

16 December 2025

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister of New Zealand
Freepost Parliament
Private Bag 18 888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Kia ora Prime Minister,

Prime Minister's summer reading list 2025/26

Please find enclosed the McGuinness Institute's 2025/26 Prime Minister's summer reading list, including a copy of each of our recommended books for you to enjoy, and an analysis of each book.

As a think tank focused on Aotearoa New Zealand's long-term future, we challenge ourselves to see what skills and insights may be needed to lead the country for the coming year. Our selection of books aims to reflect our thinking and we hope they help support your work in the year ahead.

Since 2011, as part of our passion for improving long-term thinking in public policy, the Institute has sent each current Prime Minister a package of books to read over the summer break. To reflect our non-partisan approach, we also send the same package to the leaders of other major political parties. This initiative is inspired by the Australian think tank the Grattan Institute, which submits a similar list to the Australian Prime Minister each year.

Each year we select books that fulfil a specific list of criteria, including being recently published and written by a range of international and New Zealand authors. Importantly, the real test is whether the selection provides valuable insights and skills for political leaders. The objective is to present you (and your colleagues) with a selection of books that will help guide you for the challenges and opportunities New Zealand faces in the future.

History teaches us that while we cannot always prevent a crisis, we can prepare for it. The theme of this year's summer reading list for the Prime Minister is survival – not in the abstract, but in the face of real disruption. Two possible disruptions weigh heavily on my mind: the outbreak of a significant war and the shock of a financial crash. The books in this year's summer reading list are intended to help develop critical skills for leaders in 2026 (and beyond).

We hope you have the opportunity to find a sunny spot, sit down in your favourite chair and get absorbed in a good book.

Best wishes,



Wendy McGuinness

Enclosures:

1. *Think Piece 45: Prime Minister's summer reading list 2025/26*
2. Four books and one magazine