

to urge the new Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, to assume the personal direction of the External Affairs Department. (1)

Pope's Review

In a memorandum dated January 10, 1912, and given to the Hon. R.L. Borden, Pope said:

The series of Confidential Prints initiated by the Department of External Affairs enable one to form an idea of the present position of any international question in a few minutes. The back numbers of this collection have been compiled from the files of the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, the Governor General's Office, and in some instances from the departments generally. I very much doubt whether apart from the labour involved, it would have been possible to have constructed these prints without having recourse to the authority of the Prime Minister, who most kindly authorized me to use his name, and encouraged the work in every possible way. This system is yet in its infancy. I hope that ultimately we shall possess records of past negotiations that will compare favourably with those of the Foreign Office. To ensure success however in this and other directions, it is essential that the Department be placed under the Prime Minister. (2)

In this brief review of the system of Prints introduced by Joseph Pope, his own later summary, set forth in a memorandum dated May 10, 1920, for the President of the Privy Council, may be quoted in part:

When Sir Wilfrid Laurier, appreciating the manifold inconveniences of the old system, established the Department of External Affairs, these despatches no longer came direct to Council, but to the External Affairs Department, which distributed them to the various Ministers and Departments in the manner in vogue at the present time.

These despatches were studied here, and intelligently grouped and combined according to subjects. To aid in this work and to facilitate acquaintance by new Ministers and others of the

(1) Pope to Borden, January 10, 1912.

(2) Departmental file 48/1909.