

A secondary consideration induced Borden to agree to this proposal, ^{which} although not mentioned in the debate, was no doubt the prospect which Borden may have seen, of being able to bring over to his own Office the services and staff of the Department. It was scarcely a year before he was appointing, nominally under the Department of which he had become titular head, a legal adviser (Christie) and two private secretaries (Boyce and Merriam) and some clerical staff, to be attached to

Note: Sir Robert Borden's decision to assume the portfolio of External Affairs was followed by Mr. Meighen, Mr. Bennett and Mr. King (until 1946). Mr. King justified it, as a Second ~~World~~ War necessity, as Borden might have justified it as a First War necessity after 1914. Mr. King told the House of Commons on July 12, 1943:

May I take advantage of this moment to explain why I myself have retained the position of Minister of External Affairs while holding the office of Prime Minister at this time of war.

I can assure hon. members that it has not been through any desire on my part to carry the extra portfolio. I would point out that in time of war nine-tenths of the Prime Minister's work is related to external affairs, and it would be making his task in some ways more difficult were he to try to assume the responsibility of the office of Prime Minister without being responsible as well for external affairs, when practically every decision of vital importance at this time, which has to be made by the Prime Minister, is one that is related to external affairs and would have to come as a recommendation from a Minister of External Affairs. I am perhaps stating this in an exaggerated way, but it is impossible to separate the two at this time. (1)

(1) House of Commons Debates, July 12, 1943, p.4670