however the organisational structure and constitutional framework of Liberal wasn’t formulated until the Albany conference and was officially launched at the Sydney townhall on 31 August 1945 with Menzies paced as the leader and founder of the new Labor threat. The Party faced its first challenge during the election of 1946 with a win of 26 of 74 seats with a 45.9% of a two party vote. This allowed the Party to maintain its majority of the senate, however it failed to seriously affect Labor’s larger majority. The emergence of both the Libera Party and Menzies would go on to influence Australian politics for decades to come and threaten the victory of Labor, the formation of the party also allowed Menzies to regain support with a Party that valued and followed the same ideology as him.

Menzies succeeded in the election campaign of 1949 and reprised his role as Prime Minister of Australia and maintained leadership of the Liberal Party, however since his first term dealing with the outbreak of war, Germany had since been defeated and new powers and political systems had emerged as new possible catalysts to another world war. The cold war followed after WWII as the Soviet Union emerged as a super power in an arms race with primarily America. In a way the Cold War benefitted Menzies, given that the atmosphere of the cold war began to erode Labor’s support before the election. Menzies introduced legislation to ban the communist party in Australia, given that the threat of communism had become a worldwide fear. This was followed up later in the year with Menzies decision to hold a referendum on the basis of parliament to make laws in respect of illegalising communism, claiming that it was necessary for the commonwealth security. However, Menzies was campaigned Against by the Labor Party.

During his second term, Menzies worked to improve Australian relations and foreign policy. Menzies continued to ally with Britain and the United States of America while looking towards nations within Asia such as Japan. On 1 September 1951, the Menzies government signed the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States) treaty; a treaty between Australia and New Zealand/ Australia and the U.S on the military security in the Pacific Ocean region. The Alliance between Australia and Korea was also strengthened by the loyalty displayed by Australia during the Korean war, where Menzies sent troops to fight alongside America in Korea. An act that was widely frowned upon by a majority of Australian Party’s, in particular Labor. The SEATO Treaty was also signed by the Menzies Government where U.S presence in Vietnam was Sanctioned. The SEATO organisation also involved many other nations specifically Asian countries with the expectation of Australia and Great Britain. Menzies’ second term as PM focused more so on the foreign relations, including sacrificing Australian. troops in the Korean War which sparked great divide of opinion in Australian politics during the 1950s. Menzies efforts established Australian foreign policy separate to that of Britain and assisted in Australia’s growth of independence. Menzies had looked towards America to set the example and developed a close alliance to the U.S, partly since America offered more protection then Britain, military wise and on a grand global scale as a super power.

In conclusion, Menzies middle class background and his parent’s characterisation pushed Menzies towards a successful and high paying career, which was initially law however stumbled across politics. During Menzies first term as prime minister, he sensed a lot of disapproval and was faced with the outbreak of war, to which many politicians of the war era expressed that they had no confidence in Menzies leadership. Menzies was placed in a position of great pleasure which gave him almost no ability to start his career as PM successfully. The disapproval and discouragement received from his colleagues pushed him out of office willingly, practically due to The Labor Party’s ongoing construction of hurdles and barriers that were placed in the way of Menzies reaching his full potential. The second world war had begun shortly after Menzies was elected in as prime minister which greatly affected his ability as a leader and resulted in the disapproval of many cabinet leaders and citizens. His time spent debating on land other than Australian soil hinted that his loyalties may lay elsewhere. Having been removed from office vulnerably, Menzies went onto develop the liberal party which would challenge his former opposition, Labor, and assist Menzies in climbing to the top of hierarchy. Reprising his role as PM for his second term, Menzies made major changes to his leadership and looked at foreign policy to protect the interest of Australia where the signing of ANZUS ensured Australia’s protection from America and New Zealand and vice versa, especially due to the rising threats of communism. Menzies leadership during both his first term and second term really contrast each other in the way that he was practically set up to fail due to the out brake of WWII and found himself loyal to Britain and looking towards her for assistance. Whereas his priority during his second term contradicted those of his first term. He had looked to the U.S for military support and ensured a strong foreign alliance. Menzies efforts during these two periods created great tension in Australian Politics. his actions made him a controversial leader, particularly when looking at the sending of Australian Troops to fight for American affairs in Korea and the banning of the communist party. The decisions made my Menzies would go on to echo into modern society.

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