

Unit 3 The globalising world
(1945–the present)

Introduction to the globalising world

Since the end of World War II in 1945, the world has changed immensely. Advances in technology, communication, travel and medicine have had a profound effect on the world in which we live today. In many ways, these changes have revolutionised our daily lives. Appliances have replaced hours of back-breaking work around the house, smartphones enable us to communicate with people all over the world, mass media provides us with a range of entertainment and leisure activities, and aeroplanes make international travel faster and more comfortable. More than ever before, the seven billion human beings on Earth are part of a single global community.

All of these changes, however, come at a cost. The rapid increase in world population and unprecedented growth in the consumption of resources have put our planet under serious strain. In this unit, you will learn about one of the many aspects of our globalising world in more detail.

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chapter 12

12A

How have changes in technology influenced the globalising world?

12B

How have changes in health and population influenced the globalising world?

12C

How have conflicts influenced the world since 1945?

Source 1 Since the end of World War II in 1945, the world has undergone rapid changes in the fields of technology, communication, transport and trade. These changes mean that we are now – more than ever before – part of a global community.

UNIT 3 The globalising world (1945–the present)

This unit offers a choice of four topics:

- Popular culture
- The environment movement
- Migration experiences
- Political crisis.

You must choose **AT LEAST ONE** of these topics for study.

12.1 Changes in technology since 1945

The 20th century was a time of extraordinary technological change and innovation. The first half of the century saw the first powered aeroplane flight, the expansion of industrialisation and mechanisation, the invention of penicillin and advances in theoretical physics that laid the groundwork for the nuclear age. By the second half of the century, people had orbited the Earth and walked on the Moon, developed new treatments for many medical conditions, eradicated diseases like smallpox and witnessed the birth of the Internet.

Technology in the home

Some of the technological innovations that had the most immediate impacts during the 20th century were designed for the home. From the 1920s, the growing availability of electricity in ordinary homes allowed people to change traditional housekeeping routines. Electric ovens and hot water services freed people from the need to burn wood and clean chimneys. Vacuum cleaners meant that rugs and carpets no longer had to be taken up and beaten by hand to remove dust (see Source 1).

By the 1950s, a wide range of appliances and whitegoods were available. Electric kettles, toasters and mixers transformed the kitchen, but the invention of the washing machine and the electric refrigerator were arguably the most important of the time. Before the washing machine, laundry was commonly washed by hand using a copper boiler, soap and a washboard. After that, it was wrung out in a hand-wringer and hung out to dry. The first washing machines had no spin or rinse cycles but still represented enormous savings in time and effort.

Various methods of refrigeration existed prior to 1950, but were far less effective than the type of refrigerators we are used to today. Before the 1950s,

food could be stored in a Coolgardie safe, where it was kept cool by the evaporation of water from gauze covering. Alternatively it could be stored in an ice chest, but this method relied on a daily delivery of a slab of ice from the local ice-works. The invention of the electric refrigerator allowed people to store food for much longer periods than ever before. This changed their shopping and eating habits. Later, electric refrigerators were followed by electric freezers and microwaves that once again revolutionised food preparation in the home.

Home entertainment

Entertainment was transformed by the invention of radio and television. The first radio station to go to air in Australia was 2SB in Sydney, in November 1923.



Source 1 An advertisement for Hoover vacuum cleaners from the 1940s



Source 2 Television revolutionised home entertainment for families in Australia from the 1950s onwards.

Others quickly followed. Radio became increasingly popular from the 1920s to the 1940s as the technology improved. Radios became smaller and more portable, and more stations and types of shows were offered.

Television arrived in Australia in 1956. At first, TV was offered in black and white only. By 1975, colour TV became available. In the 1980s the VCR (or video cassette recorder) arrived, allowing people to record TV shows to watch at their leisure. Together, these technologies provided much greater opportunities for people to entertain themselves at home.

Travel and trade

Just a century ago, the world was a much less mobile place than it is today. Horse-drawn transport was still in use in Australia at the start of the 20th century, international travel and trade was only possible by sea, and most Australians spent their holidays much closer to home.

