

influence well beyond the academic world. Three years after hearing him give an address at a Canadian Club luncheon, Prime Minister MacKenzie King asked Skelton to succeed Sir Joseph Pope, Canada's second Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Skelton saw the Department as a vital instrument for asserting Canadian autonomy. Two of his objectives were to establish a network of diplomatic missions reinforcing Canada's independence from Britain, and to create a high-quality foreign service. Among his recruits were two future Governors General, Georges Vanier and Jules Léger, as well as the young Pearson himself.

With Canada's entry into the Second World War, Skelton worked even harder than usual and his health suffered. "I have known no man with a sense of duty greater than Skelton," Prime Minister MacKenzie King wrote in his diary on February 1, 1940, "or who took on tasks more willingly and with less complaint. I am afraid that he will not be able to stand very long further indefinite strain." Skelton died, while still serving, in 1941.

The Skelton Lobby serves as a reception area that can hold up to 400 people. It also leads to the Robertson Conference Room and the Cadieux Auditorium, named after two other notable members of the Department.

At the far end of the lobby by the window stands *Inukshuk* (meaning "like a person") by one of Canada's outstanding Inuit artists, Osuitok Ipeelee of Cape Dorset, Nunavut. It is a pillar of natural stones carefully placed to represent the human figure. For generations, similar sculptures have been used in the Arctic by Inuit and explorers alike as landmarks and directional pointers.