

## The Prime Minister

By way of recapitulation, it will be recalled that when Mr. W. Sanford Evans in 1901 advanced the suggestion of a distinct department of "Imperial and Foreign", or "External", Affairs, he suggested, though with some reserve, that this portfolio "might be held conjointly with another. Lord Salisbury combined the Premiership with the Secretaryship and Foreign Affairs; and Colonial Premiers might be the most suitable Ministers of Imperial and foreign affairs."<sup>1</sup> A later British example was Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. The Australian example of combining the two offices has already been mentioned. Earl Grey had a similar concept.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as has been said, necessarily took an active part in all matters connected with Canada's imperial or foreign relations, especially as he was in daily association with the Governor General on such matters, and attended the Colonial, Imperial and other conferences. His direct concern for external affairs was closer than that of the Secretary of State, Mr. Murphy.

In first drafting the outline of the proposed new Department, Pope had placed the presiding authority in the First Minister. Laurier had struck this out, "in his own hand" and substituted "Secretary of State". In the next draft, Pope obediently stated that all external correspondence should first be sent to the Secretary of State; but Laurier again amended this, and while not seeking to take the portfolio, inserted that all external affairs correspondence should first be referred to the Prime Minister, as well as to the Secretary

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<sup>1</sup>Cp.cit. p. 339