

all communications passed.

In 1912, an act was passed placing the Department directly under the Prime Minister and since April 1 of that year he has held the additional portfolio of Secretary of State for External Affairs. The appointment of a separate minister for the Department has been considered from time to time but no action was taken until March, 1946, when a bill was introduced to repeal the section of the Act of 1912 which provided that the Prime Minister was to be the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The passing of the bill on April 2, 1946, placed the Department in the same position as other government departments, but until a separate minister is appointed the Prime Minister continues to act in that capacity.

#### Functions of the Department

The main functions of the department of external affairs include:

(a) the supervision of relations between Canada and other countries and of Canadian participation in international organizations; the protection of Canadian interests abroad;

(b) the collation and weighing of information regarding developments likely to affect Canada's international relations;

(c) the correspondence with other governments and their representatives in Canada;

(d) the negotiation and conclusion of treaties and other international agreements;

(e) the representation of Canada in foreign capitals and at international councils;

#### Expansion

The Department began with a modest staff consisting of the permanent Under-Secretary, two chief clerks and four clerks. The first decade of its existence was a period of inconspicuous development.

The first important step came in 1919 when Canada won separate representation as a nation at the Paris Peace Conference. This achievement marked the end of the traditional "diplomatic unity of the Empire" and the beginning of Canada's growth as a power in international affairs.

The gradual recognition of Canadian autonomy in international affairs and the growth of Canadian responsibilities abroad made expansion inevitable. After 1920 it became increasingly apparent that Canada's interests could not longer be conveniently handled by the British diplomatic and consular authorities. The new Department began to develop into an agency for the direct administration of Canadian external affairs.

In 1921 the Office of the High Commissioner in London was placed under the control of the Department. In 1923, in connection with a halibut fishery treaty with the United States, Canada, for the first time, asserted and exercised her right to negotiate and sign her own treaties. In 1925 a Canadian Advisory Officer was stationed in Geneva to represent Canada at various conferences and to inform the Canadian Government of the activities of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office.

A further advance in the Department's development came as the result of an agreement reached at the Imperial Conference of 1926, by