

or the present Secretary of State, or his predecessor, or Mr. Borden, partly from lack of opportunity and partly because I was always hoping that things would (as in the case of most if not all the other departments with whom I originally had more or less friction at the start) adjust themselves. That hope has not been fulfilled, and we must now address ourselves to the task of obtaining an authoritative decision on our points of difference. There is no probability of being able adequately to discuss this question with Mr. Borden before his departure for England, but as soon as practicable after his return I propose doing so.

I think perhaps the root of the difficulty is to be found in the erroneous view generally held in this community that the office of Secretary of State is necessarily one and indivisible; that the Secretary of State of Canada is the Secretary of State, and that the office of Secretary of State for External Affairs is, if not exactly subordinate, at any rate a lower dignity which has been evolved from the former. I need not of course remind you that under the British system there may be, and are, in England several Secretaries of State of equal rank. Now the Secretary of State for External Affairs (as such) is as much a Secretary of State as the Secretary of State of Canada (who is the Secretary of State for Home Affairs), and the Department over which the former presides, is as truly and properly a department of state as the Department hitherto more commonly associated with that name, or any other department of the public service. A glance at the statute and constituting Order-in-Council of the Department of External Affairs will I think bear out this view.

Going to particulars. I observe that you object:  
~~xxx~~

(1) to my distributing the Imperial Statutes, on the ground that such distribution has been made from your Department in the past. Of course it was, because the Department of External Affairs did not exist. When that Department was called into being, it naturally had assigned to it certain duties which up to then had been performed by other departments, particularly yours. The argument you use in this regard and that of Police Medals would apply equally to passports and consuls. The Order-in-Council of the 1st June, 1909, directs the Governor General's Secretary to send these statutes to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, for distribution. Is he, a Secretary of State, not competent to send a copy of these statutes, say to the Department of Finance? The very suggestion savours of absurdity.