

In 1939, I cannot recollect having seen any despatches so far, from Canadian representatives abroad, although the last year and a half has been a period of intense diplomatic activity. In Washington, the Canadian Minister has been in a position to observe and in fact has to some extent participated in a complete reorientation of foreign and economic policy. In London, the High Commissioner has been in daily personal contact with every phase of the Government's treatment of an international situation of an unprecedented nature. In Tokyo, the Minister has seen a country go to war and has had an opportunity of observing the change to a war economy. In Paris, the Minister has been in the unique position of an independent observer in the front line diplomatic trenches. At Geneva, the Canadian representative has been the witness of the deterioration of that great institution which, at one time, was one of the strongest links holding the Empire together. Surely our Canadian representatives have not failed to comment to their Government on these dramatic and historic events.

To ensure that the Governor General is, in future, kept fully informed of international affairs from the Canadian point of view, I wonder if you would agree to Canadian representatives abroad being empowered to send me *direct* copies of despatches which, in their opinion, should be read by the Governor General. No extra work would fall on the shoulders of the Department of External Affairs, and all that would be required in each Legation would be an additional carbon copy of such despatches as the Minister considered important. The practice of cross communication is not uncommon in the British Diplomatic Service despite the fact that there is a highly efficient Communications Department at the Foreign Office.

As regards domestic matters, when we are in Ottawa, your frequent conversations with His Excellency are, of course, invaluable, but in the summer we have of necessity to rely on what we can glean from an inaccurate and localised press. If anything in the nature of confidential progress reports could be issued by Departments on such subjects as Defence, Unemployment, etc., they would be most valuable.

I fear this is an intolerably long letter, but I am anxious that we should put into practice as regards the King's representative one of the most striking facts that emerged from the King's visit—that the King is a human being with a job to do and is not a mere symbol whose main function is to sign papers which he never reads and provide an exclusive atmosphere for certain social entertainments. There are many ways in which our own staff work is, in my opinion, too formal, and I am going into this at present, but I need hardly say that I would welcome the opportunity of a conversation with you on all these matters sometime when you are not overwhelmed with more urgent affairs.

Yours very sincerely,

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