



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

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RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr Peacock has today resigned from the Ministry, and I have accepted his resignation. I regret both his departure and the manner of his departure.

Mr Peacock won wide regard as Minister for Foreign Affairs and keenly approached his job as Minister for Industrial Relations.

The charges which Mr Peacock has made about me are totally false. There is no substance in Mr Peacock's allegation that I have allowed false and damaging reports to be published about him.

I reject utterly the charge that I have sought to undermine Mr Peacock's authority while he was a Minister. I have engaged in no acts of disloyalty to Mr Peacock or to his Office. I reject also the attempt through choice of words to draw a parallel with an earlier situation.

The allegation of reluctance to consult Cabinet is completely false. The policies of my Government are established in Cabinet discussion. These policies are binding on all Ministers, and Cabinet discussion and consultation has been a central feature of my Government throughout its entire office. The practices of Cabinet consultation and discussion have been consistently maintained throughout the period of my Government office.

I am aware that the responsibilities of office can impose a heavy burden on Ministers and I have always sought as part of my responsibilities as head of Government to assist Ministers through difficult periods.

I have done so with Mr Peacock in the past.

This time Mr Peacock's feelings and his frustration in his Ministry have obviously become too strong. Those feelings received expression in the statement which he issued today when he announced his resignation.

I wish to make it clear that it was never my intention to contribute to the strain which Mr Peacock so clearly felt.

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