

July At a special federal ALP conference held in Adelaide, the NSW branch of the Labor party under Lang's leadership was readmitted to full membership.

7 September The last Tasmanian tiger (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*) in captivity died at the Hobart zoo. The carnivorous marsupial is now presumed to be extinct.

21 November The governor-general, Lord Gowrie, officially opened the Hume Dam at the junction of the Murray and Mitta Mitta rivers near Albury, NSW, and Wodonga, Vic. It was Australia's most important water conservation and flood control scheme.

10 December King Edward VIII abdicated because of his association with a divorced woman.

16–18 December The Brisbane-to-Adelaide air race was held to commemorate SA's centenary.

31 December Judge Detheridge of the federal arbitration court granted one week's paid annual leave to printers on the grounds that theirs was a prosperous industry. Paid holiday leave was already included in some state awards.

December The monthly magazine *Man* began publication in Sydney. While concentrating on domestic issues and foreign affairs, it followed its American model *Esquire* (founded 1934) in publishing art shots of women and cartoons with sexual overtones. The first issue, with a modest print run of 8000, sold out within a week and by December 1940 sales had climbed to 40 000 a month. It ceased publication in 1974, unable to compete with the imported American monthly *Playboy*.

1936 Miles Franklin won the SA Prior Award for her novel about a pioneering family, *All that swagger*. Jean Devanny's *Sugar heaven* and P.R. Stephensen's *The foundations of culture in Australia* were published.

1936 The severe drought in Qld resulted in the loss of the wheat crop and a drought began in NSW. Drought in Tas was broken by winter rain but crop yields were very low.

1936 A submarine telephone cable across Bass Strait between Tas and the continent was opened.

1936 By the end of the year the ABC had formed permanent symphony orchestras in all six state capitals and had begun annual subscription concerts.

1936 An amending act in WA altered the Aborigines Act, increasing official controls. It empowered the minister for native affairs to take Aborigines into custody without trial or appeal and to prevent them from entering prescribed towns without a permit.

1936 State universities, funded by their respective state governments and philanthropists, received research grants from the commonwealth for the first time.

1936 *The King and his Dominion governors* by Justice Evatt of the high court, in which he delivered his judgment on Game's dismissal of Lang in 1932, was published. Evatt criticised Game for not referring the matter to the courts, the only competent authority to determine the legality of Lang's actions.



1936 'No pasaran': 'they shall not pass' became a rallying cry of the communist-led campaign for collective security and a united working class after Spanish fascists under General Franco launched their attack on the Spanish Republic in July 1936. About fifty Australians either fought in the International Brigades recruited to defend the Republic, or served as nurses or ambulance drivers. This poster was issued by the Victorian Council Against War and Fascism in 1936–37 and printed by Starlight Press in Melbourne.

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

1936 Henry Hawke won the first Sulman Competition, an annual award endowed by Sir John Sulman and administered by the Art Gallery of NSW for the best subject or genre painting.

1937

15 February An explosion in a coalmine at Wonthaggi, Vic, killed thirteen miners.

19 February The captain and four passengers on an Airlines of Australia Stinson were killed when it crashed into the Lamington Plateau, Qld, in the McPherson Ranges. On 28 February Bernard O'Reilly found the aircraft and two survivors in almost inaccessible rainforest.

6 March At a constitutional referendum, electors decided on two proposals to give the federal parliament more power over marketing and aviation. Both proposals were defeated, all states rejecting the marketing power and only two, Qld and Vic, favouring the aviation power.

April A conference was held in Canberra between state and commonwealth officials about Aboriginal affairs. It was suggested that while part-Aborigines should be absorbed into the community, large reserves should be created for the segregation of full-blood Aborigines.

June An epidemic of poliomyelitis broke out and all states took action to contain it. Country towns were isolated if a case occurred and travellers were often told to return to where they came from. Some schools were closed for several months and many sporting and social fixtures were cancelled. Border crossings were patrolled, particularly between NSW and Vic, the worst-affected state.

October William Cooper, an Aborigine, collected 1814 signatures from Aborigines from all over Australia on a petition to the King for an Aboriginal representative

in the House of Representatives. The federal government declined to forward the petition or support the proposal.

October To increase employment in SA, the SA government forced BHP, on pain of losing its iron ore mining lease in Whyalla, to set up a blast furnace there. For twenty years BHP had shipped iron ore from Whyalla to Newcastle. The furnace was in operation by 1941.

17 November The *Spirit of Progress*, Australia's first air-conditioned train, was named in Melbourne. It soon began a regular service between Spencer Street station and Albury, where, until 1962, passengers had to change trains because of the gauge difference. The streamlined train, which could reach speeds of 128 kilometres an hour, was greeted with awe by children and adults alike.

1937 A Council of Action for Equal Pay was formed under the auspices of the NSW branch of the Federated Clerks Union.

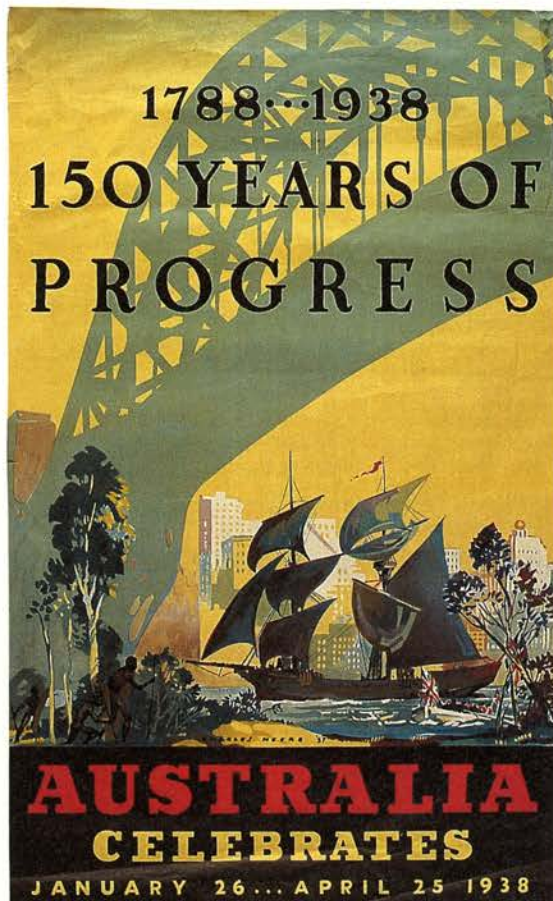
1937 Leonard Mann's *A murder in Sydney* and Eris O'Brien's *The foundation of Australia* were published.

1937 The commonwealth basic wage was increased by 5s a week.

1937 Tas changed the closing time of public houses from 6 pm to 10 pm, the first state to do so.

1937 An Australian female cricket team, captained by Margaret Peden, toured England losing only one game.

1937 *Dad and Dave*, a serial about life in rural Australia, began on radio and ran until December 1953. Its episodes were introduced by the distinctive strains of *Along the road to Gundagai*.



1938 Most of the posters produced for the sesquicentennial celebrations featured Sydney. Charles Meere, who won the Sulman Prize for painting in 1938, depicts Aborigines greeting the arrival of Captain Phillip and the first fleet, overshadowed by the Sydney Harbour Bridge, a symbol of Australia's industrial achievement. This poster, produced by the Australian National Travel Association, was distributed overseas, chiefly in Britain.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

1938

26 January Australia's sesquicentenary celebrations began in Sydney with a re-enactment of Capt Arthur Phillip's landing with the first fleet. The Aborigines' Progressive Association led by William Ferguson held a 'day of mourning' to contrast with the official celebrations and to draw attention to the dispossession of Australian Aborigines.

31 January William Cooper led an Aboriginal deputation to the prime minister, J.A. Lyons, seeking federal control of Aboriginal affairs.

January *Pix* magazine, the first Australian weekly to use the format of American photo-journalism, was launched in Sydney.

5 February The Empire Games, hosted by Australia for the first time, began in Sydney as part of the sesquicentenary celebrations.

6 February Freak waves at Bondi swept 200 swimmers out to sea; all but five were saved by surf lifesavers.

1 March The Vic Housing Commission was constituted under the 1937 Housing Act. Its brief, laid down in the Slum Reclamation and Housing Act 1938, was

to determine new minimum standards of housing, reclaim insanitary areas and provide public housing for low-income earners. The SA government had established a Housing Trust to rent homes to families on low incomes in 1936.

4 March Assisted immigration resumed for British citizens who had either been nominated by someone in Australia, possessed appropriate skills, or had an income to the value of £300 for a family or £50 for a single person.

31 March Xavier Herbert's novel *Capricornia* won the commonwealth sesquicentenary literary competition, which carried a prize of £250, and also received the Australian Literary Society's gold medal. The novel condemns European treatment of Aborigines.

April The Australian *Abo Call*, a monthly newspaper edited by Jack Patten, began publication in Sydney. It remained in print until September, focusing on Aboriginal rights and equality of opportunity.

28 June The federal Senate passed the Science and Industry Research Appropriations Act, enabling a trust fund to be set up to establish secondary industry research divisions in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. This heralded a new emphasis on industrial research in the organisation, which was to play an important role in Australian industry's war-time development.

13 July George Bell and others founded the Contemporary Art Society, in opposition to the Australian Academy of Art. Members of the new body felt that the academy, established in 1937, was unsympathetic to contemporary art forms. In 1940 Bell and about 80 followers withdrew from the society, protesting that it had been infiltrated by communists. They subsequently formed the Melbourne Contemporary Artists.

July Prime Minister Joseph Lyons placed an embargo on the export of iron ore to deny Japan Australian ore.

