

for action took place . . . In this case the only thing to be done was to get all the knowledge possible by personal application to different clerks in different departments and to go, as I did, from department to department trying to find out things . . . Now if there had been a department of external affairs with a permanent secretary and staff acquainted with all business of a nature such as I have in mind, the difficulty which then was of most serious character would have been to a very large extent obviated . . . Under the circumstances I became strongly impressed with the necessity of some such step as is now proposed . . ." (1) "There ought to be some one man at least," he continued, "who would have all the strings in his hands, would know what had passed before and would see to it that what was going out from this government was not inconsistent with what had gone before but was in continuation of the general line of policy which, in regard to dealing with any particular matter that may have come up, had already been adopted by the government."

In view of his later change of view and appreciation of the Department of External Affairs of which he, while Prime Minister, became head, it is interesting to note Mr. Robert Borden's criticism of the proposal. He thought that the aim was valid, but that the extra machinery was redundant. "I do not find any fault with the object which is aimed at by this

(1) Ibid. pp. 1994, 1996.