

Lester Bowles Pearson was appointed First Secretary in Ottawa on August 13, 1928. Treasury Board Minute P.C. 22/1297 of July 20, 1929, indicates that he was "loaned to the Canadian Legation at Washington on the 1st of June, 1929, for a short period"; he spent the months of June and July, 1929, there, and then returned to the Department. Pearson, after military service in Europe and the Near East, had studied at Oxford and Heidelberg, and had been an assistant Professor of History at ~~Victoria College~~ Toronto University, ~~for which he subsequently~~ ~~became Chancellor~~. His subsequent career is well known.\*

Pearson entered the External Affairs Department by competitive examination in 1928 while the Liberals were in power. But it was Conservative Premier R.B. Bennett who gave him his first start on his brilliant career. When Conservative Trade and Commerce Minister H.H. Stevens broke with Mr. Bennett on profits made by big business, the Price Spread Committee of the House of Commons was set up as a result. A civil servant was needed to act as Secretary of the Committee, and Mr. Bennett appointed Pearson, then a relative junior in the Department of External Affairs, who had a broad economic and historical background. When the Committee was raised to the status of a Royal Commission, he was continued as its Secretary. At the close of this task, the parliamentarians voted Pearson a special honorarium of \$1000;<sup>(1)</sup> and on Mr. Bennett's recommendation he was awarded an O.B.E. As a civil servant he was not eligible for any extra payment, but the Commission were so impressed with his work that they in-

\* (His son, Geoffrey A.H. Pearson, joined the Department in August, 1952).

(1) H. of C. Debates, July 3, 1935. Vol.IV, p.4206.