15 November In protest against Japanese aggression in China, Port Kembla wharf labourers refused to load 23 000 tons (23 460 tonnes) of pig-iron aboard the ship *Dalfran* bound for Japan. Att-Gen Robert Menzies applied the Transport Workers Act, known to workers as the 'Dog Collar Act', which required registration of workers and provided stiff penalties for disobedience. The dispute lasted almost three months, until workers agreed to load the ship on the understanding that the registration clause would be lifted and that the government would in future place an embargo on the export of war materials to Japan. The episode earned Menzies the nickname 'Pig Iron Bob'.

5 December Albert Namatjira's first exhibition of paintings was held in Melbourne, organised by artist Rex Battarbee and W.H. Gill. All 41 works sold within three days.

8 December The Theatres, Public Halls and Cinematograph Films Act was passed by federal parliament. It scaled down the quotas applying to the import of American and British films, required a greater proportion of Australian films to be screened in

cinemas and guaranteed bank overdrafts for local producers. The act did not manage to save local producers and by the end of the year Cinesound was the only Australian studio still in production.

28 December The *Sydney Mail*, a weekly founded by John Fairfax and Sons in July 1860, ceased publication.

1938 *The passing of the Aborigines* by Daisy Bates, A.P. Elkin's *The Australian Aborigines: how to understand them* and Francis Ratcliffe's *Flying fox and drifting sand* were published.

1938 Rex Ingamells founded the Jindyworobaks, a group of writers taking their name from an Aboriginal word meaning 'to join'. The Jindyworobak anthologies, produced from 1939 to 1954, gave writers a chance to publish, and stressed Australian and Aboriginal themes.

1938 A Qld royal commission found against Sister Kenny's theories on the cause and treatment of poliomyelitis. On 29 March she left Australia for America where her methods were well received and she was able to establish many clinics. Later research showed that most of her techniques were ineffective.

1938 The commonwealth parliament passed national insurance legislation, providing sickness and pension benefits for employed persons. The legislation was opposed by the Labor party, who wanted a non-contributory scheme, and the government came into conflict with the British Medical Association when it failed to reach agreement on doctors' rates of pay. The legislation was not implemented.

1938 A referendum in Vic asking whether prohibition of liquor should be introduced, returned 368 676 'yes' votes and 721 704 'no' votes.

1938 The Mount Panorama motor racing circuit at Bathurst, NSW, was opened.

1938 Following the Evian conference, Australia agreed to accept 15 000 Jewish refugees who had fled Germany and Austria because of the Nazis' anti-Semitic policies. About 7500 Jews reached Australia before the program was suspended because of the outbreak of war.

1939

9 January Drought forced the Vic government to impose water restrictions on all metropolitan consumers.

13 January After a long period of drought and intense heat in Vic, with temperatures exceeding 120° Fahrenheit (48° Celsius) in the country, bushfires swept almost the whole mountain country of Vic. Millions of hectares of forest were destroyed, 71 people died and 1500 people were left homeless. January 13 became known as 'Black Friday'.

22 February Associated Pulp and Paper Mills Ltd began production of high-quality paper from Tas hardwood at its plant in the northwest of the state.



1939 Menzies' National Register began as a statistical survey of the labour force and became, as the war intensified, an instrument of manpower policy. It encountered fierce resistance from trade unionists and Labor politicians. By equating it with industrial conscription, opponents of the scheme could depict it as an attempt to impose undemocratic discipline upon a workforce proving increasingly amenable to union campaigns for shorter hours and increased wages. Poster printed by Forward Press, Sydney.

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

27 March The Wirraway, a locally built military aircraft powered by an Australian-built Wasp engine, made a test flight at Melbourne.

7 April Joseph Lyons, prime minister and leader of the United Australia Party, died after a short illness. Sir Earle Page, leader of the Country party, was appointed caretaker prime minister until the United Australia Party elected a new leader.

26 April Robert Menzies was elected leader of the United Australia Party and Sir Earle Page bitterly attacked him and resigned, taking the Country party to the cross-benches.

11 May The minister for defence, Geoffrey Street, told parliament of the government's intention to establish a national register of labour and resources to meet the expected emergency of war in Europe.

July The Ready Mix Concrete Co, established in Sydney, became the first company in the world to truck premade concrete to construction sites. By the 1950s it had expanded overseas, revolutionising world building practices.

6 August Sydney gangster Guido Caletti, a member of the 'Palmer Street mob', was shot dead by members of the rival 'Brougham Street mob'. Caletti's murder was the climax to a gang war that had been waged in Sydney throughout the 1930s.

15 August The commonwealth arbitration court decided that it would in future regard a 44-hour working week as the standard for Australian industry. In the same month a 40-hour week was granted to some miners in NSW.

25 August Convinced that war in Europe was inevitable and that Australia would face a national emergency, Menzies made a broadcast calling on the nation to remain calm and to 'behave normally'.

3 September Menzies announced that 'in consequence of the persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her, and that, as a result, Australia is also at war'.

4 September The outbreak of war was not accompanied by any widespread expressions of anti-German sentiment. However, the government decided to act swiftly to forestall possible sabotage and on the morning after the declaration of war police rounded up large numbers of known nationals of enemy countries and sent them to internment camps.

7 September Menzies announced the national security regulations which, like the War Precautions Act of World War I, gave the commonwealth government wide powers for the duration of the war.

8 September A price order was implemented by the commonwealth government, fixing prices at the level of 31 August. A prices branch of the Department of Trade and Customs was then established and Douglas Copland, professor of economics at Melbourne University, was appointed commonwealth prices commissioner.

10 September The leader of the Australian Labor Party, John Curtin, pledged his party's support for the war effort, provided that no conscription for overseas military service would be introduced.

15 September Menzies established a war cabinet.

19 September The moment war had been declared the naval and air forces were mobilised and the much larger, though only partially trained, militia mobilised. On 19 September the minister for defence told parliament of the government's plan to train 40 000 soldiers and of Menzies' previously announced decision to recruit a special force of 20 000 volunteers for overseas service, under the command of Gen Sir Thomas Blamey.

11 October Australia's participation in the empire air training scheme was announced. In Australia's first practical contribution to the European war, the Royal Australian Air Force was to train 10 400 pilots and

15 600 observers, wireless operators and gunners. The first contingent of trainees reached Canada for advanced training in September 1940.

20 October With recruiting for the AIF attracting most volunteers, the commonwealth government introduced conscription to build up the less glamorous home militia. All single men who turned twenty-one in the year ending 1 July 1940 were liable to be called up for three months' training; in practice, men in reserved occupations were not called up.

13 November The Department of Defence was replaced by the Department of Defence Co-ordination, which Menzies added to his portfolio, and separate departments for the army, the navy and air force.

20 December Australia Calling — later called Radio Australia — began broadcasting in Sydney, before being transferred to Melbourne in July 1941.

1939 Brian Fitzpatrick's *British imperialism and Australia* and Kylie Tennant's novel *Foveaux* were published.

1940

8 January The commonwealth government announced the exchange of envoys between Australia and the United States of America. Australia's first representative in the US was R.G. Casey, formerly federal treasurer and minister for supply. In December Sir John Latham was appointed Australian representative in Tokyo.

9 January The first contingent of the Second Australian Imperial Force embarked at Sydney for the Middle East.

18 February A cyclone struck the Qld coast near Townsville and severe flooding resulted.

11 March Coalminers struck over working conditions and arbitration court delays. Regulations were issued giving the commonwealth government power to reopen the mines and to protect workers before the strike was settled on 16 May.

14 March The Country party returned to the coalition with the United Australia Party, accepting five positions in the federal ministry.

14 April The Catholic bishops of Australia and New Zealand announced that the third Sunday after Easter each year would be observed as a day when their church emphasised the principles of social justice and charity upon which the postwar social order ought to be built.

22 May The commonwealth government announced the reorganisation of the munitions industry and appointed Essington Lewis, managing director of BHP, director-general of munitions supply.

22 May The commonwealth government announced the decision to build a graving dock at Garden Island capable of accommodating any ship afloat. Work began in July 1940, and the first ship was docked in March 1945.

8 June Menzies announced the appointment of Sir Keith Murdoch, managing director of the Melbourne Herald and Weekly Times newspaper group, as director-general of information in the Department of Information.

11 June Australia declared war on Italy when the latter joined the German side.

15 June The Menzies government banned ten communist and fascist parties and organisations in Australia, believing them subversive to the war effort.

20 June A bill to give the commonwealth government complete control over Australia's resources, production, labour and people, except that it should not introduce conscription for service beyond Australian territory, was discussed in federal parliament. The proposal was strongly supported by the Labor party and was quickly passed.

11 July The commonwealth government introduced petrol rationing because of falling imports and the drain on the nation's US dollar reserves.

17 July Regulations under the National Security Act placed the Australian press, radio broadcasting and film industry under the control of the director-general of information.

19 July Off Cape Spada in the Mediterranean the cruiser HMAS *Sydney* sank the Italian cruiser *Barlotomeo Colleoni*.

13 August The minister for the army, Geoffrey Street, the minister for air, James Fairbairn, the vice-president of the executive council, Henry Gullett, the chief of the army general staff, Sir Brudenell White, and seven other men were killed when the plane in which they were passengers crashed near Canberra.

7 September The Australian cruiser HMAS *Adelaide* installed a Free French government in New Caledonia after circumventing a possible coup there by sympathisers with the Vichy regime, which had signed an armistice with Germany.

21 September The sixteenth federal election resulted in the return of the Menzies coalition government, but it had to rely on the votes of two independents in the House of Representatives.

