

largely left in the hands of the British Foreign Office. "There was another circumstance," he writes, "which increased dominion dependence on the United Kingdom in foreign affairs though it did not apply to them all with equal force. After 1926 when Dominion Departments for External Affairs assumed control of the foreign policies of their respective countries a cadre of experts was slowly built up. That was excellent so far as it went. But the growing expertness of officials was not matched by a growing interest or knowledge on the part of ministers or members of Parliaments, who remained for the most part little interested in the details of foreign policy. For this, one reason in particular may be suggested. Because foreign affairs and Commonwealth affairs were customarily dealt with by the same Department, and because both were considered to involve issues of great delicacy, it became the practice for the Prime Minister in most dominions to assume ministerial responsibility for the Department of External Affairs. In Canada, South Africa, and in the Irish Free State during Mr. de Valera's long period in power, this association of office became almost a convention of government. Yet its consequences were not uniformly helpful. Dominion Prime Ministers, by the very nature of their responsibilities, were inevitably preoccupied with domestic problems and rarely had the inclination or the time to make any thorough study of foreign affairs. This lack of interest or knowledge was a