



FOR PRESS:

P.M. No. 45/1966

DEATH OF PRIVATE NOACK

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt

We have learned today with sadness that another young Australian has lost his life in the military service of his country. I offer my personal sympathy, and that of my colleagues in the Government, to the parents and relatives of Private Noack. He was a National Serviceman, the first to be killed in action.

Private Noack was in South Viet Nam serving in a Regular Army unit as a consequence of decisions taken by the Government of this country. In deciding to send a task force containing National Servicemen to South Viet Nam, the Government acted on its considered judgment that Australia's highest national interests were involved. These reach ultimately to the welfare and defence of Australia itself. The task force is the best organised, equipped and trained military force ever to leave Australia.

Australia has, in its short history, paid a heavy price in human life in the cause of liberty and national survival. No-one can foretell what the price will be in South-East Asia. This much we do believe, most earnestly, that the loss of Australian life, regrettable though that will always be, will be far less under the strategic concepts and military system we now have in operation than under any other policies or arrangements so far advanced.

CANBERRA,
25th May, 1966