

Pope's activity in this connection, presiding over some ten deputy ministers or their representatives, throughout the 1914 season prior to the outbreak of war, must have been a monumental task, but one with the highest importance.

According to Mr. J. Castell Hopkins, it was as a result of a suggestion made by Sir Joseph Pope himself, and accepted by the Premier in a letter dated January 6, 1914, that a conference was called in Ottawa on January 12th to discuss this project. It was composed of the Deputy Heads of a number of Departments, under the Chairmanship of Pope.⁽¹⁾

In a speech given in Halifax on December 18, 1914, Sir Robert Borden again referred to the preparations made early in 1914 and the creation of a "War Book" for use in case of emergency - completed only a few weeks before the storm burst. "It is impossible to over-estimate the advantage which resulted from the steps thus taken. While war was impending and when it broke out, measures immediately and urgently necessary were taken instantly and with an entire absence of confusion. All details of preparation, arrangement and instruction, had been systematically compiled into the War Book, which co-ordinated the activities of the several Departments and rendered possible and effective co-operation with the Imperial authorities which otherwise would have been exceedingly difficult, if not largely impracticable." High credit was given on this and other occasions to Major Gordon Hall, Director of Military Operations, and Lieut. R.M. Stephens, Director of Gunnery, who, under the Chairman of Committee, Sir Joseph Pope, had acted as joint Secretaries.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ J. Castell Hopkins: Canadian Annual Review, 1914. pp. 146, 161-2

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