

Post-election speech (results not known): Andrew Fisher, Opposition Leader (ALP)

Bundaberg: September 6, 1914

“There are indications, from the figures available, that the present Government has not the confidence of the electors of Australia.

Should these indications be confirmed by fuller returns, the responsibility of carrying on the government of the country will fall on the Labour party.

In that case we shall faithfully carry out the policy we have submitted to the country.

I am still of the opinion that a great wrong was done to the whole of the people of Australia by Mr Cook offering advice to the Governor-General, asking him to refuse to accede to the Senate’s action to put the referendum questions before the electors in the elections just held.

[Word unclear] such advice the Cook Government has [word unclear] a valuable opportunity, and has used a large expenditure in the immediate [word unclear]to enable the people to give Parliament powers to protect the citizens of the community from the effects of injurious trusts, combines, and monopolies.

If our party is returned to power, it will proceed to practical public works within its financial circumstances, with a view to relief being afforded to the unemployed of the Commonwealth.”

Source: Compiled from The Sydney Morning Herald, June 7th 1914, page 5 and original documents.

Victory speech: Andrew Fisher, Opposition Leader (ALP)

Melbourne: September 11, 1914

“I should be wanting in appreciation of all whom you represent if I did not pause to thank you for the very hearty welcome you have given to me on my return to Melbourne after our great victory.

No personal influence of mine can have caused such enthusiasm.

It is because the Labour movement throughout the world is progressing, and I must regard this welcome as an expression of approval for the ideals and aspirations of the party for which I stand.

The result of the elections means that Australia has taken a step forward again.

Our primary business is to protect the toiling masses, and to protect the liberties of this and of the mother country to the end.

It will be our aim to develop this great democratic country to the best interests of the people as a whole.

We shall be faithful to the promise we have made, and shall put the necessary measures before Parliament to give effect to them at the earliest possible moment.

The integrity of the mother country and of the Dominions will be our first consideration.

We will deal with the financial industry and social position as soon as possible.

The position is less critical today and let us hope that everything will soon come to a satisfactory end.

We have hopes of a better and brighter future for Australia when this trouble is over, and we will co-operate with the other parties for the Commonwealth's general interests until the war is over.

I bring from other States to you their congratulations and good wishes for the magnificent vote the people of Victoria gave for our candidates and policy on September 5.”

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 12/9/1914, page 12.