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THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

A HISTORY

PART II

THE SKELTON EPOCH

(1925-1941)

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1.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The first part of this historical survey dealt with the period 1909-1925, under the aegis of Sir Joseph Pope as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The present, second part covers the period 1925-1941, under the aegis of Dr. O.D. Skelton, Under-Secretary and deus ex machina of the Department.

At the end of the present part is given a summary appraisal of the developments at the end of Dr. Skelton's sixteen-year tenure of office. The beginning of that period merits these few introductory comments, before describing in fuller detail the various aspects of the Department's development during this second period. It is only pertinent here to describe the backdrop of the stage as it was in 1925 when Dr. Skelton commenced his long and productive mission as head of the Department.

When this second long period commenced, the Department was confronted with some very important changes of background and tasks, and its history over the ensuing years was that of strengthening itself to meet those changes and new obligations.

There was, first, the new autonomy of the Dominions in their foreign relations, within the framework of a decentralized British imperial structure. The colonial era was closed; the era of equal partnership and more independent diplomacy

was opening. Sir Joseph Pope had scarcely envisaged this change, which took material form a year after his retirement and in the year of his death. Dr. Skelton, the new Under-Secretary, was to face the effects of this constitutional transformation, and had to adapt the Department, as best he could, to the consequences and new implications and responsibilities.

There was, secondly, the League of Nations, which brought Canada, as an independent participating member, much closer to international affairs, both European and Middle Eastern and Far Eastern. Involvements of this kind placed a heavier burden on the small corps of diplomatic experts in Ottawa.

There was, thirdly, the final blossoming of the long-contemplated independent diplomatic representation abroad, already agreed to in 1920. The opening of new Legations (at Washington 1927, Paris 1928, Tokyo 1929, The Hague 1939, Brussels 1939), and of High Commissioners' Offices (in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, Newfoundland in 1940) and of Consulates (in Greenland, St. Pierre and Miquelon in 1940), and Legations in Brazil, Argentina and Chile (in 1941), were to mean new burdens and heavier responsibilities for the home Department in Ottawa.

In 1926, the Colonial Office yielded its responsibility for dominion external affairs to the

new Dominions Office. In 1927 the Governor General's Office ceased to be the official channel of communication between the Dominion and Great Britain. Communications passed more directly between the Department of External Affairs and the Dominions Office. The communications and cyphering work was transferred from the Governor General's Office to the Department; and this was, while an extra burden, in reality a short-cut, eliminating Rideau Hall. The change from Colonial Office to Dominions Office made little difference in Ottawa. The raised position of the Canadian High Commissioner at London, and the appointment of a British High Commissioner at Ottawa, facilitated contacts and communications. The opening of High Commissioners' Office in the other Dominions of the Commonwealth, and of Legations in several foreign countries was soon to impose new duties and tasks on the Department, and necessitated staff expansion.

All these were consequences of the changing constitutional structure in the Empire and Commonwealth. That change in structure was the consequence of the long pressures, of preceding years or decades, for greater dominion autonomy in foreign relations. The attainment and formal recognition of this new status, advocated particularly by Smuts and Borden in 1917-1919, approved at the Imperial Conference of

1926, and formally defined in the Statute of Westminster of 1931, were the backdrop of the stage upon which the Department of External Affairs was to develop its increasing role.

On Dr. Skelton's appointment in 1925 as Under-Secretary, he found Pope's very small Department of three officers static and almost rigid; devoid of public or parliamentary interest or even of much Cabinet concern - except for the Prime Minister who also held the External Affairs portfolio and borrowed the Department's staff as assistants to his Office; limited in space in the East Block; dependent on British informational service since Canada had no diplomatic observation posts of its own, outside London, Paris, and Geneva; and with an undeveloped public and parliamentary knowledge of foreign affairs beyond the relations with the United States. In some respects he found, if not a tabula rasa, at least an undeveloped and rather elementary foundation upon which he was called on to erect a more serviceable Department. His few assistants at that time included the long-serving W.H. Walker, the experienced clerks F.H. Baker and J.F. Boyce, Miss Agnes McCloskey as accountant and administrative clerk, and a number of seasoned stenographers. It was a tiny contingent. Mr. Desy, Mr. Beaudry, and Mr. Read soon came as Counsellors to help him.