Road travel

In the post-war period, the motor car became much more affordable and more common. The first traffic lights in Australia were installed in Melbourne in 1928 and the first Australian-produced car, the Holden FX,

went on sale in 1948 (see Source 3). Roads were sealed to reduce dust from the ever-growing volume of traffic, and highways expanded to connect cities and towns all over the country. By 2010, car registrations exceeded 12 million. While the growth of car ownership has meant greater freedom for many people and a boom to the tourism industry since World War II, many people are now questioning its broader impacts, including pollution and greater congestion in cities



Source 3 The Holden FX, the first Australian-produced car, went on sale in 1948.

Air travel

Passenger aviation arrived in Australia in the 1920s (see Source 4). Qantas was established in 1921 and by the 1950s other commercial airlines were operating domestically, including Trans Australian Airlines (TAA) and Australian National Airways (ANA). Up until the first jet aeroplane arrived in Australia, aeroplanes were propeller-driven. The jet age began in 1959 with the arrival of Qantas’s first Boeing 707 and expanded during the 1970s. The arrival of the Boeing 747 (see Source 5), allowed larger planes to travel longer distances. Prices became more affordable and both domestic and international travel by air came within the reach of many Australians.

Trade

Even the nature of shipping has changed dramatically during the post-war period. Ships became far larger and more powerful, allowing for the bulk transport of vast quantities of resources. Containerisation of freight developed after World War II, allowing goods to be shipped all over the world in standard-sized metal containers. These containers can be loaded and unloaded from ships using heavy machinery, and can be easily transferred to trains or trucks for rail or road transport. Containerisation led to the loss of jobs for dock workers who had traditionally loaded and unloaded ships, but also reduced the costs of transport for many goods, helping to make them cheaper.



Source 4 In 1922, Alexander Kennedy, an 84-year-old cattleman, was the first paying passenger on Qantas.

Communications

The way that Australians communicate with each other and the world has transformed entirely since 1900. At the start of the century, Australians often had to wait for significant lengths of time to receive news from interstate friends and relatives overseas. Mail was the main form of communication, transported by ship from overseas or by rail within the country. However, as aviation technology improved postal services began to use airmail.

The other main method of sending messages was the telegraph. Although instantaneous, a telegram still had to be delivered by a messenger to the recipient. Furthermore, messages tended to be short, as the technology was expensive.

Several advances contributed to a gradual reduction of Australian isolation. A telegraph line was connected to Britain by 1927, allowing instantaneous overseas news. Cinema newsreels also became more common. Though these had to travel in the same way as letters, people were now able to see what was happening elsewhere. Radio station broadcasts began in 1923 and, by the middle of the century, telephone use became widespread, with direct long-distance (STD) and overseas telephone services becoming available in the 1970s.

Then, in the last part of the 20th century, another communications revolution began with the invention of the microchip. Mobile phones, computers and the Internet changed personal correspondence and the



Source 7 Early mobile phones

way people conducted business. The number of emails and SMS messages sent around the world now far outnumber traditional letters. In addition, households are now shifting away from fixed lines (‘landlines’) in favour of mobile telephone and wireless Internet services. Satellite communication now allows the transfer of data, voice and images instantaneously around the globe. Together, these technologies have allowed people from all over the world to communicate and carry out a range of tasks in real time – something that could never have been imagined at the end of World War II.



Source 5 Today, Qantas operates around 5600 flight a week to over 182 destinations in 44 countries.



Source 6 The Port of Shanghai in China has been the world’s busiest container port since 2010. Each year, over 700 million tonnes of cargo is processed through the port and shipped all around the world.

Check your learning 12.1

Remember and understand

- 1 Summarise some of the key developments in household technology that occurred in the first half of the 20th century.
- 2 What is meant by the term ‘containerisation’ and what impact did its introduction have on society?

Apply and analyse

- 3 Of the inventions discussed in this unit, select two that you believe are the most significant. Justify your decisions.

Evaluate and create

- 4 What do you consider to be the most serious problem raised by technology? Why is it a problem and how do you think it could be best addressed?

12.2 Changes to health and population since 1945

World population

At the end of World War II in 1945, the world's population stood at approximately 2.2 billion people and Australia had a population of around 7 million. Just 70 years later, the world's population has exceeded 7 billion and Australia's population has more than tripled to around 23 million. Based on current trends, experts believe that world population will reach 9 billion by 2050.

