

New Zealand

Rice

New Zealand is a parliamentary democracy with two major parties: The Labour Party (LAB), and the National Party (NP). The Prime Minister is considered the head of state.

In 1920, the Prime Minister of New Zealand was William Massey of the Reform Party (Ref). Massey had been in office since 1912. In 1925, Massey (who had been ill beginning in 1924) died, and Francis Bell, also of the Reform Party, was named Acting Prime Minister for sixteen days. He declined to take over the role of Prime Minister officially, and was replaced on May 30, 1925 by Joseph Gordon (J.G.) Coates, another member of the Reform Party (no SOLS change). Coates' government remained in power until 1928, when the United Party (Uni) won elections and formed a new government under Joseph Ward (SOLS change). In 1930, due to the Great Depression, a new government led by the United Party (Uni) took power, under Prime Minister George Forbes (no SOLS change). In 1931, Forbes' government entered into a coalition with the Reform Party (minor SOLS change on September 20, 1931) in order to have a more united government to combat the financial crisis, and the coalition won the election (Hawke 1985: 146).

Forbes' government lasted until 1935, when new elections brought a landslide victory for the Labour Party (Lab), under Prime Minister Michael Savage (SOLS change). Savage was in office until his death in 1940. For three days after his death, Peter Fraser, who had served on Savage's Cabinet, was the Acting Prime Minister. On 1 April 1940, Fraser became the new Prime Minister for the Labour Party's government (no SOLS change).

Fraser remained in office until December 1949, when his party lost elections to the conservative NP. The office of Prime Minister then passed to Sidney George Holland (SOLS change). Holland was in office until September 1957, when he resigned due to ill health. He was replaced by his Deputy, Keith Holyoake (no SOLS change). In December of that same year, elections led to the National Party losing the majority, and the Labour Party forming a new government under Walter Nash (SOLS change). Nash was in office until 1960, when elections led to NP forming another government under Holyoake (SOLS change). This Holyoake government remained in power until February 1972, when he resigned, passing leadership of the party (and the office of Prime Minister) to his Deputy, Jack Marshall (no SOLS change).

Marshall and NP then lost the election of December 1972 to the Labour Party, now under the leadership of Norman Kirk (SOLS change). Upon Kirk's sudden death from heart problems in 1974, his deputy, Hugh Watt became Acting Prime Minister (from 1-6 September; not listed in Archigos). The office of Prime Minister was then taken over by the new leader of the Labour Party, William Rowling (no SOLS change). Rowling's government was in power for just over one year. In the elections of 1975, the NP won the majority, and formed a government under Robert Muldoon (SOLS change). Muldoon was in office until July 1984, when he called snap elections and lost them. The Labour Party then formed a government under David Lange (SOLS change).

Lange was in office until 1989, when opposition to the economic policies he had enacted led to his resignation. Leadership passed to his Deputy, Geoffrey Palmer (no SOLS change). In 1990, Palmer was replaced by Michael Moore, due to upcoming elections (no SOLS change). Labour lost the election, and in November 1990 a new NP (National Party) government was formed under James Bolger (SOLS change). Following the 1996 introduction of the MMP electoral system, Bolger headed a government of the National Party that was joined by the UP - a

formation of former Labor and NP MP's (minor SOLS, Feb 28). On 10 December 1996 Bolger's national party entered into coalition with the smaller New Zealand First party (NZF) (Europa World Yearbook 2003 – minor SOLS). This is coded as a minor SOLS change. Bolger was in office until 1997, when he was replaced in a "leadership coup" from within his own party (Vowles 1998, 479).

The new leader of the NP (and the new Prime Minister) was Jennifer Shipley, Bolger's former Minister of Women's Affairs (no SOLS change). In August 1998, the NZF left the coalition, and the NP continued as a minority government (National Party Website). The parting of the NZF was coded as another minor SOLS change. Shipley remained in office until 1999, when elections led to a Labour victory under Helen Clark (SOLS change). Helen Clark constructed a minority government with the Alliance (All.) that was supported by MP's of the Green Party. Following disintegration of the Alliance and increasing policy disagreement with the Greens, Clark called for new elections to be held in 2002. Following the July elections, Clark built a minority government that consisted of the LP and the Progressive Coalition (PC; also progressive Party - PP) with the support of the United Future New Zealand (UF). The Date of the coalition agreement, August 8, was coded as a minor coalition change (New Zealand Herald 2002). In the 2005 election, Clark's Labour Party surpassed the NP with a very narrow margin and built a minority coalition with the Progressive Party on October 17. Her coalition was dependent on support of the UF and NZF, with the UF and NZF even getting ministerial positions outside the cabinet (Bradford 2005, Department of State 2011). Labour's fortunes changed in 2008, however, when Clark lost to John Key of the National Party. The entry of his government on November 19 is coded as a SOLS change (worldstatesmen.org; Barrowclough 2008).

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Pre-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura (Rice) on 06/19/2012

Post-1945 revised by Eelco van der Maat (Vanderbilt) on 10/10/2011

Combined by Matt DiLorenzo (Vanderbilt) on 06/21/2013

Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) on 5/24/2014