26 October The last of Melbourne's cable trams went out of service.

28 October Having rejected Menzies' offer of an all-party coalition, Labor leader John Curtin accepted three of the seven seats in the advisory war council.

9 November The navy department announced that Bass Strait had been temporarily closed to shipping because of an enemy minefield.

20 November Australia's first naval loss in the war occurred when the minesweeper *Gooragai* was rammed and sunk by the liner *Duntroon* in Port Phillip Bay, with the loss of its entire crew of 24.

November Margaret Doyle became the ABC's first woman announcer. The British Broadcasting Corporation had already adopted such a policy to free male announcers for active service.

6-8 December Near Nauru German raiders sank five vessels engaged in the phosphate trade. On the 27th the raider *Komet* shelled installations at Nauru.

21 December Preliminary skirmishing began between Australians and Italians holding Bardia on the Libyan-Egyptian border.

26 December The film *Forty thousand horsemen* confirmed Charles Chauvel as a major director and launched Chips Rafferty as a star. The film was released in every continent and became Australia's first feature of international stature.

1941

3-4 January The Sixth Australian Division defeated a much larger Italian force at Bardia, north Africa. On 22 January the Australians captured Tobruk and on 6 February the Sixth Division captured Benghazi.

16 January Menzies announced a national child endowment scheme. The first payment under the new national scheme was made on 29 July, providing 5s for each child under sixteen years after the first, regardless of family income.

24 January Menzies left on a four months' overseas tour to discuss war strategy with the British government, including Britain's ability to defend Singapore against attack by Japan. During his absence Menzies lost much ground with the public and within his own party, particularly because of his role in committing Australian troops to the tragic campaign in Greece.

7 February Reflecting its doubt about the future impact of the war on the economy, the commonwealth arbitration court refused to grant an increase in the basic wage.

18 February A brigade of the Eighth Australian Division arrived in Singapore.

12 March President Roosevelt signed the Lend Lease Bill, under which the US sent urgently needed war supplies to allied countries, including Australia.

25 March The minister for air, John McEwen, announced in parliament the formation of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force, with an initial establishment of 308 women. Numbers grew to about 18 000 in 1944.

11 April The German Afrika Korps, which had arrived in north Africa in February and March, laid siege to the Ninth Australian Division and a brigade of the Seventh Division at Tobruk after a counter-offensive that recaptured most of the ground lost by the Italians. Australian troops of the Sixth Division went into action against German troops in Greece. Along with other Allied troops, they were forced to retreat, more than 2000 being captured and 320 killed. The remainder were evacuated. Many survivors were on Crete when it was conquered by the Germans from 20 May to 1 June, more than 3000 Australians being captured.

18 April The minister for the navy, W.M. Hughes, approved the employment of women as telegraphists in the Royal Australian Navy. This led to the formation of the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service, which grew to more than 2000 during the war.

5 May Assembled from components imported from England, the first Australian-built Beaufort bomber made a successful experimental flight.

6 May The acting prime minister, Arthur Fadden, launched the commonwealth government's £35 000 000 war loan.

27 May At a meeting in Canberra the state premiers rejected the commonwealth government's proposal that the states should vacate the income tax field.

8 June As the main part of an Allied force, Australian troops invaded Vichy-controlled Syria. More than 400 were killed in a hard-fought advance that led to victory by 14 July.

3 July The commonwealth government appointed a joint committee on social security to inquire into and report upon ways of improving social and living conditions after the war. In its first report on 24 September 1941 the committee concluded that a 'considerable proportion' of Australians were poorly housed, ill-clothed and ill-nourished.



1942 *The Australian women's weekly encouraged women to take an active part in the defence of their country, especially after Japan entered the war.* Australian women's weekly, 11 April 1942.

15 August The second (and final) brigade of the Eighth Division reached Singapore.

29 August Menzies resigned as prime minister because of internal strife in the United Australia Party. He was replaced as prime minister by the leader of the Country party, Arthur Fadden, but remained minister for defence co-ordination.

August The Australian Women's Army Service was created. It reached a peak strength of 25 000 in January 1944.

3 October The two independents upon whom the government depended for its majority in the House of Representatives, Arthur Coles and Alexander Wilson, withdrew their support. Fadden resigned as prime minister and on 7 October John Curtin was installed as the leader of the first federal Labor government since January 1932.

7 October Curtin opened the £100 000 000 cash and conversion loan.

19 November The cruiser HMAS *Sydney* sank in an engagement with the German raider *Kormoran* off the WA coast, leaving no survivors from the 645 crew.

27 November The sloop HMAS *Parramatta* was torpedoed and sunk with the loss of 137 lives while escorting a supply convoy to Tobruk.

7 December A British offensive raised the siege of Tobruk. By this time only one Australian battalion was in the fortress, all others having been relieved by sea between August and October.

7 December Japan launched its Pacific offensive, in twelve hours attacking key points on an arc of some 9500 kilometres — about one-quarter of the world's circumference. It began with landings in Thailand and Malaya, followed eighty minutes later by an airborne attack upon the US Navy base at Pearl Harbor. So began the most spectacular months of conquest in the world's history, as Japan's empire extended east, west and south towards Australia. RAAF squadrons in Malaya were involved in the fighting from the outset.

9 December The governor-general, Lord Gowrie, acting on the advice of his Australian ministers, declared Australia to be at war with Japan, Finland, Hungary and Romania. He thus upheld the principle that Australia had self-governing responsibility in international affairs.

10 December Japanese aircraft sank the British battleship HMS *Prince of Wales* and battle cruiser HMS *Repulse* 160 kilometres east of Malaya.

11 December The war cabinet decided to call up married and unmarried men in a wide range of occupations for full-time home defence army service. Curtin demanded 'a complete revision of the whole Australian economic, domestic and industrial life', and his government increased the flow of regulations controlling the use of materials, labour and finance, so creating a 'total war' economy within a few months. The government called up 5000 men for the Volunteer Defence Corps. By June 1942 it held almost 100 000 men, nearly all on part-time duty.

26 December A new radio-beam service opened between Australia and the US.

27 December The Melbourne *Herald* published an end-of-year message by Curtin, including the sentence: 'Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom'.

1941 Eleanor Dark's novel *The timeless land* and Ernestine Hill's novel *My love must wait* were published.

1942

1 January Daylight saving was introduced throughout Australia until the end of March.

14 January Australian troops in Johore, south Malaya, fought their first big action against Japanese troops, but were forced to retreat because the flanks of the British front were collapsing.

23 January Soon after midnight Japanese troops landed at Rabaul, quickly overcoming the defending Australians. Japanese troops made unopposed landings on New Ireland and Bougainville. These were the first Australian territories to fall to the Japanese.

30 January Thirteen people died when a Qantas flying boat was destroyed by Japanese action en route from Darwin to East Timor.

30 January–3 February Japanese troops seized Ambon, capturing an Australian battalion.

31 January The National Security Act mobilised the workforce. Important industries were declared to be 'essential' and important occupations 'reserved', while other industries and occupations were to be phased out; industries of 'lower priority' were starved of labour and some occupations, such as domestic service, disappeared almost completely.

11 February The first Australia-wide 'blackout' test was made.

15 February Singapore surrendered to the Japanese and thousands of British troops, mostly Indians but including 15 000 men of the Australian Eighth Division, became prisoners of war.

17 February Curtin opened a new £35 000 000 'liberty loan'.

19 February A large force of Japanese aircraft attacked Darwin. Two hundred and forty-three people were killed and more than 300 others injured in an attack the severity of which was at first hidden from the Australian public. A further 62 air raids were made on Darwin during the war and other raids were made on Townsville, Qld, and on Broome, Wyndham and Port Hedland, WA.

19 February Japanese forces began landing on Timor. They outnumbered the defending Australians by 20 to 1 and within four days had forced the battalion to surrender. Some 300 other Australians in the 2/2nd Independent Company withdrew from Dutch to Portuguese Timor and for a year waged a successful guerrilla-type campaign.

23 February Churchill gave way to Curtin after a cable controversy over the destination of a convoy carrying troops of the Seventh Division returning from the Middle East. On 17 February Churchill asked for at least one of the returning divisions to be landed in Burma. Without Curtin's knowledge, he diverted the ships to Rangoon. Curtin protested and the convoy was ordered to sail for Australia.

1 March The Australian cruiser HMAS *Perth* was sunk in a night action in the Sunda Strait with the loss of 352 lives. On 4 March the Australian sloop *Yarra* was sunk by Japanese warships in the Java Sea, with the loss of 138 lives.

8 March Allied forces on Java surrendered to the Japanese. Among them were more than 2700 Australians.

15 March The commonwealth government instituted an identity card system for adult civilians over the age of fourteen. The card was used to organise rationing and to check employment status.

17 March The commonwealth government agreed to an American request to nominate Gen Douglas MacArthur (who had arrived that day in Darwin) as supreme commander of all Allied forces in the south-west Pacific. On 28 January reports had reached Australia of Winston Churchill's speech in the House of Commons formally handing over the protection of Australia to the Americans.

26 March Frank Forde, the deputy prime minister, announced the suppression of the Australia First movement, a fascist organisation formed in 1941.

26 March Gen Sir Thomas Blamey became commander-in-chief of Australian military forces.

30 March Rationing began throughout Australia. People were allowed 2 ounces (58 grams) of tea and one pound (0.45 kilograms) of sugar each per week, and the clothing ration imposed a cut of about 40 per cent on normal clothing purchases for men, about 33 per cent for women and 20 per cent for children.

6 April The 41st US Division reached Australia. The 32nd Division arrived on 14 May.

4–8 May An American naval force forced the retreat of a Japanese fleet in the Coral Sea, thwarting Japanese plans to seize Port Moresby as a step towards isolating Australia from the US.