World population has increased so rapidly for many reasons. Advances in agricultural production (leading to better food supply), better sanitation and improvements in health and medicine have all played a role (see Source X). Life expectancy has also increased in many parts of the world, meaning that many people (particularly in the developed world) are living longer than ever before.

While it is possible to regard the growth of human population as a reflection of human success, concerns have also been expressed in recent years that a large human population, coupled with increasing consumption of natural resources, is putting the natural environment at risk.

Changes in life expectancy across the globe

Australia has one of the highest life expectancies in the world. A non-Indigenous Australian boy born in 2006 can expect to live for 78.7 years, and a girl for 83.5 years. Unfortunately, the picture is not so good for Indigenous Australians. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimated in 2007 that an Indigenous person born in the period 1996–2001 has a life expectancy that is 16–17 years shorter than that of a non-Indigenous person.

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Source 2 The capital of Japan, Tokyo, has a population of around 38 million people. This makes it the most populated city on Earth. Since the end of World War II in 1945, the population of Tokyo has grown from around 9 million people. Improvements in health, sanitation and agricultural production have contributed to this growth.



Source 1 A child suffering from HIV in Africa. The spread of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa has dramatically affected the life expectancy of people living there.

By contrast, the United Nations estimates that people living in Swaziland have the lowest life expectancy in the world. There, on average, men only live to the age of 40 and women only live to the age of 39.

Measures of life expectancy are not static, and many areas of the world have seen dramatic increases since the end of World War II. For example, life expectancy rates in developing countries such as China and Brazil have risen substantially over the past 60 years, almost doubling by some estimates. Sadly, life expectancy has also decreased in some places. The AIDS pandemic has been devastating for Sub-Saharan Africa (see Source 2). Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa all saw life expectancy drop significantly from the late 1980s as infection rates soared. By 2006, life expectancy in Zimbabwe was only 44 years for men and 43 years for women.

Improvements in public health and standards of living

In 1967, the World Health Organization declared its intention to eradicate smallpox, a disease that killed up to a third of all sufferers and disfigured many survivors. Through a vaccination program the target was achieved, with the last case of smallpox recorded in

1977. Other diseases, although not eradicated, have been dramatically curbed through widespread vaccination. Polio and measles are two examples, with polio cases in the developed world reduced by 99 per cent.

In spite of these examples, many of the advances in public health have been due to simple factors like improved sanitation, better urban planning and better nutrition. The **Green Revolution**, beginning in the 1950s, vastly increased the food output of farms in all continents except Africa, leading to improved nutrition and food supply. The Green Revolution involved a combination of methods, such as:

- increased mechanisation (e.g. the use of tractors and irrigation pumps)
- the development of new, higher-yield crops
- the invention of new fertilisers and pesticides.

World trade also intensified in the years after World War II, aided by improved communications and transport systems. By the end of the 20th century, the world had entered the era of **globalisation**, meaning that goods are now being traded more freely across many parts of the world. Commerce and banking has also become globally integrated, as the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (in which losses by banks in the United States led to worldwide shortages of financial credit) has demonstrated.

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Source 3 The Gulf of Mexico oil spill in 2010 is one of the most significant environmental disasters ever recorded. The oil platform operated by BP gushed crude oil for 87 days before it could be capped. During this time it released around 800 million litres of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico, devastating animal and plant populations and destroying many local businesses.

Many people believe that increased global trade has led to higher standards of living. Advocates of globalisation argue that poorer countries are able to sell their goods to a much greater market than before, and that people in the developing world have access to more jobs. However, critics point out that globalisation does not necessarily mean that any new wealth created will be shared. For Australia, globalisation has seen an increase in exports of mineral resources to overseas markets, but it has also brought with it the collapse of some manufacturing industries as companies have looked to source the skills of cheaper workers in other countries.

Environmental pressures

The 20th century has seen continued urbanisation and industrialisation. As a result of this change, more and more people are now engaged in the production of goods and services rather than the production of food. Urban populations drain energy resources, and create large amounts of waste and pollution. Industry, previously concentrated in Western countries, has become more global since the end of World War II, due to the growth of industries in Germany, Japan, South Korea, and more recently in China and India.

