

Concession Speech: Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister (LP)

Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne, 1 am, March 6 1983

“Ladies and gentlemen, I have a short statement that I would like to make. Firstly, I would like to congratulate Mr Hawke and the Australian Labor Party for winning this election. I hope they can achieve what they intend for the people of Australia. They have set a high ambition and I hope they can achieve it because if they can it will advantage this country.

I want to say that from this moment I resign the leadership of the Liberal Party. I will not contest the leadership of the Liberal Party.

I would also like to say that I think Australia is handed over to Mr Hawke and the Labor Party in as good a condition or better condition than any other Western country in the world.

I want to make it plain that I take full responsibility for the timing of the federal election. I take total responsibility for the conduct of that election. I therefore take total responsibility for the defeat of the Liberal Party.

I would like to thank all my colleagues and the Liberal Party right around Australia for the support they have given me, not just over recent week, but for the past seven years. There really has been magnificent support in very difficult times. There are many wonderful people who believed in what the government was doing and I thank them for that.”

Source: Transcribed from Australian Politics Online, The Age and The Canberra Times