4–19 May The bodies of three strangled women were found around inner Melbourne, victims of the 'brown-out murderer'. Inquiries by police and American military authorities led to the arrest of Edward Joseph Leonski, a 24-year-old US soldier. He was subsequently tried by a US court martial in Melbourne, found guilty and sentenced to death. He was hanged at Pentridge gaol, Melbourne, on 9 November.

14 May The widows' pensions bill was introduced into federal parliament.



September 1942 *Operation Bulimba, 2/15th Battalion attack near Tel el Eisa, Egypt. Oil on canvas by Ivor Hele, 1965.*

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

30–31 May Australians took part in the first '1000-bomber' raid on Cologne. By this time almost 4000 Australians had reached the UK to serve in the RAF. Most of them were posted to bomber command, which was developing a strategic bombing offensive ('area bombing') against Germany.

31 May Three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour. The naval depot ship *Kuttabul* was sunk, killing 19 people. One submarine was sunk by depth charges, another blown up by its crew after becoming entangled in boom nets, and one escaped.

2 June Curtin opened the second 'liberty loan' of £35 000 000.

4 June The Uniform Income Tax Act, giving the commonwealth government the sole right to collect income tax for the duration of the war, came into force. The Vic, SA, Qld and WA governments unsuccessfully fought the act in the high court.

4–6 June The American defeat of the Japanese in the battle of Midway, in which four Japanese aircraft carriers were sunk, led MacArthur to tell Curtin that 'the security of Australia had been secured'. It was a year before Curtin made such a statement in public.

5 June Two Japanese submarines were sunk by Allied planes off the east coast of Australia after they had made several successful attacks on shipping. The following day another submarine was sunk, bringing the total number destroyed in the area to seven.

8 June Japanese submarines shelled Sydney and Newcastle. Though there were no casualties and little damage, property values dropped in Sydney's eastern suburbs where the shells had landed.

10 July In its first actions since leaving Tobruk, the Ninth Division engaged Italians near El Alamein. Over the next seven weeks it fought in battles that stabilised the front after the Axis advance of the first half of the year.

21 July Japan began to implement its plan to take Port Moresby by land, when a force disembarked at Gona in Papua. Its advance across the Owen Stanleys was resisted by Australians in the Kokoda campaign.

24 July National security regulations were gazetted to prevent coal strikes.

9 August Japanese ships sank the Australian cruiser HMAS *Canberra* and three US cruisers off Guadalcanal in the Solomons in the night action of Savo Island. Eighty-four crewmen on the *Canberra* died.

25 August As a step in their moves to take Port Moresby Japanese forces began landing at Milne Bay at the eastern tip of New Guinea. By 6 September they had been defeated by Australian soldiers and airmen. Never before on their southern drive had Japanese soldiers sustained such a significant defeat.

3 September Australia and the US reached a reciprocal lend-lease agreement, providing for the exchange of war materials.

3 September The government's 'austerity loan' opened and Curtin called for greater sacrifices.

17 September After a hard-fought advance over the Kokoda Trail, Japanese troops reached Ioribaiwa Ridge, about 50 kilometres from Port Moresby. Then, exhausted and short of supplies, they had to retreat. The Australian advance began on 28 September.

9 October Federal parliament enacted the Statute of Westminster Act, providing for the exercise of Australian governmental authority beyond Australian territorial waters. The Act, made retrospective to the declaration of war against Germany on 3 September 1939, put into legislative terms the principles enunciated in the Balfour declaration at the imperial conference of 1926: equality of status of the self-governing dominions, their autonomy within the British Empire and their allegiance to the crown.

23 October Under General B.L. Montgomery, the major allied offensive began in north Africa with the battle of El Alamein. The Australian Ninth Division played a crucial role in this famous victory which by 5 November had forced the enemy to begin the long retreat to Tunisia.

2 November Australian troops recaptured Kokoda.

3 November A £100 000 000 loan was opened. Loans such as these were needed to pay for the war and also absorbed savings, thus reducing spending on luxuries. The Australian economy was totally geared to production of war materials, equipment and food for the Allied armies.

15 November Australians completed their victory on the Kokoda Trail and within a few days began probing strong Japanese defences in beachheads at Gona, Sanananda and Buna.

24 November The states gave the commonwealth government powers to establish a department of post-war reconstruction. The department was set up in December and in January 1943 Dr H.C. Coombs was appointed director-general.

26 November A crowd of between three and four thousand Australian soldiers attacked an American army canteen in Brisbane. The fighting that ensued between them and US military police left about twenty seriously injured on each side, and one Australian shot dead. Known as 'the battle of Brisbane', it was the biggest of many clashes between Australian and American troops in base areas, caused by friction arising over the privileges Australian troops believed the Americans enjoyed. Wartime censorship suppressed reporting of the incidents.

November–November 1943 Along with other nationals, Australian prisoners of the Japanese suffered greatly building the Burma–Thailand railway.

9 December Australian troops captured Gona, Papua, after hard fighting.

18 December The attorney-general, Dr H.V. Evatt, announced that the ban on the Communist party imposed in June 1940 had been lifted. It was a delayed response to Russia's entry into the war against Germany on 22 June 1941.

1943

2 January Australia sent its first envoy to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

5 January A federal ALP conference approved Curtin's proposal to amend the Defence Act to extend the use of conscripted militia forces in some non-Australian territories in the southwest Pacific area. Curtin had worked hard to persuade the ALP state branches to accept this departure from Labor tradition. The proposal came into force under the Defence (Citizen Military Forces) Act 1943 on 19 February.

20 January–8 February Nearly 3000 Japanese troops from Lae, New Guinea, set out to seize Wau and its airfield. An Australian brigade, airlifted in mainly by American aircraft, only just thwarted them.

23 January Organised Japanese resistance in Papua ended. In the six-month Papuan campaign 2165 Australians had been killed — more than in any other of the army's campaigns of the war.

2–4 March The Japanese suffered a severe reverse with the loss of four destroyers, eight troop transports and about 3000 men in the battle of the Bismarck Sea.

22 April A Qantas flying boat was forced down in bad weather and sank in the sea off northern Australia, with the loss of thirteen lives.

April The commonwealth government fixed the prices of goods and services. Until now profits had been regulated but some goods, not affected by the earlier price order, had continued to rise in price. The new scheme directly controlled prices.

April The system of collecting income tax by instalments, introduced in January 1941, was altered to pay-as-you-earn income tax. Under the old system instalments began on 1 August each year and continued until the tax for that year had been paid. Under the pay-as-you-earn system the government received immediate access to a large reserve, necessary to pay for the war. Deductions under the new system began on 1 July 1944.

14 May Two hundred and sixty-eight people died when the hospital ship *Centaur* was torpedoed and sunk by a Japanese submarine 64 kilometres off Brisbane, despite the fact that it was a convention of war not to attack hospital ships and the *Centaur* was clearly marked with red crosses.

16–17 May Thirteen Australians were in Lancaster bombers of the RAF's 617 Squadron ('the Dam Busters'), which raided four dams on the Ruhr and Weser rivers in Germany.

7 June The rationing of butter began, with each adult allowed half a pound (227 grams) a week.

21 August The Curtin Labor government gained an overwhelming victory in the federal election. With a majority of 24 in the House of Representatives and 22 of the 36 Senate seats, Labor controlled both houses of parliament.

3 September Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the American president, arrived in Australia to inspect the activities of the Red Cross on behalf of American servicemen based in Australia. By June 1943 there were about 178 000 American servicemen based in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and many smaller towns throughout the country. For many people the American presence and American ideas about food, dress and customs were the most remarkable aspect of the war.

4 September Troops of the Australian Ninth Division landed near Lae, opening an important offensive aimed at clearing Japanese out of the Huon Peninsula in northeast New Guinea. Together with the Seventh, the Ninth Division occupied Lae on 16 September. The Seventh then began to fight its way up the Markham–Ramu valley. The Ninth was moved east to Finschhafen, where it fought the Japanese 20th Division, defeating it by early December.

22 September Menzies replaced the 81-year-old Hughes as leader of the United Australia Party, Hughes becoming deputy.

23 September The new federal parliament included Australia's first two women federal members, Dame Enid Lyons, (United Australia Party, Tas) in the House of Representatives and Dorothy Tangney (Labor, WA) in the Senate.

15 November Curtin announced the appointment of the Duke of Gloucester as governor-general of Australia in succession to Lord Gowrie. The Duke of Gloucester, brother of the King, arrived in Australia on 28 January 1945.

1943 C.E.W. Bean published *War aims of a plain Australian*.

1944

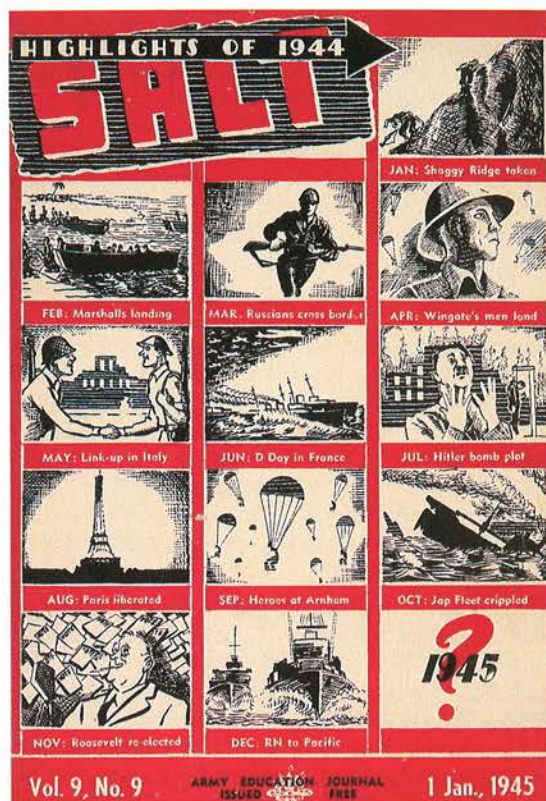
17 January Meat rationing began throughout Australia. Each person was allowed about two and a quarter pounds (just over 1 kilogram) of meat a week.