These trends have had serious ecological implications and over time, the environment has come into much sharper focus. By the end of the 20th century, there were clear differences between those who saw the planet as a resource to be exploited, and those who saw it as a unique biological system to be preserved. Development and conservation frequently clashed as a range of issues and campaigns made the environment movement a critical part of historical change.

The second half of the 20th century saw the emergence of environmental thinking. A major development in environmental thinking was the Gaia hypothesis. This proposed that life on Earth was interconnected and formed a self-contained system that allowed life to flourish. In other words, the Earth is a single, inter-dependent system. The idea of **sustainability** has also become increasingly important during the 20th century. It requires human beings to take a long-term view when it comes to the use of resources. It also requires the exploitation of natural resources to be measured and managed so they are safeguarded for future generations.

In the post-war period, environmental movements developed in response to the belief that governments

were not dealing with environmental threats appropriately. Individuals formed activist groups to focus attention on issues at a range of scales – local, regional, national, international and global. International non-government organisations like Greenpeace have brought a range of environmental issues to the world's attention, from nuclear testing in the Pacific to whaling in the Southern Ocean. Local conservation groups in Australia have also fought to protect endangered species and the natural environment against development.

Green politics has gradually made an impact on the international political scene and Green parties now participate at various levels of government in many countries. The environment is increasingly becoming a global issue as world governments recognise the need for coordinated efforts against threats like climate change. The Kyoto Protocol, signed by Australia in 2007, is an international commitment to reduce

Check your learning 12.2

Remember and understand

- 1 Give three reasons for the rapid growth in world population since 1945.
- 2 What is the estimated life expectancy of an Aboriginal person born in the period 1996–2001?
- 3 Which disease was eradicated by 1977?
- 4 In your own words, define the Gaia hypothesis.

Apply and analyse

- 5 Visit the website of the Australian Conservation Foundation.
 - a What environmental issues does this organisation see as currently important to Australia's future?
 - b What actions have they taken, are they taking, or do they intend to take, in order to address these concerns?



Source 4 'Greenies' in Melbourne protest against the logging of old-growth forests in Tasmania

12.3 Australia's role in global conflicts since 1945

The involvement of Australian troops in Europe and the Pacific during World War II (together with events such as the Fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin by the Japanese) encouraged Australians to think more closely about issues of national security in the post-war world. In order to protect Australia from future attacks, Prime Minister Robert Menzies (who served in office from 1949 to 1966) set out to build stronger relationships with our neighbours in the Asia region and ally Australia more closely with the United States.

Communism in Asia and the domino theory

In 1949, after years of civil war, Mao Zedong became the communist leader of the People's Republic of China. This was the first powerful communist revolution to take place in Asia. Many people in Australia feared that a communist government in China would have an influence on other countries in the region. As a result, Australia's key foreign policy objective was to increase national security and stop the spread of communism in Asia by joining regional treaty organisations. In 1951, a treaty – known as the ANZUS Pact – was signed by Australia, New Zealand and the USA. The pact was a military alliance that committed the three nations to assisting each other in terms of defence. In September 1954, another alliance – known as the South-East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) – was formed between the USA, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines. The members of SEATO were all anti-communist countries. Like ANZUS, SEATO was essentially a Cold War pact designed to limit or stop the spread of communism around the world. At this time, many leaders in the Western world believed that if one country fell to communism, neighbouring countries would follow. This became known as the **domino theory** because if one country was allowed to fall to communism the rest of South-East Asia would quickly follow, just like dominoes falling one after another.

The Australian government's belief in the domino theory encouraged them to support Britain and the USA in a number of conflicts across South-East Asia in the 1950s and 1960s, especially when communist rebels were attempting to seize power. The most significant of these were Australia's involvement in the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

The Korean War

When Japan surrendered at the end of World War II, the area of land it controlled on the Korean peninsula was divided into two halves – North Korea and South Korea. North Korea was occupied by the USSR, and South Korea was occupied by US-led UN forces.

In June 1950, the leader of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, encouraged the leader of North Korea, Kim Il Sung, to invade South Korea. The US president, Harry Truman, immediately called on the United Nations to take action. The UN ordered the North Korean army to retreat, but they refused. In response, the UN sponsored a military intervention that was led by US troops under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies, who was strongly anti-communist, believed that if communism was not stopped in Asia, it would eventually spread to Australia. Thousands of Australians enlisted and volunteered to fight in Korea (see Source 1).

