

Notes for the Prime Minister's Press Conference

JWH/AC

*John D. [unclear]  
in [unclear]*

Proper Title - The full title is Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, whereas a Minister is known formally as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

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Significance of the Move

There will be no change in the duties, functions, privileges, or remuneration of the Canadian representative in Washington. The difference is one of rank, dignity, and prestige rather than one of power.

Difference between an Ambassador and a Minister

The historic differences between embassies and legations have gradually lost their substance. International practice in recent years has recognized this assimilation of the two types of diplomatic representation. In all the principal capitals, especially London and Washington, the facts of war and alliance have accelerated the levelling up of diplomatic representation by the raising of legations to embassies. Certain countries, e.g. Sweden and Switzerland, retain the rank of legations for all their offices abroad.

Historical Background

Originally an ambassador was sent abroad on missions but did not remain abroad for a long period as did a resident minister. Gradually ambassadors began to remain for longer periods. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the Congress of Aix la Chapelle in 1818 defined the ranks of diplomacy, with ambassadors senior in rank to ministers. For the most part ambassadors were the principal representatives of the great monarchies. As they have become the representatives of large and small countries and of monarchies and republics, the difference between ambassadors and ministers has virtually disappeared.