

The position, he went on, must be regularized. "I think we should have an understanding with the imperial government that the consuls should have semi-diplomatic recognition amongst us".⁽¹⁾ Looking back at a practice with which he had been familiar, Sir Robert Borden, a few years afterwards, concluded that it had been "both convenient and advantageous", and cited a case during his own period of office: when in 1913, he had negotiated with the Consul-General of Japan over Canada's adherence to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1911.⁽²⁾ Laurier's suggestion that the practice be regularized was never taken up, probably because the War of 1914 brought Canada nearer to participation in the more conventional diplomatic procedure.⁽³⁾

Attention has been given at some length to this position of foreign consuls in Canada because of the clauses in the Acts of 1909 and 1912 transferring "the administration of all matters relating to the foreign consular service in Canada to the Department of External Affairs". This alone would appear to have placed a large burden of business on the Under-Secretary and his senior assistants, with all the informal discussions and formal correspondence which it entailed.

Channel of Communication

One result of the "reform" in the new Act was that the foreign consuls were notified that instead of

(1) Ibid. 1910-11. p. 953.

(2) Sir Robert L. Borden: Canadian Constitutional Studies. p. 128.

(3) G.^{P.} de T. Glazebrook: A History of Canadian External Relations. pp.232-234.