

Setting

The Department of External Affairs, in its first period of sixteen years (1909-1925) under Sir Joseph Pope, was an experiment in government administration. For newly evolving tasks, new machinery had to be invented and constructed; and it was largely Sir Joseph Pope who invented and constructed it. He had the support of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Robert Borden, partly as a result of his own persuasion and enlistment of their interest; he also had the support of the enthusiastic Governor General, Earl Grey. He had behind him the precedent of Australia; and had heeded the suggestions of men like Sanford Evans and J.S. Ewart. He informed himself by visits to the British Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and by study of the State Department in Washington and the Department of External Affairs in Australia.

The new tasks which necessitated the new machinery in Canada were largely imposed by outside factors. The Empire was gradually decentralizing, with the increase of nationalism and desires for autonomy in its self-governing portions. More rapid and frequent steamship connections and the introduction of cable communication, stepped up the tempo of diplomatic business. Foreign commercial matters affecting ^{Canada} were steadily increasing, involving diplomatic negotiation. Questions of imperial defence, especially naval, involved Canada in international issues. By 1914 the War broke out, implicating Canada in relations with Britain, France, and other Allied countries, and in delicate relationships with the still neutral United States. The Colonial Office with its Dominions division,