



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

20 NOVEMBER 1984

The Prime Minister today totally rejected a claim by the National Secretary of the RSL, Mr Ian Gollings, that the Department of Veterans' Affairs was to be cut back. It would continue to have full and unchanged responsibility for the care of the ex-service community.

He said Mr Golling's comments were utterly wrong, with no foundation whatsoever.

"I find it extremely disappointing considering that Mr Gollings knows how closely this Government has worked and consulted with ex-service organisations, in particular the Returned Services League, and its President, Sir William Keys. It is a relationship that I look forward to continuing in a constructive fashion after the election."

"I draw Veterans' attention to the fact that only last week I promised to continue the upgrading of repatriation hospitals. I can also reiterate this Government's commitment to full consultation with the ex-service community and the promise that a draft of the new Veterans' Entitlements legislation will be provided to the ex-Service community for comment and discussion as soon as it is finalised."