



1900

(McLintock, A. H.,
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PRIME MINISTERS OF NEW ZEALAND

The Title "Premier"

In the constitutional debates of 1854 during the first session of the New Zealand Parliament, the term "Prime Minister" was frequently used in a somewhat casual fashion. This explains in part why it was some years before the term "Premier" came into general usage. William Fox, who took office in July 1861, was described in the *Gazette* as Attorney-General "with first seat in the Ministry". In November 1864 Weld was gazetted as holding "a seat in the Executive Council and the office of Premier". Stafford, his successor, in October 1865 was termed "First Minister". In June 1869, when Fox again headed a Ministry, he was described officially as "Premier and member of the Executive Council." Thereafter the term "Premier" was regularly used. Nevertheless, in the Schedule of the Civil List Act of 1873, provision was made for the salary of the Leader of the Government "being the Prime Minister". The first Premier to use the title "Prime Minister" officially was Richard John Seddon. It was used in the *New Zealand Year Book* of 1900 and the Imperial Conference of 1903 confirmed the practice. A.H.MCL.

MINISTRIES 1856–1962

Leader of Ministry	From	To
1. Sewell	7 May 1856	20 May 1856
2. Fox I	20 May 1856	2 Jun 1856
3. Stafford I	2 Jun 1856	12 Jul 1861
Fox II	12 Jul 1861	6 Aug 1862
4. Domett	6 Aug 1862	30 Oct 1863 ⁽¹⁾
5. Whitaker I	30 Oct 1863	24 Nov 1864
6. Weld	24 Nov 1864	16 Oct 1865
Stafford II	16 Oct 1865	28 Jun 1869
Fox III	28 Jun 1869	10 Sep 1872
Stafford III	10 Sep 1872	11 Oct 1872
7. Waterhouse	11 Oct 1872	3 Mar 1873 ⁽²⁾
Fox IV	3 Mar 1873	8 Apr 1873 ⁽³⁾
8. Vogel I	8 Apr 1873	6 Jul 1875
9. Pollen	6 Jul 1875	15 Feb 1876
Vogel II	15 Feb 1876	1 Sep 1876
10. Atkinson I	1 Sep 1876	13 Sep 1876 ⁽⁴⁾
Atkinson II	13 Sep 1876	13 Oct 1877
Grey	13 Oct 1877	8 Oct 1879
Ill	8 Oct 1879	21 Apr 1882
ker II	21 Apr 1882	25 Sep 1883

3rd

Atkinson III	25 Sep 1883 16 Aug 1884
13. Stout I	16 Aug 1884 28 Aug 1884
Atkinson IV	28 Aug 1884 3 Sep 1884
Stout II	3 Sep 1884 8 Oct 1887
Atkinson V	8 Oct 1887 24 Jan 1891
14. Ballance	24 Jan 1891 27 Apr 1893 ⁽⁵⁾
Interregnum	27 Apr 1893 1 May 1893 ⁽⁶⁾
15. Seddon	1 May 1893 10 Jun 1906
Interregnum	10 Jun 1906 21 Jun 1906 ⁽⁶⁾
16. Hall-Jones	21 Jun 1906 6 Aug 1906 ⁽³⁾
17. Ward I	6 Aug 1906 28 Mar 1912
18. Mackenzie	28 Mar 1912 10 Jul 1912
19. Massey I	10 Jul 1912 12 Aug 1915
Massey II (National)	12 Aug 1915 25 Aug 1919 ⁽⁷⁾
Massey III	25 Aug 1919 10 May 1925
Interregnum	10 May 1925 14 May 1925 ⁽⁶⁾
20. Bell	14 May 1925 30 May 1925 ⁽⁸⁾
21. Coates	30 May 1925 10 Dec 1928
Ward II	10 Dec 1928 28 May 1930
22. Forbes I	28 May 1930 22 Sep 1931
Forbes II (Coalition)	22 Sep 1931 6 Dec 1935 ⁽⁹⁾
23. Savage	6 Dec 1935 27 Mar 1940
Interregnum	27 Mar 1940 1 Apr 1940 ⁽⁶⁾
24. Fraser I	1 Apr 1940 30 Apr 1940 ⁽¹⁰⁾
Fraser II	30 Apr 1940 13 Dec 1949
War Cabinet	16 Jul 1940 21 Aug 1945 ⁽¹¹⁾
War Administration	30 Jun 1942 2 Oct 1942 ⁽¹²⁾
25. Holland I	13 Dec 1949 26 Nov 1954 ⁽¹³⁾
Holland II (reconstructed)	26 Nov 1954 20 Sep 1957
26. Holyoake I	20 Sep 1957 12 Dec 1957
27. Nash	12 Dec 1957 12 Dec 1960
Holyoake II	12 Dec 1960

Notes to Table of Ministries

(1) Domett was the only Prime Minister to resign mainly because of the adverse action of the Legislative Council.

(2) Prime Minister tendered his resignation after difference with his colleague (Vogel) whom he recommended should succeed him.

(3) As Vogel was in Australia at the time and could not be sworn in, the Governor used his discretionary power to summon a new Premier. He chose Fox, who had been the last Premier of the same party as Waterhouse. He held office until Vogel returned to New Zealand. A similar situation arose in 1906. Ward, Seddon's obvious successor, was overseas; the Governor therefore sent for Hall-Jones, who held office pending Ward's return.

(4) This Ministry contravened the Disqualification Act 1870, and probably had no legal existence. Atkinson therefore resigned and reformed his Ministry.

(5) All Prime Ministers since Ballance have either been elected, or have been confirmed in office, by the party caucus in the House of Representatives. Fox was the first Prime Minister to be elected by caucus.

(6) The interregnum arises because, when the Prime Minister dies, his Ministry ceases to exist; in such cases, however, his successor is appointed on the day of the funeral. In effect, during the interregnum there is a ministry but no Prime Minister.

(7) New Zealand's first real Coalition Ministry, formed of elements of the Reform and Liberal Parties.

(8) Bell was summoned at the end of the interregnum following Massey's death. The Reform caucus asked him to continue in office, but Bell refused on the grounds that he was too old. Caucus thereupon elected Coates to succeed him. Bell's refusal to remain in office had no connection with his membership of the Legislative Council.

(9) Coalition between Forbes's United Party and Coates's Reform Party.

(10) Fraser accepted office following the interregnum, on condition that the Labour caucus approved. When the caucus ratified the Ministry, Fraser resigned formally and was reappointed. Since this caucus the Labour Party has elected its ministers.

(11) Fraser invited two Opposition members to join a War Cabinet. These had no official portfolios, but did have administrative duties. The War Cabinet coordinated New Zealand's war effort while the ordinary Cabinet continued to administer purely domestic affairs.

(12) The War Administration was an expansion of the War Cabinet. More Opposition members were added and were given portfolios connected with the war effort. The Domestic Cabinet continued, and when this arrangement ended the War Cabinet was reconvened.

(13) Following the 1954 election, Holland reconstructed his Ministry. The Prime Minister himself did not resign and thus the change scarcely constitutes a change of ministry; however, the scope of the reconstruction was such that it can be best shown in this manner.

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