



PRIME MINISTER

17/92

**STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON. P.J. KEATING, MP
MR HAWKE'S RETIREMENT FROM PARLIAMENT**

Mr Hawke's retirement from Federal Parliament today marks the end of an unparalleled period of success and achievement for an Australian labour leader.

Moreover, it marks the end of a political career devoted to uniting Australians for the common good.

Only Sir Robert Menzies served longer as Prime Minister, yet history will judge the Hawke era as contributing much more to Australia.

Bob Hawke led this country during a period of historic change, a period of awakening in which Australians chose to join the world as a modern, diversified economy.

This change was profound and difficult but the price of not making it would have been to deny Australia a future.

Bob Hawke and I served as a team for eight years. It was a privilege to serve with him. We shared beliefs and goals and worked together to achieve to them.

It is clear that the past year has been a difficult one for both of us but that does not diminish the camaraderie we shared nor the pride in our achievements together.

I wish Bob and Hazel well. All of us in the Labor Party, and all Australians, owe them a debt of gratitude.

**CANBERRA
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