

Lord Salisbury and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had been both Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries; but these were for relatively short periods. In Canada the experiment of combined portfolios had been tried from 1912 to 1946, a matter of thirty-four years under four different Prime Ministers, (Borden, Meighen, Bennett and King). It had been advocated by Earl Grey, and by Sir Joseph Pope, and even before he took office, by Sir Robert Borden, in the 1909 debates.

Now the ~~new~~ innovation was made of having a separate Minister of External Affairs, as was customary, with the above-mentioned exceptions, in British practice and in some of the other Dominions in recent years.\*

Professor Nicholas Mansergh has expressed the view that the concentration of authority in external affairs in the Prime Minister and its inevitable burden and neglect, was a reason why, up to the Second War, dominion diplomacy was still

\* The Irish Free State established its own separate Department of External Affairs in 1922.

A Department of External Affairs with a Minister was established in New Zealand by an External Affairs Act, 1919, but the function of the Department was limited to the administration of New Zealand's island territories, foreign affairs being handled by the Prime Minister's Department with the Prime Minister as Minister of External Affairs until 1943, when a separate External Affairs Department was established.

The South African Department of External Affairs was constituted in 1927, and the Prime Minister was accorded the additional designation of Minister of External Affairs. (See E. Rosenthal South African Diplomats Abroad) (South African Institute of International Affairs, 1949).

The Australian Department of External Affairs was set up in 1901 as a part of the Prime Minister's Office. It became a separate functioning department in 1935-36. At first the Prime Minister held the office of Minister of External Affairs, but this was later allocated to a separate Minister. (Nicholas Mansergh: Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-39, p.71).