

I recommend that a small staff of young men, well educated and carefully selected, be attached to the department whose creation I have advocated, and that they be specially trained in the knowledge and treatment of these subjects. In this way we shall acquire an organized method of dealing with international questions which at present we wholly lack.

Joseph Pope

Ottawa, March 23, 1908

Lord Grey
(Gouverneur général) à
Lord Elgin (secrétaire aux
Colonies)

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Lord Grey
(Governor General) to
Lord Elgin (Colonial
Secretary)

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My Dear Elgin,

... There is no Department, no official through whose hands all matters dealing with external affairs must go. Consequently there is no record, no continuity, no method, no consistency.... We have only three men in the Government Service who have any knowledge of details connected with Canada's foreign relations. One drinks at times, the other has a difficulty in expressing his thoughts, and conversation with him is as difficult as it is to extract an extra tight cork, and the third is the Under Secretary of State, Pope – a really first class official. Not a day should be lost in putting him in charge of a Department of External Affairs under Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and in a short time he would be able to train one or two young men who would take up his work after he has gone. He would have the papers on every question in good shape. Sir W. Laurier's work would be ever so much facilitated, and Canada would be prompt and satisfactory to deal with, instead of the swollen impossible cork, the extraction of which almost bursts a bloodvessel.

Yours ever,
G.