

procrastination; and also to the opposition of Mr. Fielding, an influential and respected member of Laurier's Cabinet. It may also be assumed that Laurier shied away from any suggestion which either would seem like a reflection on the existing role and functioning of the Colonial Office, or would seem like interference in a long established constitutional system. Although to some degree an autonomist (resisting any scheme of an Imperial Council), he was also modestly reluctant to interfere with the administrative structure of the British Government, or the existing Colonial framework.

1911

The Imperial Conference of 1911 took place, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier attended. Notwithstanding the urgings of Earl Grey, he made no special proposals for discussion, and did not take the lead in any suggestions on the structure of Colonial administration.

Although nothing further developed from this Conference regarding a Dominions Office, Earl Grey, nevertheless, after he returned to England in 1911, continued with all seriousness to urge the creation of a separate Dominions Office and to plan a group building in London, something like the Commonwealth Building of Rockefeller Centre in New York, which would house all the Dominions' London offices as well as the new Ministry. He kept this dream alive for three or four years.(1)

In 1912 Grey consulted with Lord Strathcona, the High Commissioner, on his project, but the latter

(1) Castall Hopkins. The Canadian Annual Review, 1911, pp.626, 628.