In some other respects, however, he found in this small bureau a fairly well-constructed scaffolding, left by Sir Joseph Pope. The Department was already a co-ordinating bureau, a clearing house, and international centre and repository, and, a year later, was to be the principal post-office for all communications on foreign affairs, in place of the Governor General's Office. It already supervised at least three semi-diplomatic posts abroad - in the High Commissioner's Office in London, the Commissioner General's Office in Paris, and the Canadian Advisory Office in Geneva; and by agreed arrangements previously made, could enjoy more directly the help of the British diplomatic and consular services abroad, even by-passing where necessary the Dominions Office in London. The participation of carefully selected Canadian delegations in the League of Nations meetings and at many other international conferences, had already become an established practice - in which (in 1924) - Dr. Skelton himself had taken part; and the Department was already incipiently able to give guidance to this machinery of diplomacy. Under Sir Joseph Pope, it had also developed procedures of diplomatic protocol for locally accredited Consuls General in Ottawa and for important royal visitors and other Heads of State or foreign political leaders. Altogether, the elementary machinery was present, waiting

to be improved, developed, and put to more influential use. The Pope framework was such that further expansion could, without inconvenience, be carried forward according to the increasing tasks and pressure for services. The sub-structure created by Pope was ready to receive an upper structure as necessity required. The new pattern of enlargement was not yet blue-printed, but both Christie and Pope had studied and reported on the structure of the Foreign Office in London and the State Department in Washington, and had filed these useful guides and reference-material as a basis for future planning in Ottawa.

Moreover, the matter of separate Canadian diplomatic representation abroad, - commencing with Washington - had already been clarified and agreed to, in 1920; in 1924 the Irish Free State had already brought the experiment into application; and this vista of autonomy lay open, ready for practical application by Canada as soon as the government was ready. The commencement of Canadian legations abroad was impending when Dr. Skelton took office in 1925; it was implemented the next year, 1926, and the Department was more or less administratively prepared for the innovation when the first Canadian Legation was established in Washington in 1927, followed rapidly by Legations in Paris and Tokyo.

On all these foundations, - this prepared glacis - Dr. Skelton was called on to build further. In the sixteen years of his tenure of office, he built, visibly and invisibly, a dynamic Department of External Affairs. Even after his first five years, he was able to report progress, rapid though still inadequate. On his death in 1941, his chief, Mr. King, was able to report even greater progress; although it was not until the pressures and demands of the Second World War that the Department came into its own as an essential and vigorously active agency and apparatus of government, in Canada's external relationships.

In ensuing chapters we shall see the role of the Prime Minister as Secretary of State for External Affairs, and of parliamentary Under-Secretaries and parliamentary Standing Committees; the expansion of staff; the enlargement of premises, the handling of documents, the beginnings of a functional specialization within the Department and other mutations of organization; the personal influence of Dr. Skelton and Loring Christie and other officers; the growth of an independent diplomatic and consular service representing Canada abroad, and the parallel growth of a foreign diplomatic corps in Ottawa; and various other aspects of the Department's improvisations and development leading into the demanding exigencies of the Second World War.

Five years after Dr. Skelton took office as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, he gave to a Parliamentary Standing Committee a resumé of developments up to 1930:

As we are all aware, it is only very recently that the Canadian Government has found it necessary or desirable to develop special agencies for carrying on its international affairs. Our international contacts were formerly brief and scattered. Our relationship to the rest of the British Empire was of such a nature that our dealings with foreign countries were for the most part carried on through the Mother Country and its diplomatic staff, rather than through our own. Within the last twenty years particularly, however, a great deal has been done in developing the instrumentalities of international action within the Federal field.