20 January Seventeen people were killed when a bus was hit by the Kempsey mail train at Brooklyn in NSW.

26 January Government tram and bus employees went on strike in Sydney and Newcastle for 24 hours in protest against the commonwealth government's refusal to release men from the army to improve the condition of transport workers. The strikers ignored the prime minister's order, under the national security regulations, to return to work.

26 January The Seventh Division, having secured the Markham–Ramu valley, seized the Japanese defensive position on Shaggy Ridge in the Finisterre Range, paving the way for the envelopment of the Huon Peninsula.

14 February Bushfires at Yallourn, Vic, set fire to the open-cut coalmine, disrupting Melbourne electricity supplies. In January and February bushfires at Beaumaris, Yallourn and Gippsland caused 51 deaths and destroyed 700 buildings.



1944 *Salt*, the army education journal, was issued free to all troops. It combined coverage of the war with a concern about what Australia would be like to live in once the war was over. *Salt*, 1 January 1945.

SPEARRETT COLLECTION

17–18 February Despite opposition from Hughes and Percy Spender, the United Australia Party withdrew its representatives (Menzies, Hughes and Spender) from the bipartisan advisory war council. Spender and Hughes rejoined and were expelled from the UAP, precipitating its demise later in the year.

March The commonwealth government introduced into the House of Representatives proposals for the payment of unemployment and sickness benefits which were to be paid from revenue and not, as the opposition wanted, from a contributory fund.

1 April Curtin, Evatt and the secretary of the defence department, Frederick Shedden, left Australia for America and Britain. At Ottawa on 30 May Curtin declared that European nations were too distant to be competent judges of Australia's role in the Pacific. He and Shedden returned to Australia on 26 June.

16 April Australian troops entered Alexishafen, New Guinea, marking the end of the Huon Peninsula campaign. By this time large American forces were being landed in New Guinea, and by 30 July Americans had reached the island's northwestern tip.

26 May The acting prime minister, Frank Forde, announced Australia's intention of embarking on an

active postwar immigration policy. The government preferred immigrants of British stock but was prepared to consider other nationalities.

5 August In the early hours of the morning the 1104 Japanese prisoners of war at Cowra, NSW, attempted a mass escape armed with baseball bats and other makeshift weapons. Three Australian guards and 234 Japanese were killed during the break out.

19 August A referendum providing for changes to the constitution was lost. It had been intended to allow the commonwealth government wide-ranging powers to control postwar reconstruction for five years after the end of the war.

23 August The commander-in-chief of Australian forces, Gen Blamey, told Curtin of his 'grave misgivings' as to Australia's ability to maintain offensive forces in the event of prolonged operations against Japan in 1945.

14 September A strike by coalminers in NSW almost brought industry to a halt before the men returned to work on 15 March.

13–16 October With the United Australia Party in disarray, Menzies called a conference of non-Labor politicians and organisations in Canberra to form a Liberal party. The new party was formally constituted with Menzies as its leader at a conference at Albury, NSW, on 14–16 December.

October Australian army units began taking over from American divisions facing Japanese on Australian territory near Aitape and on New Britain and Bougainville. The Americans went north to reinforce MacArthur's army liberating the Philippines. The Australians mounted limited offensives and gradually regained territory from the Japanese.

9 November Judge Roper of the NSW supreme court found that William Dobell's portrait of Joshua Smith, which had won the 1943 Archibald Prize, was a pictorial representation of the subject within the meaning of Archibald's will. After the prize had been awarded to Dobell two artists had taken action against him on the ground that the portrait was a caricature.

19 November Stories of the hardships suffered by Australian prisoners of war held in Japanese camps were made public following the rescue of Australian men from a Japanese troop ship, torpedoed by an American submarine on 12 September.

1944 Kenneth Slessor's *One hundred poems* and Christina Stead's novel *For love alone* were published.

1945

January The Japanese stepped up a program to exterminate Australian prisoners of war in Borneo. Of 2000 Australians, all but six perished.

27 February Curtin wrote to Gen MacArthur stressing that Australian forces serving overseas should not be split up. Throughout late 1944 and 1945 Australia and the US disagreed over the role of Australian

troops. While American forces made the costly but glamorous final assault on the Japanese mainland, Australian troops were left with the less prestigious and equally dangerous task of 'mopping up' Japanese garrisons bypassed by the main advance in New Guinea, New Britain, Bougainville and Borneo.

25 April Australia was among the 50 nations that met at San Francisco between April and June to draw up the charter for a new world organisation, the United Nations, which would replace the League of Nations. The Australian delegates were F.M. Forde and H.V. Evatt, assisted by 23 advisers.

1 May Australia's campaign in Borneo began when a brigade group of the Ninth Division landed at Taranakan.

8 May German forces unconditionally surrendered to the Allies in Europe.

11 May The Sixth Division recaptured Wewak, New Guinea.

10 June The remainder of the Ninth Division landed at Labuan Island and Brunei Bay in northwestern Borneo.

1 July The Seventh Division landed at Balikpapan.

5 July Curtin died in office after a long period of intermittent illness, exacerbated by his efforts as war-

time leader. Ben Chifley was elected the new ALP leader, replacing Frank Forde, who had been caretaker prime minister for a week. There was widespread sadness that Curtin had not lived to see victory.

8 August The Australian press reported the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima two days earlier.

15 August Japan's surrender and the end of the war were greeted by the largest crowds that had ever gathered in Australia. During the war 33 826 Australian men and women died in service, 180 864 were wounded or injured and 23 059 had spent time in prisoner-of-war camps. The cost of the war to Australia up to the middle of 1945 was over £2000 million.

21 August The Banking Act and Commonwealth Banking Act extended the commonwealth government's control over private trading banks.

22 August The War Service Land Settlement Scheme was implemented after agreement was reached between the federal and state governments.

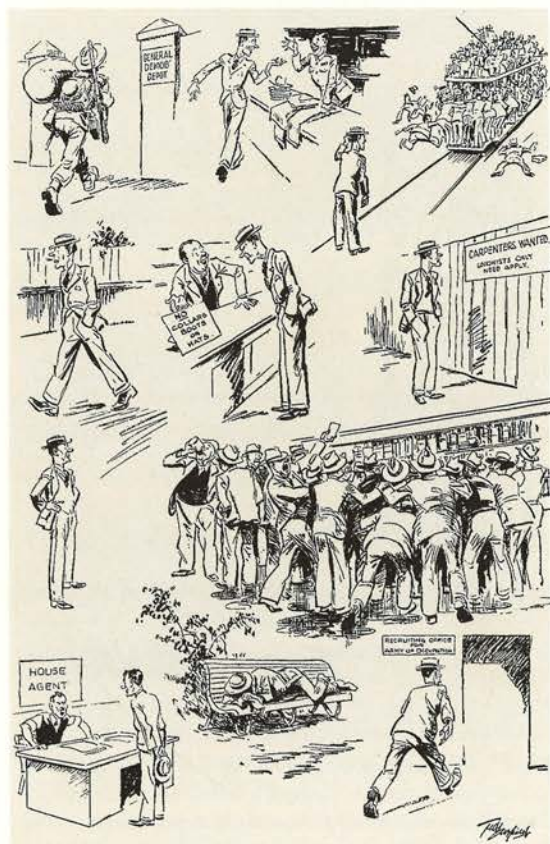
23 September A series of industrial disturbances involving NSW steelworkers, coalworkers and seamen began over wage claims, the introduction of a 40-hour week and certain company policies. The disputes put half a million people out of their jobs before work resumed on 12 December.

December The first Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race, attracting nine entries, was organised over Christmas and New Year. The race was won on 1 January by the smallest yacht, *Rani*, owned by Royal Navy engineer Capt John Illingworth.

1945 The first National Trust in Australia was formed in NSW. In the next twenty years trusts were formed in all states.

1945 Adelaide-born pathologist Howard Florey, co-discoverer of penicillin, was the first Australian to be awarded the Nobel Prize.

1945 S.J. Baker's *The Australian language* and Bernard Smith's *Place, taste and tradition* were published.



1945 'Demobbed', a cartoon by Scorfield for the Bulletin, 31 October 1945.

1946

1 January A free hospital scheme was established in Qld by the state Labor government.

1 February The federal government announced that Australian troops would participate in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan. The first contingent of troops left shortly afterwards and by 1947 Australia had 10 000 troops in Japan.

7 February The federal government indicated its willingness to co-operate with the British government on research into nuclear energy. It would sympathetically consider any request for the use of large uninhabited areas in Australia suitable for testing of atomic weapons.

9 February The federal parliament passed the Australian National Airlines Act, establishing a commission to operate interstate and territorial air services. The

commission established and operates Trans Australia Airlines. The legislation was a response to the high court's decision in July 1945 that the government did not have the power to nationalise all private interstate airlines.

19 February The *Koei Maru*, the first Japanese ship to enter an Australian port since the outbreak of war, arrived in Melbourne to take home 2000 Japanese prisoners of war.

February The inaugural meeting of the Australian branch of the World Council of Churches was attended by representatives of Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, the Church of Christ, the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army.

