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Office found it necessary to establish within it a Dominions division to keep the required liaison with the Dominions Office and thence the overseas Dominions. Foreign Office telegrams, prints, and other memoranda were, however, regularly supplied to the Canadian Government - in many cases under pledges of secrecy - through the Dominions Office, or in some instance, through the Canadian High Commissioner in London. Professor Berriedale Keith and others have from time to time advocated a closer direct connection between the Department of External Affairs in the overseas Dominions and the Foreign Office which so often ultimately acts for the Dominions in foreign matters; but this short-cut has not materialized.

The suggestion for direct intercourse with the Foreign Office had, however, been made as early as 1924. At the instance of Mr. Mackenzie King, the Governor General, on December 12, 1924, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in a despatch which read in part:

My Ministers are of the view that where, in matters of consultation on foreign policy, it is advisable to secure expedition, communications might be made without reference to the Colonial Office and be between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Great Britain and the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the self-governing Dominions or between Prime Minister and Prime Minister. Where, as is the case at present in Canada, the Office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs is combined with that of Prime Minister, it would be a matter of indifference to which of the two offices the communications were addressed. (1)

(1) File 844/1924.