This development has taken place in three directions. The first of these is the establishment of the Department of External Affairs, which corresponds to the Foreign Office and Dominions Office of Great Britain. The Department of External Affairs was founded in 1909. It has made rapid development, in view of the increase in international duties, during and since the war. It is growing, not as fast as those connected with it would like to see it grow, but its equipment for its tasks is being increased, so far as staff and organization is concerned. . . .

The second federal agency for dealing with international affairs consists in the permanent offices abroad. We have long had two such agencies, namely the High Commissioner's Office at London, established in 1880, and the Paris agency, the Canadian Commissioner in France, established in 1882. Recently the Dominion has expanded in the normal direction taken by other countries, in setting up diplomatic establishments. The office in Paris has been converted into a Legation, and Legations have been established at Washington and Tokyo. In addition we have a Canadian Advisory Officer at Geneva who acts on behalf of External Affairs and Labour, assisting in dealing with League of Nations matters. In these five permanent agencies we have the nucleus of a diplomatic staff. . . .

Then, in addition to the Department of External Affairs and the permanent agencies abroad, there are various conferences held from time to time. Mr. Lloyd George has said that the chief political development of the post-war era has been the utilization of conferences. . . . There has been a marked development in the getting together of governments to deal with international problems by conference, and there can be little doubt that it is a helpful and indeed indispensable procedure. . . . We have in the Department at Ottawa a central agency whose duty it is to provide a permanent storehouse of information and a central directing force for the work in the legations abroad, and to facilitate participation in the Imperial Conferences, the League of Nations and the special conferences from time to time. Other departments are of course interested in their special phases of this international work.

Canada has been taking a rapidly increasing part, a big part, in the development of its international relations. In view of the improvisation of many of the agencies used in this development, it is a part which no one who views Canada's share in international affairs from the framing of the Treaty of Versailles and the establishment of the League of Nations down to the present time will say is wholly inadequate. Development has been rapid, but it has not yet progressed far enough. I do not think either that anyone who has looked into the facts will say it has involved undue burden upon the country. (1)

(1) Minutes of Select Standing Committee on Industrial and International Relations, March 25, 1930, pp.10-12.

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DOMINIONS OFFICE

Dominions Office

In Part I of this survey, attention was given to the history, role and relationship of the Colonial Office with the external affairs of Canada, using the Governor General as the channel in Canada until 1927. As was shown in an Appendix, efforts were made between 1907 and 1914 by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and also by Earl Grey in Canada, to have the Dominions work of the Colonial Office separated from the work concerning the Crown Colonies. After the Colonial Conference of 1907, a partial step was taken by Lord Elgin, the Colonial Secretary of State, by establishing a Dominions Department within the Colonial Office. Later efforts to bifurcate the Office, urged by Sir Joseph Ward and Earl Grey, were abortive; Grey himself promoted the scheme of an independent Dominions Office and a separate building (also to house all the Dominion High Commissioners' Offices), until the scheme broke down at the beginning of the 1914 War, and was not revived in that form. To complete the record, however, the following further note may be added to relate the development during this second period of the present survey.

On the retirement of the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office in 1919, Mr. Churchill, Colonial Secretary from 1921 to 1922, found himself unable to entrust the duties of the post to any member of the Colonial Office staff. He was therefore obliged to appoint an outsider , who had no special Colonial experience.

The burden of the Office with its two divisions and a General Department, proved too severe for his health after two or three years. The next Colonial Secretary, Colonel L.S. Amery, in 1924 ~~still~~ found it still difficult to promote any one of the staff to the full senior position, but solved the impasse by appointing an outsider with, however, much Colonial experience, for the Crown Colonies division, and a member of the staff of the Dominions division. (1)

Then, in 1925, the Colonial Secretary of State adopted the additional title of Secretary of State for Dominions Affairs, which was tantamount to creating an independent Dominions portfolio. The Dominions Department became a new and separate Office, or Ministry; it was dignified by a separate vote in the estimates, and there was an investiture of a Permanent Under-Secretary and a Parliamentary Under-Secretary all its own. (2) In theory, the new Dominions Office was to be under its own Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, <sup>\*</sup> but for practical convenience it was to remain housed in the Colonial Office, and the two Secretaryships of State were provisionally combined in the same individual, (Mr. Amery, followed by Lord Passfield, the former Sydney Webb). The new Dominions Office was manned by the ad-

(1) Berriedale Keith: Responsible Government in the Dominions. (2nd ed. 1928) II p.915.

