

Speakers of the Senate, Chief Justices of all courts, Senators and certain senior executives of the public service. The Prime Minister also recommends the appointment of a new Governor General to the Sovereign, although this normally follows consultation with his Cabinet.

Following are the Prime Ministers since Confederation, with dates of administrations:

Rt. Hon. Sir John Alexander Macdonald, July 1, 1867 — November 5, 1873
 Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, November 7, 1873 — October 16, 1878
 Rt. Hon. Sir John Alexander Macdonald, October 17, 1878 — June 6, 1891
 Hon. Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbott, June 16, 1891 — November 24, 1892
 Rt. Hon. Sir John Sparrow David Thompson, December 5, 1892 — December 12, 1894
 Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell, December 21, 1894 — April 27, 1896
 Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, May 1, 1896 — July 8, 1896
 Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, July 11, 1896 — October 6, 1911
 Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Laird Borden, October 10, 1911 — October 12, 1917 (Conservative Administration)
 Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Laird Borden, October 12, 1917 — July 10, 1920 (Unionist Administration)
 Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, July 10, 1920 — December 29, 1921 (Unionist — National Liberal and Conservative Party)
 Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King, December 29, 1921 — June 28, 1926
 Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, June 29, 1926 — September 25, 1926
 Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King, September 25, 1926 — August 6, 1930
 Rt. Hon. Richard Bedford Bennett, August 7, 1930 — October 23, 1935
 Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King, October 23, 1935 — November 15, 1948
 Rt. Hon. Louis Stephen St-Laurent, November 15, 1948 — June 21, 1957
 Rt. Hon. John George Diefenbaker, June 21, 1957 — April 22, 1963
 Rt. Hon. Lester Bowles Pearson, April 22, 1963 — April 20, 1968
 Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, April 20, 1968 —

The Cabinet. The Cabinet's primary responsibility in the Canadian political system is to determine priorities among the demands expressed by the people and to define policies to meet those demands. The Cabinet is a committee of ministers chosen by the Prime Minister, generally from among members of the House of Commons, although one or two Cabinet Ministers are usually chosen from the Senate including the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It is unusual for a senator to head a department of government because the constitution provides that measures for appropriating public funds or imposing taxes must originate in the House of Commons. If a senator headed a department, another minister in the House of Commons would have to speak on his behalf in respect of its affairs.

In January 1977, the following were members of the 20th Ministry according to precedence:

Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau
 President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Hon. Allan Joseph MacEachen
 Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Hon. Jean Chrétien
 Minister of Finance, Hon. Donald Stovel Macdonald
 Minister of Labour, Hon. John Carr Munro
 Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Hon. Stanley Ronald Basford
 Secretary of State for External Affairs, Hon. Donald Campbell Jamieson
 President of the Treasury Board, Hon. Robert Knight Andras
 Minister of Transport, Hon. Otto Emil Lang
 Minister of Supply and Services, Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer
 Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Hon. Alastair William Gillespie
 Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Eugene Francis Whelan
 Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Hon. W. Warren Allmand
 Minister of State for Science and Technology, Hon. James Hugh Faulkner
 Minister of State for Urban Affairs, Hon. André Ouellet
 Minister of Veterans Affairs, Hon. Daniel Joseph MacDonald
 Minister of National Health and Welfare, Hon. Marc Lalonde