



# **The Protest Years: The Official History of ASIO, 1963-1975**

*John Blaxland*

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In 1963, Robert Menzies had been in office for 13 years, Australians had entered the war against communism in Vietnam, and change was in the air. With its focus on exposing Soviet spies and communist collaborators, ASIO struggled to adjust to a society no longer willing to unquestioningly accept authority. This was the period of protests against the Vietnam War, and the rise of the women's liberation movement, Aboriginal land rights, and student activism. ASIO was concerned that the new freedoms being so stridently demanded would open the floodgates to revolution, and was slow to recognize the decline of the Communist Party of Australia and the rise of the more radical New Left. With unrestricted access to ASIO's internal files, and extensive interviews with former government officials, *The Protest Years* tells the inside story of Australia's domestic intelligence organization during the turbulent period from the end of the Menzies era to the end of the Whitlam government. For the first time, the truth about ASIO and CIA involvement in the demise of the Whitlam government is revealed, also the impact of the raid on ASIO headquarters in Melbourne by Attorney-General Lionel Murphy, and Australia's intelligence activities in Papua New Guinea. *The Protest Years* is the second of three volumes of The Official History of ASIO.

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