(2) See statements by the British Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary of State in the British House of Commons, June 11 and July 27, 1925. See also Journal, Vol.VI, pp.444-5, 675-8, 685.

\* The proposal suggested at various times, and by Borden on July 16, 1918, (Memoirs II, p.831) that the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom should head the Department of Dominion Affairs had been unacceptable to Mr. Asquith and subsequent Prime Ministers.



ministrative staff hitherto forming the Dominions Department of the Colonial Office, but the services of the General Department, the Legal staff, the printing, copying and accounts branch, and the Library were shared.

In 1930 the Dominions Office was placed under a separate Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, (Mr. J.H. Thomas), wholly divorced from the Colonial Office. "The title of the new Secretary of State", comments Prof. N. Mansergh, "was symptomatic of the new approach. He was not Secretary of State for the Dominions, which would have implied a measure of responsibility for them, but Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. This was a nice refinement which had its importance, for it reflected accurately the nature of the duties with which the Department was charged. Its work was similar in kind to that of the Foreign Office, but the atmosphere was different, for relations with the dominions were conducted with a degree of intimacy that is not possible in relations with foreign countries, however friendly. 'A Foreign Office with a family feeling' was the happy description of Mr. Walter Runciman." (1)

The channel of communication through the Governor General lapsed in 1927; the Dominions Office replaced in 1925 the Colonial Office, but continued to serve as the Imperial Government's link with the Dominions through their High Commissioner in London, through the United

(1) Nicholas Mansergh: Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, p.68.

Kingdom High Commissioners in the dominion capitals after 1928, or in direct correspondence through the Department of External Affairs in most of the dominions. The Dominions Office became more and more the liaison between even the Foreign Office and the Dominion Governments. Professor Barriedale Keith, writing in 1927, said that "The common sense conclusion, which was not attained, was that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should communicate direct with the External Affairs Departments of the Dominions, omitting the process of going through the Dominions Office. Mr. Fisher, in 1911, was acute enough to see that the relations of the dominions with the Foreign Office should ultimately become direct, and it is impossible to see how any useful purpose can be served by interposing a third party in the process. There is little doubt that economy and efficiency alike would have been promoted by entrusting the one important function of the Dominion Office, the conduct of correspondence on foreign affairs, to the Foreign Office, whence it is ultimately derived."<sup>(1)</sup>

But this system did not formally materialize, possibly because of the expansion of the Commonwealth membership - the incorporation of India, Pakistan, Ceylon and even Ireland (and later Ghana, Malaya, British West Indies Federation, etc.), and the increase of inter-Commonwealth relations over and above "foreign" relations. Thus the Dominions Office, or subsequently the "Commonwealth Relations Office", continued necessarily to have a function and role inherited from the old Colonial

(1) Keith: op. cit. p. 915.

Office, substituting as one of its links, the United Kingdom High Commissioner for the Governor General in various of the dominions.

"The principal duty of the Dominions Office was to give as much background information as possible about developments in foreign affairs to the dominion governments. In the ordinary course its contact in the dominions' capitals was with the Dominion Departments of External Affairs. Matters of highest moment were, however, usually dealt with direct by Prime Ministers. It is, however, an illusion to suppose that a communication even from one Prime Minister to another necessarily disposed of a problem more quickly than was possible by other means. A Prime Minister in a dominion was a member of a Cabinet collectively responsible to his Parliament and he was in no position to take an important decision without consulting with his colleagues."<sup>(1)</sup>

There does not appear to have been any great pressure on the part of Canada for a reorganization or bifurcation of the Colonial Office. As has been indicated in Part I of this survey, Earl Grey, while Governor General, had warmly advocated the creation of a separate Dominions Office, apparently believing that this was the desire of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Laurier, however, remained passive in the matter,