1 March The federal government began lifting war-time labour controls. Concerned to avoid spiralling wages and prices, it staggered the return of ex-service men and women to civilian life, and gradually phased out defence projects. All labour controls were lifted by 1 May when the Commonwealth Employment Service was formed.

10 March A Douglas DC3 crashed at Hobart, killing 25 people.

5 April An agreement for assisted passages for English migrants to Australia was signed by the British and Australian governments.

8 April The Liberal party and the Country party announced joint Senate teams and the exchange of preferences in all elections for the House of Representatives.

15 April Norman Thomas Gilroy, the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, became the first Australian-born cardinal.

1 May A strike by Aboriginal stockmen affected 20 of 22 stations in the Pilbara, WA. Two Nyanamada men, accused of enticing Aborigines from their employment, were sentenced to three months' gaol. The strike ended in 1949 when employers offered a £3 a week wage plus keep.

12 May British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) and Qantas combined to bring the first post-war flying service from England to Australia, using Short Hythe flying boats.

19 June The minister for postwar reconstruction, J.J. Dedman, introduced legislation to establish the Australian National University in Canberra as a centre of research and postgraduate education. The first permanent building was opened in 1952.

10 July ABC radio began broadcasting sessions of the House of Representatives. Senate broadcasts began on 17 July.

15 August The Coal Industry Act received royal assent. A complementary NSW Act was assented to on 25 September. Together they established the Joint Coal Board to take over from the Wartime Commonwealth Coal Commission. The board was created to stabilise the coal industry, secure Australian coal supplies and promote the welfare of miners. Industrial

disputes would be handled by the coal industry tribunal.

20 August Robert Menzies delivered the Liberal party's policy speech, launching its first election campaign. Menzies concentrated on tax relief, incentives for increased production and national development and encouraging individual effort.

9 September Trans-Australia Airlines began operation with a daily Melbourne-Sydney flight using DC3s. By the end of the year, TAA connected all capital cities carrying passengers and freight.

27 September *The overlanders* was released in Sydney. The film was produced by the British Ealing Studios with federal government assistance. Encouraged by its international success, Ealing established a film unit in Australia, hoping to produce more films with a distinct Australian flavour.

28 September The federal Labor government returned to office with the loss of six seats. Voters also decided three referenda proposals. Those for organised marketing of primary produce and for power to control terms and conditions of employ-

THE GOLDEN AGE
a Fantasy
by J.B. Chifley

JOBS
The Liberal Government will ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity of employment. It will create new jobs and ensure that existing jobs are not lost. It will ensure that the unemployed are not left to starve.

HOMES
The Liberal Government will ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity of a home. It will build new houses and ensure that existing houses are not lost. It will ensure that the homeless are not left to starve.

TAXES
The Liberal Government will ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity of a fair tax system. It will reduce taxes and ensure that the rich pay more than the poor. It will ensure that the poor are not left to starve.

CONTROLS
The Liberal Government will ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity of a free market. It will remove all controls and ensure that the market is free. It will ensure that the market is not left to starve.

FACT
The Liberal Government will ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity of a better life. It will create new jobs, build new houses, reduce taxes, and remove all controls. It will ensure that the people are not left to starve.

NOTE LIBERAL
What We Promise We Shall Perform

Authorised by G. M. Chifley, 31 Adelaide Street, Sydney, for The Liberal Party of Australia.

1946 The newly formed Liberal Party of Australia, in its first federal election, claimed it would do a better job than Chifley in returning the country to peacetime prosperity. At the election Labor won 43 seats, the Liberals 15, the Country party 11. Bulletin, 18 September 1946.

ment were rejected. A third, giving the government power to legislate for social services, was accepted.

September The eighteenth federal ALP conference denounced the Communist party and rejected any association with it.

16 October A strike began among metalworkers in two Vic iron foundries and spread to metalworkers generally. The strikers demanded an increase in wage margins and did not return to work until 7 May 1947.

30 October The commonwealth arbitration court committed itself to the principle of the 40-hour week, but it did not specify when the shorter hours would be introduced.

20 November The federal government announced that an experimental rocket range would be set up at Mt Eba, SA. It was to be a joint development between Britain and Australia. In 1947 the site was moved 162 kilometres southeast to Woomera, SA.

13 December Prime Minister Chifley announced that wage pegging regulations would be relaxed.

13 December Australian trusteeship of the mandated territories of New Guinea and Papua was approved by the United Nations. The federal government decided to administer the two territories jointly as Papua-New Guinea, with headquarters at Port Moresby.

31 December The National Security Act was terminated. The federal government retained control over prices and maintained a number of anti-inflationary and anti-profiteering measures.

1946 The commonwealth and states enacted a joint housing agreement whereby the commonwealth provided loan funds to state housing commissions to help overcome an acute housing shortage. Over the next ten years 26 000 houses were built for rent under this agreement.

1946 C.E.W. Bean's *Anzac to Amiens* and Rohan Rivett's *Behind bamboo* were published.

1947

6 January The federal government lifted restrictions on share dealings and allowed stock exchanges to conduct their business on a free market. This opened the way for speculative investment in a number of industries that had been starved of funds during the five-year suspension of trading.

31 January Buckingham Palace and Canberra jointly announced the appointment of Australian-born William McKell, the Labor premier of NSW, to the post of governor-general. It attracted strong criticism from the press and opposition, Menzies arguing that this was 'the most deplorable incident in the government's growing record of political jobbery'. McKell took office on 11 March.

January Concerned about the devastation left by the war in the south Pacific region, Australia, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Britain and the United States formed the South Pacific Commission. They

hoped to raise living standards in the region, but the commission also reflected wider strategic interests.

12 March Evatt introduced legislation into parliament to amend the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1904, to separate conciliation matters from judicial decisions. Lay conciliation commissioners would be appointed to deal with industrial disputes and receive the power to make awards and orders, leaving the arbitration court to decide policy issues such as the national basic wage, standard hours and annual leave.

31 March The principle of penalty rates for weekend work was established by the commonwealth arbitration court.

March The Macquarie radio network began broadcasting Bob and Dolly Dyer's *Pick-a-box*. This highly successful quiz show transferred to television in 1957 and ran until Bob Dyer retired in 1971.

5 May Sixteen people died in a derailment at Camp Mountain, Qld, the state's worst rail accident.

12 June The Pharmaceutical Benefits Act was passed by federal parliament, providing pharmaceutical benefits to all persons ordinarily resident in Australia. It came into effect from 1 June 1948.

30 June Motor vehicle registrations in Australia reached one million.

30 June The census recorded the Australian population at 7 579 358. 'Full-blood' Aborigines, estimated at 46 638, were counted separately.

1 July In NSW the 40-hour week was established for employees under state awards.

1 July With the 7 pm bulletin, the ABC began broadcasting its independent news service. This followed amendments to the Broadcasting Act that made it obligatory for the ABC to secure news within the commonwealth wholly through its own staff. It could not rely on newspaper or other sources whose objectivity might be tainted by commercial interests.

7 July Sugar rationing was ended. Rationing continued for other goods, including meat and petrol.

21 July The commonwealth signed an agreement with the International Refugee Organization to accept 'displaced persons' as immigrants. In return for their free passage, these immigrants had to agree to work for the government for two years. The first displaced persons to arrive were 839 Baltic migrants.

16 August Following a cabinet meeting, Chifley announced the government's intention to nationalise all banks except state and savings banks. When he introduced the legislation into the house on 15 October, Chifley justified the government's decision by arguing that private banks 'are conducted primarily for profit and therefore follow policies which in important respects run counter to the public interest'.

25 August As leader of the opposition, Menzies launched a nationwide campaign against bank nationalisation. He claimed that the fight against Labor's policies was a fight against 'fascism in Australia'.

8 September The commonwealth arbitration court introduced the 40-hour week for workers under commonwealth awards, to come into effect on 1 January 1948.

16 October The federal government announced that an aluminium industry with an annual output of 10 000 tons would be established near Launceston, Tas. In May 1948 the federal and Tas governments announced an agreement for the Tas Hydro-Electric Commission to supply power for the new plant.

October Wartime emergency regulations, which had limited the power of industrial tribunals to vary wages and awards, ceased.

18 November The federal government announced that Australia would apply the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade reached earlier in the year at Geneva. Under the agreement tariffs were reduced. The new rates were to apply from this date.

30 November With the creation of the Australian Regular Army, Australia for the first time had a force capable of deployment in peacetime.

26 December The Australian flag was raised on Heard Island in a short ceremony that marked the transfer of Heard and MacDonald islands from Britain to Australia and the beginning of a five-year Antarctic exploration program.

1947 Jon Cleary's *You can't see round corners* was published in New York. M. Barnard Eldershaw's *Tomorrow and tomorrow* was published in a censored version. The full version was first published in 1984.

1948

3 February The second conference of commonwealth and state Aboriginal welfare authorities began. It considered the alternative of a transfer of power in Aboriginal affairs to the commonwealth or of commonwealth assistance to the states for Aboriginal welfare. The first, which raised issues of state power, was opposed by NSW, Qld and WA, and rejected. The conference agreed that the commonwealth should fund state programs on a fifty-fifty basis.

4 February In Qld 10 000 railwaymen struck in support of demands for increased marginal rates for workshops and running shed tradesmen. A state of emergency was declared. The strikers did not return to work until 2 April when the government offered to increase the marginal rates.

5 March The federal government announced that, commencing on 1 July, 50 000 men would be enlisted into the Commonwealth Military Forces.

9 March The high court ruled that sections of the 1947 Bank Nationalisation Act were invalid.

16 April BHP announced plans to invest £7 million in the steel industry, including the establishment of an integrated steelmaking plant at Whyalla, SA, and the establishment of a tin plate works at Port Kembla, NSW.

