

During the following year, 1910, the question of amendment, promised by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was revived, and near the end of that session, and also near the end of Earl Grey's incumbency of the office of Governor General, Mr. Murphy sent a letter dated April 22, to the Prime Minister reminding him of the controversy and urging that "sleeping dogs lie":

Referring to your mention at Council today that His Excellency had again requested that the Act relating to the Department of External Affairs be amended, permit me to say that the objections urged by Mr. Aylesworth and myself last year to the proposed amendment apply with much greater force now.

As I recollect the proposed amendment, it was to the effect that the word "conduct" in line 2 of section 3 of the Act should be eliminated and the word "care" substituted, so that the section would read that the Secretary of State as head of the Department would have the care of all official communications etc., instead of the conduct of all official communications as the case stands at present.

As Mr. Pope very properly pointed out last year, the proposed amendment would make the Department a mere filing office, and would destroy the reasons given to the House and to the country for the creation of the Department in the first instance.

Another objection to the proposed amendment is that the Governor General does not allege that in the actual carrying out of the work of the Department since its creation there has been any interference of any kind with the work of his office. On the contrary the pledges given to the House by yourself, by Mr. Aylesworth, and by the writer have all been adhered to, namely, that the Act was not intended to interfere in any way with the work or prerogatives of the Governor General's office. Hence it follows that as in actual practice there has been no interference with the Governor General's office, there can therefore be no good reason advanced for the proposed change.