The fighting eventually ended with a negotiated ceasefire on 27 July 1953, which left Korea a divided country, just as it had been before the Korean War broke out. It remains this way today.

The Vietnam War

Since the mid-19th century, a large section of Indochina (including modern-day Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) had been part of the French Empire. During World War II, Japanese forces invaded this region and occupied it. A communist group, known as the Viet Minh, formed under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh to fight the Japanese.

After Japan's surrender in 1945, the Viet Minh formed a government and declared Vietnam's



Source 1 Australian troops fighting in the Korean War c. 1951

independence. However, the French wanted to take Vietnam back as one of their colonies. By December 1946, the French and the Viet Minh were involved in a war that would last for nine years.

By 1952, Vietnam had become divided. The Viet Minh had control of the north, and the French had set up a rival government in the south under the Vietnamese Emperor Bao Dai. The Soviet Union and China offered support and recognition to the Viet Minh in the north, while the USA and Britain did the same for Bao Dai in the south. Bao Dai was ousted from power in the south by Ngo Dinh Diem, a corrupt landowner who had little support from within Vietnam. However, because he was anti-communist, he had the support of the USA. Diem's police tortured and killed peasants suspected of supporting the Viet Minh.

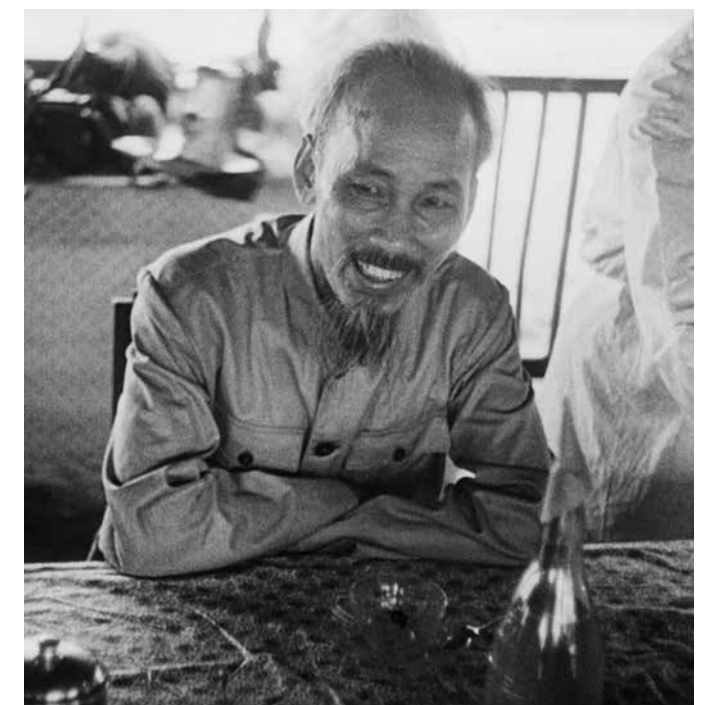
In 1957, the Viet Minh in North Vietnam began a guerrilla war (a war fought by small, independent groups of fighters) against South Vietnam in order to reunify their country. The United States, under President Kennedy, started sending American advisers to support the anti-communist government of South Vietnam.

In December 1960, the National Liberation Front for South Vietnam was formed in opposition to Diem's government in South Vietnam. It allied with North Vietnam and became known as the Viet Cong. North Vietnam dramatically increased its military assistance to the Viet Cong, which then began attacking South Vietnamese military units. The Viet Cong continued to use guerrilla warfare against the government of South Vietnam and the United States through the war.

US military involvement in the Vietnam War increased from 300 military advisers in 1955 to over 500 000 US troops by 1968. To justify this level of intervention, US President Eisenhower, and presidents following him, all declared their belief in the domino theory.

Australia's involvement in Vietnam

Australia's prime minister at the start of the Vietnam conflict was Robert Menzies. Menzies fully supported the United States' anti-communist policy, and was a committed ally throughout the war. Menzies was also a strong believer in the domino theory. In 1962, the Australian government committed its first military advisers to South Vietnam. The initial commitment of 30 men would grow to 60 000 over the next decade and would lead to the introduction of **conscription** in Australia for overseas military service. Public opinion polls at this time indicated that most Australians supported the government's decision. This would change



Source 2 The Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh fought for Vietnamese independence.