12 May The Vic government announced plans to expand brown coal production. Investments of £19 million would be made in a new open-cut mine at Morwell and in establishing two new briquette factories.

19 May The federal government announced the standardisation of railway gauges in NSW, Vic and SA, to commence in 1951.

29 May The Commonwealth Rents and Prices Referendum was defeated in all states. The Labor government had hoped to make wartime controls on rents and prices permanent. The opposition, however, conducted a vigorous 'no' campaign and the referendum's results indicated that many Australians were tired of restrictions.

31 May The Australian and Maltese governments agreed on assisted passage for Maltese migrants.

22 June Rationing of meat and clothing ended.

21 September H. V. Evatt, the minister for external affairs, was elected president of the United Nations General Assembly. During his term Evatt displeased the Americans by failing to be a strong supporter of their fight against communism. At the time the United States and Britain were in conflict with the Soviet Union over the Berlin blockade.

22 September A nationwide anti-tuberculosis campaign began. In the 1940s, tuberculosis had been the greatest individual cause of death for people between the ages of 20 and 40. The legislation aimed at early detection by making chest X-rays compulsory.

6 October Coalminers in NSW went on strike because of a dispute with the Australian Workers' Union. They returned to work on 8 November.

21 October Sumner Locke Elliot's *Rusty bugles* opened at Sydney's Independent Theatre. After three performances the NSW chief secretary forbade further production because of the strong language used. 'Stinker' and 'dimwit' replaced Locke Elliot's more evocative vocabulary.

29 November Chifley attended the unveiling of Australia's first mass-produced motor car, the Holden. Costing £760, it was beyond the reach of most Australian families but in the following decade its cost in comparison to average earnings fell dramatically.

17 December Federal parliament enacted the Mental Institutions Benefit Act. States subsequently stopped charging for patients in mental hospitals in return for the commonwealth providing a benefit equal to that previously paid by patients' relatives.

21 December The National Health Services Act gave the commonwealth power to take over, provide or arrange for any health facility or service. Although enabling the government to nationalise health services, these powers were not implemented by the Labor government before it lost office in 1949 but were used by the Menzies Liberal-Country party government in its reformation of the health services.



1949 Widespread flooding caused distress in Maitland, NSW, and surrounding towns. Pix, 29 June 1949.

MAGAZINE PROMOTIONS

December Don Bradman resigned from test cricket. In his 21-year career Bradman played 669 innings and scored 50 731 runs.

1948 To bring the parliamentary representation ratio closer to that of 1901, federal parliament passed the Representation Act. It increased membership of the Senate from 36 to 60 and of the House of Representatives from 75 to 121. It also replaced the 'winner take all' system in the Senate with proportional representation.

1948 At the Olympic Games in London, the Australian team won two gold medals, in athletics and rowing.

1948 Patrick White's *The aunt's story*, Ruth Park's *The harp in the south* and Clive Turnbull's *Black war* were published.

1949

26 January The Nationality and Citizenship Act (1948) became law. This created the status of 'Australian citizen' which was automatically acquired by people born in or outside Australia of Australian fathers and who were admitted for permanent residence, people nationalised in Australia, and British subjects with five or more years' residency. In future a woman's citizenship would not be affected by marriage alone.

25 February ABC radio began broadcasting *Blue hills* by Gwen Meredith. This popular serial ran for the next 27 years.

3 March Legislation was introduced into federal parliament to enable Australian Aborigines 'who,

through association and education have sufficiently developed the attributes of civilization' to vote in federal elections. It franchised those already able to vote in state elections (NSW, SA, Tas) or those who had been members of the defence forces. Aborigines in the NT and WA still had only a limited franchise and in Qld none at all.

10 March Parliament passed the Papua–New Guinea Act which formally merged the two territories to form the Trust Territory of New Guinea and Papua.

March The ruling state Labor party in Qld enacted a major 'gerrymander' when they divided the state into four electoral zones, each with its own quota. Country areas with a traditionally high Labor vote were favoured in the redistribution, which increased the number of seats in the assembly to 75.

6 June The full bench of the high court declared that commonwealth regulations regarding petrol rationing were invalid. The commonwealth asked states to assume responsibility.

20 June Lawrence Louis Sharkey, chairman of the Communist party, was convicted of a breach of the Commonwealth Crimes Act for uttering seditious language with seditious intent. Talking to a *Daily Telegraph* reporter in March he had said, 'If Soviet forces in pursuit of aggressors entered Australia, Australian workers would welcome them'. Sharkey was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

26 June A coal strike began and continued until 15 August. The miners demanded increased wages, long-service leave and a 35-hour week. Severe power cuts resulted and 123 000 workers had to be stood down. The strike was brought to an end when the Labor government sent in troops to operate open-cut mines in NSW.

29 June The National Emergency (Coal Strike) Act was passed. This made illegal any payments in support of striking miners.

June The NSW University of Technology was established by the state government at Kensington. Intended to assist with the postwar demand for tertiary education, its initial emphasis was on science and technology. In 1958 it was renamed the University of NSW.

6 July The high court declared the National Emergency (Coal Strike) Act invalid.

26 July The Privy Council disallowed the commonwealth's appeal over the Banking Act.

July The Chifley government announced plans for the Snowy Mountains scheme. The scheme involved diverting the headwaters of the Snowy River through a series of tunnels and dams to generate electricity for NSW, Vic and Canberra and to provide water for irrigation. Work began on 17 October at Adaminaby, NSW.

1 August The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority was established to supervise the development and construction of the Snowy Mountains scheme.

4 August Alleging the coal strike to be the result of communist influence in the trade unions, the RSL declared the month to 3 September 'anti-communist month'.

20 September The British government devalued the pound sterling from US\$4.30 to US\$2.80. To maintain exchange rates between Australia and the UK, the Chifley government devalued the Australian pound to US\$2.44. As a result imports from dollar areas—notably tobacco, petrol and cars—became more expensive.

27 September J.J. Dedman, minister for postwar reconstruction, announced the establishment of a commonwealth scholarship scheme to commence in 1950. Three thousand scholarships would be available each year for university, technical and other approved professional courses. They would cover tuition fees and, subject to a means test, provide a living allowance. Selections would be based on competition within each state.

7 October The high court declared invalid the section of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Act that compelled doctors to participate in the government's free medicine scheme.

10 November Menzies launched the Liberal–Country party campaign for the federal election. He argued that a vote for Labor would be a vote for socialism, an 'alien and deadly growth' that threatened the very substance of Australian democracy.

10 December At the federal election, Labor lost to the Liberal–Country party coalition. A decisive factor in the campaign was Labor's support for bank nationalisation, a move unpopular among big business and many small savers. The ALP continued to control the Senate.

16 December Charles Chauvel's *Sons of Matthew*, an epic story of Australian pioneer life, was released in Sydney.

19 December The Menzies–Fadden government was sworn in. As vice-president of the executive council, Dame Enid Lyons became the first woman to serve on a federal ministry.

December Sidney Nolan's 'Ned Kelly' series was exhibited at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

1949 With the passing of the Science and Industry Research Act, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research became the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. The Act specified that CSIRO would carry out research in all areas except defence, medicine and atomic energy.

1949 The Aboriginal leader William Ferguson stood unsuccessfully for the federal seat of Lawson, NSW.

1949 David Campbell's *Speak with the sun* and Percival Serle's *Dictionary of Australian biography* were published.

1949 Chifley issued a directive for the establishment of a security service, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO).

1950

9 January The first of a series of regular conferences between British commonwealth foreign ministers began in Colombo. The ministers jointly resolved to co-operate in the raising of living standards, overcoming poverty, disease and ignorance. Australia's representative, P.C. Spender, proposed that commonwealth countries would provide technical assistance to countries of south and southeast Asia; this proposal formed the basis of the Colombo plan for co-operative economic development.

8 February Menzies announced the end of petrol rationing.

23 February A tram strike began in Melbourne and lasted until 24 April. It achieved reduced working hours.

April Menzies introduced the Communist party dissolution bill to parliament, to ban the party and

disqualify communists from holding certain offices. He said Australians must fight the communist 'wherever we find him, leaving him no immunity and no sanctuary at all'.

23 May The federal government announced plans for a national health scheme based on voluntary insurance. Payments would cover medical and hospital charges.

May After seven years of trials, CSIRO successfully released the myxomatosis virus in the Murray valley. Spread by mosquitoes, the virus caused an epidemic in which millions of rabbits died.

23 June Federal parliament passed a bill to extend child endowment to include the first child. Payment was 5s a week.

26 June An ANA DC4 crashed near York, WA, killing 29 people. This and the TAA crash near Mackay on 19 June 1960 with the same loss of life were the worst civil air disasters in Australian history.

29 June Menzies announced that Australian warships would be placed at the disposal of the United Nations following a decision by the Security Council to send air and sea forces to the aid of South Korea, which had been invaded by North Korea.

3 July The National Theatre Ballet performed *Corroboree*. Choreographed by Rex Reid to music by John Antill, this was the first full-length ballet to reflect Aboriginal culture.

6 July The House of Representatives and Senate were convened specially to discuss Australia's involvement in the Korean War. The minister for external affairs, P.C. Spender, argued that this was an opportunity for Australia to demonstrate that 'greatly as we love peace, it can be purchased at too great a price if it involves submission to aggression'.

26 July The federal government announced that Australia would send ground troops to Korea.

12 October The full bench of the arbitration court granted an increase in the male basic wage by £1 a week and increased the female basic wage from 54 per cent to 75 per cent of the male basic wage.

