

5.



## **PRIME MINISTER**

96/92

### **STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J. KEATING, MP COALITION PARTNER DOWNGRADES WOMEN**

The decision of the Queensland National Party to abolish the concept of equal pay for equal work is a disgraceful example of overt discrimination.

By proposing a lower minimum wage for women than for men in their industrial relations policy, the National Party has proclaimed that it considers women to be second-class Australians.

Whether a woman is part of the labour force or works in the family home, she is an Australian as worthy as any other. For equal work, or work of equal value, she should receive equal pay.

The National Party's attitude belongs back in history with the caveman.

It is a further example of the determination of the conservative parties in Australia to wind back the clock in terms of social change and equality of opportunity.

It accords with comments by the Federal Leader of the coalition, who has denigrated nurses, teachers, people who rent their homes and, indeed, all Australians, whom he has branded as "lazy" in recent days.

It seems that many Australians would have to accept second-class treatment under the coalition.

But this appalling, prejudiced policy promoted by the Queensland Nationals is the most shameful example.

It shows a disregard for the status of Australian women, and is discrimination based solely on their gender, not on merit, ability or capacity.

It is a disgrace, and Dr Hewson should be asked at the first opportunity whether he supports his coalition partner.

**SYDNEY**

**4 September 1992**