

Some of the opposition to the creation of another new Department may be attributed to the criticism of the creation, at almost the same time, of a separate portfolio of Labour. From 1900 till 1909 the Department of Labour, with W.L. Mackenzie King as its Deputy Minister, had been presided over successively by Sir William Mulock, A.B. Aylesworth and R. Lemieux, Postmaster General. In May, 1909, Sir Wilfrid Laurier had arranged the passage through Parliament of legislation creating a separate Department of Labour under the charge of a separate and single Minister. Mr. Mackenzie King was recommended as the first such Minister, and having resigned his Civil Service Office of Deputy Minister, was appointed Minister of Labour on June 2, 1909. In the Commons there was considerable hostile criticism by the Opposition who objected to the proliferation of departments and ministerships, who felt that Mr. King, then aged <sup>35</sup>~~28~~, was too young to become a Privy Councillor and member of the Cabinet, and asserted that the Minister's salary was too big for so soft a job.

At the simultaneous suggestion of a new Department of External Affairs, with the possibility of another separate Ministership, some members took fright and had to be reassured that no new Ministerial appointment was then contemplated, no new costs would be involved except for a deputy minister's salary and that of three or four clerks, and that the Department would be, "for the time being" under the Ministership of the Secretary of State of Canada.