

INTRODUCTION

This third Volume of *Documents on Canadian External Relations* deals with the events of the period from November 11, 1918, to the close of 1925, except for Canada's role at the Peace Conference of 1919 which has been treated in Volume 2. These were crucial years in Canada's long development from colonial status to nationhood. The transitional character of the period has affected both the kind of material selected for publication and its organization.

Canadian and British leaders were confronted with a number of alternative courses in the evolution of Imperial relationships. There were many proposals, and much speculation and experimentation, in an effort to determine the direction which Britain and the self-governing Dominions should take. To restrict the selection of documents to those which reflect settled policies would have meant publishing very little. On many subjects the researcher would have been greeted with official silence. For this reason there has been a considerable reliance upon documents which illustrate the formulation of policy, or attempts to formulate it, even where the proposals failed of acceptance. Some memoranda have been included which explain not why a particular decision, but rather no decision at all, was made. One example may suffice. It is well known that the Government of Sir Robert L. Borden won the right to appoint a Canadian Minister to Washington as early as 1919, but in fact the appointment was not made until late in 1926. A memorandum by an important member of the King Cabinet, William Stevens Fielding, helps to explain the delay; this is the justification for including it among the published documents.

The period witnessed expansion in the scope of Canada's external relations and this has naturally affected the organization of the material. There is a temptation when dealing with the external relations of a colony, as Canada was then, to subsume many topics under the inclusive heading of Imperial Relations. One might well expect to find the Chanak 'incident' of 1922 so classified. Instead, it is to be found under "Peace Settlement with Turkey", which forms part of a chapter dealing with problems arising directly out of the First World War. Or again, to take one more example, one might look in the chapter on Imperial Relations for some such theme as 'A common Empire foreign policy' or 'Consultation between Britain and the Dominions on foreign policy'. There is indeed this subject matter throughout the Volume, but it has been treated in the context in which it arose, whether at the League of Nations, at particular international conferences, or at Imperial conferences.