

Post-election speech: Bob Hawke, Prime Minister (ALP)

March 25, 1990

“When the count is finalised I will on behalf of the Australian Labor Party again be in a position to form a Government, the fourth Hawke Labor Government.

Obviously I can't finalise that position.

It would be improper in the circumstances to make a final claim because there is still counting that has to be done.

As far as I can see and on the best advice available to me the worst case scenario facing the Labor Party is one in which we would hold 73 seats, the coalition hold 73, there could be two independent, but I point to that as being the absolute worst scenario.

It involves making no claim in regard to Kennedy in Queensland, Page in NSW, assumes the loss of Hawker in South Australia and Cowan and Stirling in Western Australia, and we are quite confident that we will pick up at least one of those seats.

Obviously in these circumstances it is appropriate I should continue in a caretaker capacity until such time as these results are finalised.

But I repeat in all the circumstances I believe that I will be in a position to be called upon to form a fourth Hawke Labor Government.

Obviously while the claim has to be finalised, it is appropriate that I say some thank-you's.

The first thank-you is to my wife, Hazel. She has been a magnificent campaigner and companion and friend through it all and now I thank her for that.

I thank all my colleagues in my parliamentary team. I say particularly to those who have lost their seats how said I am that that has happened, particularly here in the state of Victoria. I thank them for the service they have given and their time will come again.

But to everyone within the party I say thank you. Because there are so many I can't hope to name them all and therefore I seek not to, but I do say a particular thank-you to my own staff, those around me, my family in addition to Hazel who have been a constant source of comfort and inspiration and loyalty to me.

I thank all of those and I thank if I may the media. I hope in saying that we don't get accusations of media bias. I have enjoyed the coverage that has been given. It's been tough but fair.

But having said all that, finally, there is of course my thanks to the people of Australia.

I know that in the last three years there have been tough times, things have had to be done that have given me no pleasure at all, but I thank the Australian people for having, be it by a somewhat slender majority, having expressed their understanding that we have had their best interests at heart and I simply make this commitment: my Australians, that when, as I believe I will be, I'll be commissioned to form the fourth Hawke Labor Government, that I will with my colleagues do everything that we can to give effect to those promises and commitments we made through this campaign to create an Australia which will be economically strong and competitive and socially just.

Thank you very much.”

Source: Compiled from The Sunday Age, March 25th 1990, page 12 and original documents.