

Victory speech: Bob Hawke, Opposition Leader (ALP)

National Tally Room, Canberra: March 5, 1983

“I want to say first of all to the people of Australia, thank you for the confidence which they have entrusted in me and my colleagues in forming the next Government of Australia.

I thank my parliamentary colleagues for the work they've done in this campaign in supporting me. Particularly I want to thank those who've been close to me in this campaign. I don't name them on this program now but everyone knows to whom I refer.

I and the party are deeply indebted to the work that they have done in assisting us in what I believe has been a positive and now clearly a successful campaign.

In saying that I thank the people of Australia who have put this trust in me and my colleagues.

I want also particularly to say to those who have voted another way that this is going to be a Government for all Australians, irrespective of how they cast their vote.

And may I say particularly to the people of Tasmania: You have cast your vote somewhat out of kilter with the rest of Australia and I know that there have been particular issues there that have been of concern to you.

I want to give you, the people of Tasmania, right from this moment, my assurance that my Government will be particularly concerned with the problems that have been close to your minds as you've cast your vote. My Government will honour the promises that we have made in respect to Tasmania.

The dam will not go ahead but, that said, you are concerned legitimately with issues of adequacy of power supplies and of employment. I have made it clear, on behalf of this incoming Government, that we will meet your concerns in that way.

So I say that from this moment I commit myself, I commit our Government, to undertaking from this moment the task of national reconciliation.

And as I say to all Australians, however they voted, that we will be governing for them all. I ask you all now to give us your trust, your confidence and your co-operation. We have a magnificent country. If we all work together we can see, I believe, no bounds to what we can do.

So once again, I thank you all deeply.”

Source: The Canberra Times, 6/5/1983, page 10.