

and usually left Ottawa only in his company. Fortunately for the historian, Pearson did neither and the paper record improves as a result. Even so, there are few occasions when he found it necessary to write the argumentative type memoranda for which Dr. Skelton is remembered. Memoranda were usually for conveying the technical aspects of policy while the reasons for that policy were communicated orally. It was in keeping with the nature of the growth of the Department and the intimacy and complete understanding which characterized the relations of Robertson, Pearson and Wrong that none of them ever thought of preparing a formal letter of instructions for his successor. As Mr. Wrong remarked at a press conference on September 26, 1946: "We follow a fairly consistent pattern at the various conferences we attend, but I don't see what is to be gained by attempting to reduce the matter to a simple code." Senior officials were conscious of making history, not the records for history. The individual rather than the file was the main source of information. Thus gaps in the paper record were of less consequence to the official than to students thereafter.

The shift of the main portion of Canada's diplomatic activity to international conferences had profound consequences for the organization of the Department and its paper records. Unlike other delegations who actively publicized their policy objectives at these conferences, the Canadian delegates acting upon the instructions of the Prime Minister deliberately cut a low profile. Unobtrusively in committees and corridors they applied Canadian policy directives to specific issues. In most cases it was sufficient for them to record only the fact of achievement, defeat or compromise. The how and why were too often left for Departmental gossip or the confines of a private letter. Numerous references in the official files to these unofficial exchanges of letters are accompanied by the notation that they were not indexed and the editor's searches in private collections of papers were seldom productive.

The shift in the location of many international meetings from London, Paris and Geneva to Washington and New York also contributed to the incompleteness of the paper record by reducing the need for written instructions. When a Canadian delegate in New York wanted to discuss routine matters he had the telephone at his disposal while for more important issues he could easily return to Ottawa for an unrecorded meeting with the Prime Minister and a few officials. All of the major decisions on the international control of atomic energy, for example, were made in this fashion. In interviewing the officials of the time the historian soon discovers the difference between the written instructions prepared for a wide distribution and the really significant instructions that were transmitted orally. Once the major issues of policy were clarified and agreed upon by those who needed to know, there was never a thought given to the completeness of the file. Files were filled instead with subsequent telegraphic exchanges communicating merely technical and drafting details. Their profusion often overwhelmed the officials in Ottawa who had neither the time nor the auxiliary documents to comprehend the full significance of what was happening. Within the context