

Borden's reforming efforts, was not yet very adequately developed in the business of diplomacy, had only a limited interest in international affairs other than relations with the neighbouring United States, and was content to leave this business to the Imperial Government and British Foreign Office. On the whole, British diplomacy during the period to 1911 did not serve Canada badly.

Moreover, there were numerous opportunities for the Dominions to keep in touch with the British authorities and with one another, through the periodic Colonial Conferences, in 1887, 1897, 1902, 1907, 1909, and the Imperial Conference in 1911, and subsequently in Imperial War Cabinet and Conference meetings in London during the War. Closer imperial federation was frequently discussed and at times resolutely fostered by the Imperial Government, but it met with a cold reception by certain Dominions who saw in federation, or any modified form of it, a scheme of government whereby they would exchange their existing or desired autonomy for a feeble voice in policies about which, for the most part, they were not concerned.

Professor Dawson sums up the situation prior to 1914 thus: "Unfortunately for the Imperialist cause, the past history of British diplomacy had created much hostility and little gratitude in the Dominions; the evils were remembered, the merits soon forgotten. . . . On the other hand, it would be quite inaccurate to think of the Dominions before the War as fretting under the hardship of Imperial control in foreign affairs. although it is true that they were at times uneasy re-