

The position of Prime Minister, the keystone of the Cabinet, is one of exceptional authority. He alone makes recommendations on the dissolution and convocation of Parliament, appointment of Privy Councillors, Cabinet Ministers, Lieutenant-Governors, Chief Justices, Senators, Speakers of the Senate and House of Commons, and Deputy Heads of departments. The Cabinet, under his leadership, directs the business of the Commons, initiates nearly all public Bills placed before Parliament, and has complete responsibility for the initiation of taxes and the recommendation of expenditures. Following established precedent or convention, it is always responsible to the Commons. When the Cabinet (the Government) suffers defeat on a Government Bill or a vote of censure or on a motion of want of confidence in the Commons, the existing Government or Cabinet must either resign or request a dissolution from the Governor General. If it resigns, the Governor General may call on the Leader of the Opposition in the Commons to form a new Government. Alternatively, if a Government that has been defeated in the House is granted a dissolution and is defeated in the ensuing general election, then, should no clear majority be indicated, the Government may decide (1) to remain in office and seek a vote of confidence in the House when it meets or (2) to resign immediately with the consequent result that the Governor General will ask the leader of the party with the highest number of members returned to form a new Government. These alternatives may also eventuate as a result of a general election subsequent to the normal dissolution of Parliament at or near the close of its statutory life.

The primary responsibility of the Governor General in either of the above circumstances is to provide the nation with a Cabinet or Ministry capable of conducting Her Majesty's Government with the support of the House of Commons.

The Prime Ministers since Confederation are listed in Table 3 and the members of the Ministry as at Apr. 30, 1963 in Table 4. Sessional and other allowances received by Cabinet Ministers are given at pp. 76-77.

3.—Prime Ministers since Confederation, 1867

Ministry	Prime Minister	Length of Administration
1	Rt. Hon. Sir JOHN ALEXANDER MACDONALD.....	July 1, 1867 — Nov. 5, 1873
2	Hon. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.....	Nov. 7, 1873 — Oct. 16, 1878
3	Rt. Hon. Sir JOHN ALEXANDER MACDONALD.....	Oct. 17, 1878 — June 6, 1891
4	Hon. Sir JOHN JOSEPH CALDWELL ABBOTT.....	June 16, 1891 — Nov. 24, 1892
5	Rt. Hon. Sir JOHN SPARROW DAVID THOMPSON.....	Dec. 5, 1892 — Dec. 12, 1894
6	Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL.....	Dec. 21, 1894 — Apr. 27, 1896
7	Rt. Hon. Sir CHARLES TUPPER.....	May 1, 1896 — July 8, 1896
8	Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER.....	July 11, 1896 — Oct. 6, 1911
9	Rt. Hon. Sir ROBERT LAIRD BORDEN.....	Oct. 10, 1911 — Oct. 12, 1917 (Conservative Administration)
10	Rt. Hon. Sir ROBERT LAIRD BORDEN.....	Oct. 12, 1917 — July 10, 1920 (Unionist Administration)
11	Rt. Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN.....	July 10, 1920 — Dec. 29, 1921 (Unionist—"National Liberal and Conservative Party")
12	Rt. Hon. WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING.....	Dec. 29, 1921 — June 28, 1926
13	Rt. Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN.....	June 29, 1926 — Sept. 25, 1926
14	Rt. Hon. WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING.....	Sept. 25, 1926 — Aug. 6, 1930
15	Rt. Hon. RICHARD BEDFORD BENNETT.....	Aug. 7, 1930 — Oct. 23, 1935
16	Rt. Hon. WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING.....	Oct. 23, 1935 — Nov. 15, 1948
17	Rt. Hon. LOUIS STEPHEN ST. LAURENT.....	Nov. 15, 1948 — June 21, 1957
18	Rt. Hon. JOHN GEORGE DIEFENBAKER.....	June 21, 1957 — Apr. 22, 1963
19	Rt. Hon. LESTER BOWLES PEARSON.....	Apr. 22, 1963 — ...