

Legation in Ottawa by a similar step in Brussels. I note that the Ambassador is apprehensive that the Belgian Government might incur some criticism in the Belgian Parliament for having accepted one-sided representation.

I quite appreciate the situation. We have ourselves always taken the view in the past, when the question of the establishment of Legations in Canada was concerned, that it was desirable that arrangements should be reciprocal, and we have stated in some cases that we were not at the time in a position to arrange for the extension of our Diplomatic Service by establishing additional posts. At the same time I believe that the reciprocal establishment of Legations is by no means a universal practice.

We regret any embarrassment that might result, but the fact is that any other action on our part was rendered difficult by the premature publicity given by the press to the original enquiry made by the Belgian Government. We had had under consideration for some time the question as to whether the establishment of additional Legations should be taken up, and had decided to postpone the matter until after the present session of Parliament.

On October 12th, you will recall the Belgian Ambassador wrote the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, indicating the desire of the Belgian Government to establish direct diplomatic representation of Belgium in Canada by setting up a Legation at Ottawa, and to designate Baron Silvercruys as first Minister of Belgium to Canada. It was added that the Belgian Government would be happy to learn whether the establishment of a Belgian Legation in Canada and the nomination of Baron Silvercruys would be agreeable to the Canadian Government. By despatch of the 23rd October, 1936, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs transmitted the Ambassador's note to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. At some time between those dates you informed me, and also Dr. Skelton who was in London with me at the time, of the enquiry which had been received.

On October 16th the following press despatch appeared in the MONTREAL GAZETTE:

Belgium, which is now represented in Canada by a Consul [General], desires to send a Minister to that Dominion.

An unofficial approach from Brussels through the British Foreign Office was made today to ascertain if the Ottawa Government would be pleased to have the present Belgian Consulate raised to a Legation. The request will undoubtedly be transferred to the Dominions Office for transmission to Canada.

The Canadian Government would have preferred to have the question of the establishment of any additional Legations stand until consideration of the whole question of the expansion of our Diplomatic Service could be given consideration, but in view of the above press despatch, which was widely reproduced in Canada, it was felt that it would be embarrassing to the Belgian Government if such an answer were returned. It was not possible, so far as Canada was concerned, to take any action for the present, but Council decided it would be desirable to accept the suggestion of the Belgian Ambassador, which, incidentally, had made no specific reference to reciprocal action by Canada. On December 8th a telegram was accordingly sent to