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THE VIET NAM MEDAL

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt

Her Majesty The Queen has signified her approval to the award of a special medal for service in Viet Nam, and to the design of a ribbon for the medal.

The approval follows a joint approach by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Rt. Hon. Keith Holyoake, and myself to Her Majesty for a medal which would recognise service by Australian and New Zealand servicemen in Viet Nam.

In consultation with New Zealand, the ribbon has been designed to incorporate the colours traditionally symbolic of the three Services and also red and yellow, which are the national colours of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam. Supplies of the ribbon are on their way to Viet Nam and will be issued to our men shortly. The award will represent a recognition of the excellent service our Forces have given in the cause of freedom and the resistance of Communist aggression in South Viet Nam. Australian servicemen have over the years been found serving the cause of freedom in many parts of the world, and we are proud on this occasion that the medal is being made available in the ANZAC tradition.

To qualify for the medal, it will be necessary for a serviceman to have been attached to a unit posted to South Viet Nam for at least one day or, in the case of aircrew, to have flown one sortie over Viet Nam. The medal will be available to members of the armed forces and also to accredited members of philanthropic organisations who wear the prescribed uniform. In all cases, the relevant service must be on or after 29th May, 1964.

The Government of New Zealand is being consulted on a design for the medal for submission to Her Majesty for approval. As with all medals awarded by The Queen, the obverse will bear an effigy of Her Majesty. The reverse will carry a suitable theme to mark the nature of the award. Themes for the reverse are now being considered, and the Minister for Defence will be making a further announcement on this subject when approval for the theme has been received.

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CANBERRA,  
19th May, 1966