Source 3 Images of the Vietnam War such as this one of children fleeing a village bombed with napalm (a flammable sticky jelly used in bombs and flame-throwers) caused many Australians to turn against the war.

dramatically in the coming years (see Source 3). By 1970, there were mass demonstrations held in the major capitals of Australia to demand a suspension of the war to allow peace talks.

When the USA began withdrawing troops from Vietnam, Australia followed suit. Between 1970 and 1972, all Australian combat troops were withdrawn. On 27 December 1972, the newly elected Labor government ended all Australian military aid to South Vietnam.

Five hundred Australians died during the Vietnam War, including 185 National Servicemen who had been conscripted to fight. Until the deployment of Australian soldiers to Afghanistan in 2001, Vietnam had been Australia's longest war.

Australian involvement in the UN

Australia was a founding member of the UN and played an active role in the drafting of the Charter of the United Nations at the San Francisco Conference of 1945. The Australian delegation, led by Dr Herbert Evatt, actively promoted the rights of smaller nations. Since then, Australia has served five terms on the Security Council: 1946–1947, 1956–1957, 1973–1974, 1985–1986 and 2013–2015. During 1946, Labour politician Norman Makin served as the first Australian to act as President of the Security Council. Dr Evatt was also elected President of the General Assembly in 1948.

Australia has played an active role in the UN Commission on Human Rights and has been a strong supporter of the work of the expert UN bodies dealing with the implementation of international human rights conventions. Australia also has a long history of contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. Australia currently has peacekeeping forces in many places around the world, including the Persian Gulf and East Timor (see Source 4).

Enduring allies

Despite the best efforts of the UN Security Council, the world remains an unpredictable and uncertain place. Since the end of the

Cold War, the United States has served as the last superpower of the 20th century. On 11 September 2001, the world looked on as a series of deadly coordinated attacks on key targets in the United States took place, including the deliberate crashing of two passenger jets into the World Trade Center towers in New York and another into the Pentagon in the state of Virginia. The events of 11 September marked the beginning of a new era in global conflict that became known as the 'War on Terror'. Military action since 2001 has centred on wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Throughout the War on Terror, Australia has continued to be a strong ally of the USA. Australian troops have served both in Iraq and Afghanistan and specialist military advisors and strategists have worked closely with US command. Australian troops were withdrawn from Iraq in 2008 but continued fighting in Afghanistan until 2013. During the 12 years of fighting there, 40 members of the Australian Defence Force were killed and 261 were seriously wounded.



Source 4 An Australian peacekeeping soldier patrols a street in East Timor.

Source 5 Australia's peacekeeping missions, 1947–2011

Australia's involvement in peacekeeping missions, 1947–2011, including military and policing operations	
Indonesia	1947–1951
Kashmir	1950–1985
Middle East (Israel and surrounding areas)	1956–present day
Cyprus	1964–present day
Zimbabwe	1979–1980
Iran	1988–1990
Namibia	1989–1990
Pakistan–Afghanistan	1989–1993
Persian Gulf	1990–present day
Iraq	1991–1999
Western Sahara	1991–1994
Cambodia	1991–1998
Somalia	1993–1995
Rwanda	1994–1995
Bougainville (Papua New Guinea)	1994, 1998–2003
East Timor	1999–present day

Check your learning 12.3

Remember and understand

- 1 What were the key motivators behind Australia's involvement in overseas conflicts during the Cold War period?
- 2 Why do you think the Soviet Union and China supported the Viet Minh during the Vietnam War?
- 3 Why did the USA support Ngo Dinh Diem during the Vietnam War?
- 4 Explain what is meant by the domino theory.

Apply and analyse

- 5 Describe the two treaties that Australia signed to help combat the spread of communism.

6 Examine Source 3.

- a What type of source is this?
- b Why do you think this source (and others like it) caused many Australians to reconsider their views on the war?

Evaluate and create

- 7 Do you think the Australian government made the correct decision to become involved in the Vietnam War? Conduct research and locate at least two reliable sources to support your view.
- 8 Design and create an anti-communism poster encouraging the Australian public to support the commitment of Australian troops to the conflict in Vietnam during the Menzies era.