

16. The Washington Project

Sir Joseph Pope apparently did not display the same keen interest as his colleague Loring Christie in the movement commencing in 1919 and 1920 for Canadian diplomatic representation abroad, particularly in the United States. Nevertheless, once the concept had been set in motion by Sir Robert Borden, it was the duty of the Under-Secretary, as well as the Legal Adviser, to support his chief, the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Both Christie and Pope prepared detailed briefs on the subject for Borden and Meighen. Pope based his support on his own experience, over twenty years, of going on ad hoc diplomatic missions to Washington, and on the importance of having greater continuity through a permanent resident representative with greater diplomatic power and status than Mr. Mahoney or the Canadian War Mission. Belonging to the "Old School", however, Pope eschewed the notion of separate diplomatic representation; like Borden and Meighen - and Bennett later - all Conservatives, and even Fielding in 1924, a Liberal, he felt that the imperial diplomatic unity must not be disrupted, and consequently a Canadian diplomatic representative should be attached to, or located within, the British Embassy - the single agency of the Crown. (The deviation from this concept by the Irish Free State, in 1924, had not yet created an alternative precedent, which Mr. King was finally to adopt.)