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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

8 FEBRUARY 1988

The Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, Mick Young, has informed me of his decision to resign from political life as from today.

It is a decision which I deeply regret and one which I urged him to reconsider, but Mick feels that such have been the events of the last week he no longer has the desire to continue in political life. I would emphasise that there are absolutely no circumstances other than those he mentions in his press release that have pressured him to resign.

One of the tragedies of public life is that exonerations never receive the headlines of allegations.

Mick Young has been an inestimable asset to the Labor Party both prior to his election to the House of Representatives in 1974, and in holding Parliamentary and Party positions in Opposition and in my Government. In Opposition, he was instrumental in devising many of the policies on which we were voted into office in 1983.

Mick Young has been a greatly respected and liked Minister - as Special Minister of State, and since the last election, as the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. He also held the Office of Vice-President of the Executive Council. He has been an outstanding Leader of the House whose wit and quick mind have earned him the admiration of all its Members. His voice has been one of great common sense and wisdom in the councils of both Cabinet and Caucus.

The loss of Mick Young's unique talents and experience to my Government and to the Parliament is immeasurable. Today is a day of great personal and professional regret to me. We lose an outstanding Minister, an energetic representative and a convivial colleague.

Margaret Reynolds will undertake the duties of Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs until my further announcement.

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