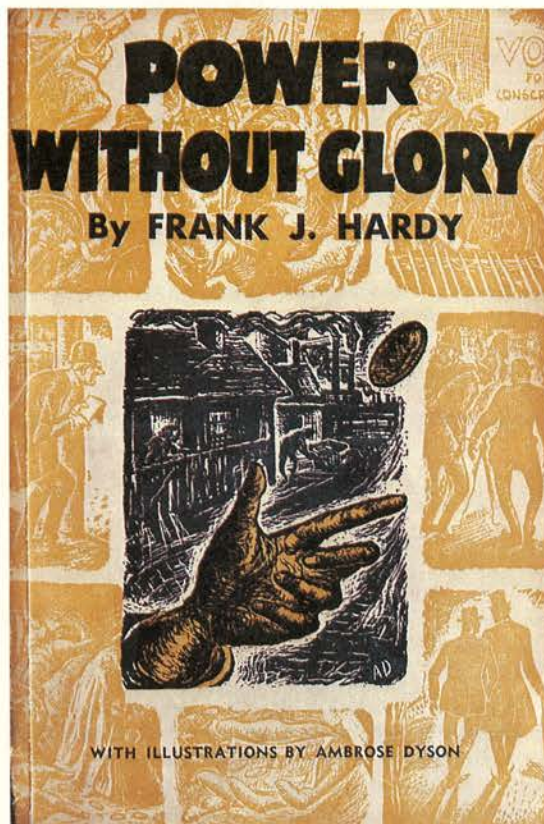
16 October In Vic a nine-week railway strike began over the issues of reduced hours and overtime. SA railway workers struck in support.

20 October The Communist Party Dissolution Act became law. Its passage had been delayed by opposition from ALP parliamentarians who accepted it only after being directed by the ALP federal executive to do so.

22 October Australians experienced their first real battle of the Korean War when trying to rescue an American parachute unit near Yongju, north of Pyongyang.

28 October The last issue of *Smith's Weekly*, founded in Sydney in 1919, appeared.

9 December A referendum in WA over the prohibition of the sale of alcohol returned a resounding 'No' vote.



1 September 1950 Frank Hardy's novel *Power without glory* was published. On 25 October Hardy was arrested for publishing a defamatory libel against Mrs Ellen Wren, wife of well-known Melbourne businessman, John Wren. In the novel Nellie West seduced a married man and bore their child. The case lasted for nine months and Hardy was acquitted.

PETER ARNOLD, ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLER

1950 Nevil Shute's novel *A town like Alice* was published in London and soon became a bestseller. In North America it was entitled *Legacy*.

1950 In Vic adult franchise replaced property franchise for the legislative council.

1950 Diesel locomotives gradually began to replace steam engines, first in Tas and Qld and later in other states.

1951

19 February A Melbourne prostitute, Jean Lee, and her two 'pimps', Robert Clayton and Norman Andrews, were hanged at Pentridge gaol. They had been convicted in March 1950 of the torture and murder of William George Kent, a 73-year-old bookmaker.

9 March By a majority of six to one, the high court declared the Communist Party Dissolution Act invalid. The court stated that the constitution did not give federal parliament authority or power to legislate on such matters.

11 March Australian troops in Korea captured Chusan. On 5 April they crossed the 38th parallel into the north.

14 March P.G. Taylor set out on the first flight between Australia and South America in a Catalina named *Frigate Bird II*. He reached Valparaiso on 27 March.

16 March Federal parliament passed the National Service Act. All 18-year-old males were liable to be called upon to register for national service training lasting 176 days. Trainees could nominate which arm of the service they wanted, although to be accepted by the navy or air force they had to volunteer to go beyond Australia.

19 March Following a deadlock over the commonwealth bank bill, Menzies secured a double dissolution, the second since Federation.

28 April The Liberal-Country party coalition successfully contested the federal election and won control of the Senate.

20 June H.V. Evatt was elected leader of the federal parliamentary Labor party following the death of J.B. Chifley on 13 June.

1 July The NSW Industrial Arbitration Act was amended to provide for paid sick and long-service leave. Other amendments to the act provided for stricter control of trade union ballots.

29 July The federal government announced that one-quarter of Australia's petrol needs would be met by the Shell Co's new £5 million oil refinery at Geelong.

16 August John Fairfax and Sons launched a new weekly newspaper, the *Australian Financial Review*. It was issued twice weekly from 1961 and daily from 1963.

1 September The ANZUS treaty was signed in Washington by Australia, New Zealand and the



1951 Like all the other states, South Australia put on a show for the fiftieth anniversary of Federation in 1951. South Australia had shown less inclination to celebrate the nation's sesquicentenary in 1938 because two years earlier it had celebrated its own centenary. Retail Traders' Association float, Adelaide, 1951.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

United States. It was a mutual defence pact whereby, in the event of an armed attack in the Pacific, the signatories would come to each other's aid.

9 September Australia was one of the 49 nations that signed the Japanese peace treaty at San Francisco.

22 September The Constitution Alteration (Power to Deal with Communists and Communism) Referendum was defeated by a narrow margin.

26 September To counter mounting inflation, federal treasurer Arthur Fadden introduced a budget that would produce a surplus through a 10 per cent tax increase.

September The first cargo of iron ore was shipped from Yampi Sound in northwest WA to Port Kembla, NSW.

12 November Leading church and civic dignitaries launched 'a call to the people'. On radio, in newspapers and pamphlets, they issued an urgent appeal for moral revival, claiming that 'we are in danger from the moral enemies of mankind which sap the will and darken the understanding and breed evil dissensions'. This appeal was quickly endorsed by both Menzies and Evatt.

November The legislative council of Papua-New Guinea was inaugurated.

1951 Dymphna Cusack and Florence James's *Come in spinner* and Eric Lambert's *Twenty thousand thieves* were published.

1952

16 January Senator Spooner, minister for national development, announced that agreement had been reached between the commonwealth and WA governments and Anglo-Iranian Oil over the establishment of an oil refinery at Kwinana, a few kilometres south of Fremantle.

January Ealing Studios announced the closure of its Australian operations. Productions had included *Eureka Stockade*, *Bitter springs* and *The overlanders*.

8 February The accession of Queen Elizabeth II was proclaimed.

7 March Severe import restrictions were introduced to prevent further deterioration in the balance of payments. The federal government aimed at cutting imports by £500 million. It also limited the amount of money Australian tourists could take overseas.

2 April Agreement was reached between federal and SA governments and the Combined Development Agency of America and Britain over the development of uranium deposits at Radium Hill. Mining would commence in 1954 and the uranium was to be shared by the three countries.

7 August The minister for supply, H. Beale, announced that the intake of migrants would be curtailed in 1952 and halved to 80 000 in 1953 in response to mounting criticism of the government's continued sponsorship of migration at a time of rising unemployment.

8 September Australia became a signatory to the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Other signatories to this collective defence treaty were France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Its intention was to create an organisation to oversee the interests of signatories or other countries threatened by communist aggression.

9 September Five children died in a fire at Somers migrant camp, Vic.

September The Vic Trade Union Congress demanded the immediate cessation of all immigration and a substantial increase in unemployment relief.

3 October Britain exploded its first atomic weapon on the Montebello Islands off the northwest coast of WA. There was little protest in Australia.

4 October The newspaper magnate Sir Keith Murdoch died and his son Rupert inherited large holdings in News Ltd of Adelaide.

24 October The minister for territories, Paul Hasluck, rejected proposals by the private airline ANA, then running at a loss, to merge with the profit-making government airline TAA. Instead, the government committed itself to maintaining the two airlines.

15 November Bantamweight Jimmy Carruthers became the first Australian to win a world boxing title.

15 November The Melbourne *Argus* became the first newspaper in the world to publish daily news pictures in full colour.

23 December Federal parliament passed legislation to introduce charges for in-patients in public wards at public hospitals. At the same time, the commonwealth hospital benefits scheme began. It paid a small basic benefit to all hospital patients and an additional benefit to those contributing to a voluntary hospital insurance fund.

1952 Dr John Burton, a former Australian diplomat, led a delegation to the Asian-Pacific peace conference in Peking. This was strongly opposed by the Menzies government, which refused to recognise the communist government in China.

1952 At the Olympic Games in Helsinki, Australians won six gold medals in athletics, cycling and swimming. Two of these were won by Marjorie Jackson, 'the Lithgow flash', for the 100- and 200-metre races.

1952 Martin Boyd's *The cardboard crown*, Robin Boyd's *Australia's home* and Judah Waten's *Alien son* were published.

1952 *Mike and Stefani*, a documentary about the experiences of two Ukrainian immigrants, produced by government film makers, won a major prize at Melbourne's Jubilee Film Festival.

1953

7 January The federal government welcomed the first postwar Japanese ambassador, Haruhiko Nishi.

8 January The federal government and the Combined Development Agency signed a ten-year agreement on the development and sale of uranium deposits at Rum Jungle, NT.

January The exhibition 'French Painting Today' began a nine-month tour of Australia.

February The Menzies government established a royal commission on television. It reported in February the following year, recommending that the ABC should be responsible for the national service and that Sydney and Melbourne should each have two commercial stations.

20 March Federal parliament passed the Television Act which included provision for both government and commercial stations.

15 April The Atomic Energy Act was passed, establishing the Australian Atomic Energy Commission with responsibilities to conduct research, undertake and encourage uranium exploration, exercise federal government rights over various finds and operate generating plants. Maj-Gen J.E.S. Stevens was appointed full-time chairman of the commission.

17 April The NT Legislative Council passed a bill giving citizenship rights to all Territory Aborigines except those in state care.