



Jules Léger (left) was the department's first under-secretary from Quebec.

Howard Green, a passionate advocate of nuclear disarmament, served as secretary of state for external affairs from 1959 to 1963, under Conservative Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.

The department hired women for officer positions for the first time in 1942. They did the work of junior officers but earned a lower salary.

Canadian diplomats successfully demanded an appropriate say for Canada in the Allied war effort and in shaping the post-war world. Canada took a prominent part in creating the new United Nations Organization.

In 1946, the department regained its own minister for the first time since 1912 when Louis St. Laurent became secretary of state for external affairs, before becoming prime minister in 1948. Serving under him was Lester B. Pearson, first as under-secretary and then as secretary of state for external affairs.

Both men were committed to responsible and active internationalism. When the UN proved an insufficient guardian of security in the face of Communist aggression, Pearson and St. Laurent proved strong supporters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.