

The Role of Prime Minister: Borden, Meighen  
and King, and the Department

Prime Minister's Responsibilities

The role of Prime Minister in the formulation of policy and the implementation of it through his own diplomatic efforts, through assistance of the various departments, and through legislation enacted by Cabinet and Parliament, has been referred to in a previous chapter ("Laurier"). The manifold functions and tasks, even in the executive field, of the Prime Minister as premier and as Secretary of State for External Affairs, were vastly increased since the days of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. In parliament, he was the representative of his constituency, the leader of his party, the head of the government; in addition to the premiership, he was Secretary of State for External Affairs and President of the Privy Council. He was the representative of the Government ~~and Parliament~~ in relations with the Governor General. He had personal relations with the foreign consuls-general and impersonal relations carried on by correspondence through the External Affairs Department on matters of foreign concern. Later these were to be augmented by personal relations with the foreign diplomats and the Commonwealth High Commissioners in Ottawa. He necessarily took part in numerous public events and ceremonial functions, and met visiting foreign personages. His Parliamentary and executive