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Secretary of State for External Affairs, in reference to the Department in 1941, - a month after the death of Dr. Skelton:

The matters of high policy, which in the imperial war council of the last war were considered around the council table by the heads of the several governments of the British empire, are today discussed between them by direct communication. The means and agencies of communication, in the intervening years, have alike been materially improved. The cable has been supplemented by the wireless and the transatlantic telephone.

Each dominion has today a Department of External Affairs efficiently organized and in a position instantly to supplement the information essential as a background to the discussion of any problem.

Not only is each government represented in London by its own special agent - a high commissioner - but the British government is also represented by a high commissioner in each of the dominions. . . We are fortunate in having in our capital at this time distinguished representatives from all of the other dominions with the exception thus far, I think, of New Zealand. In those countries we are also represented by our high commissioners. (1)

The Prime Minister may have been pardonably optimistic in this picture, in the context of an argument against an Imperial War Cabinet. It is true that the Department of External Affairs was by 1941 larger, more active, and more efficient than it had been in the Pope epoch.

Three years later, - still in the war-period - Professor Skilling summarized ^{the} character of the Department and its overseas offices, virtually as Dr. Skelton had bequeathed them, in the following words:

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941, Vol.1. p.812.