<sup>(1)</sup> Nicholas Mansergh: Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, p. 69.

considering that this was mainly a domestic and administrative matter for the Imperial Government in London to develop. Nevertheless, there was an underlying feeling among many in Canada that the old Colonial Office connoted a continuance of colonialism; that the creation of a Dominions department within the Colonial Office might improve efficiency but would not eliminate the connotation; and that a Secretaryship of State for Dominion Affairs, separate from the Secretaryship of State for the Colonies, would better please the amour propre of the self-governing Dominions which were in process of casting off their colonial chains. There does not appear to be any official Canadian correspondence with London on the subject, other than Earl Grey's early letters; but the change, when finally made in 1925, was welcome as a gesture and psychological improvement, as well as being, no doubt, a more specialized and thus more efficient agency of intercourse.

The Canadian Government or Secretary of State for External Affairs did not communicate directly with the British Foreign Office (although it did so with the British Ambassadors and Ministers and Consuls abroad.) All matters of foreign concern were invariably sent through the Dominions Office for attention of the Foreign Office and vice versa; and the Foreign

Office found it necessary to establish within it a Dominions division to keep the required liaison with the Dominions Office and thence the overseas Dominions. Foreign Office telegrams, prints, and other memoranda were, however, regularly supplied to the Canadian Government - in many cases under pledges of secrecy - through the Dominions Office, or in some instance, through the Canadian High Commissioner in London. Professor Berriedale Keith and others have from time to time advocated a closer direct connection between the Department of External Affairs in the overseas Dominions and the Foreign Office which so often ultimately acts for the Dominions in foreign matters; but this short-cut has not materialized.

The suggestion for direct intercourse with the Foreign Office had, however, been made as early as 1924. At the instance of Mr. Mackenzie King, the Governor General, on December 12, 1924, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in a despatch which read in part:

My Ministers are of the view that where, in matters of consultation on foreign policy, it is advisable to secure expedition, communications might be made without reference to the Colonial Office and be between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Great Britain and the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the self-governing Dominions or between Prime Minister and Prime Minister. Where, as is the case at present in Canada, the Office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs is combined with that of Prime Minister, it would be a matter of indifference to which of the two offices the communications were addressed. (1)

(1) File 844/1924.

This suggested arrangement was apparently not implemented, but it is interesting to note the desire "when it is advisable to secure expedition", to circumvent the Colonial Office.

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CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

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## Channels of Communication

### Decline of Governor General's Role in External Affairs

In Chapter III of Part I it was indicated that the constitutional role of the Governor General as the official channel of communication between the Canadian Government and the Imperial Government or sister Dominions or foreign states was carefully respected and preserved throughout the period of the External Affairs Department covered by the lifetime of Sir Joseph Pope. In the very year of his death, in 1926, a great transformation took place in the relationship of the Dominions and the Mother Country within the Commonwealth and in the position of the Governor General, who ceased to be the channel of official correspondence.

Although the formal system had been carefully protected from Confederation until 1926, there had been nevertheless steady forces leading to an impairment of that recognized system.

It has been shown how the pressure had gradually developed for more independent diplomatic representation abroad, without the intermediation of the British Colonial and Foreign Offices, in consequence of which more direct communication from Canadian representatives would by-pass the slow and cumbrous conduit pipe through London. It has been suggested that the laying of the cable between Canada and England in 1868 resulted in the loss by the Governor General of much of the personal initiative which in the older days of Colonial rule and relative remoteness had been made possible by the length of time it had taken to receive an answer from the Colonial Office to a despatch of the Governor's. Furthermore, the Canadian Government



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by 1880 had its own High Commissioner in London, with whom it corresponded in supplement to or extension of the Governor General's channel. The successive Colonial Conferences of Prime Ministers provided, periodically, more direct and personal channels of consultation, and occasionally, even then, correspondence passed directly between the various Prime Ministers. On minor technical matters, Pope and others privately exchanged communications with their opposite numbers in London, Melbourne or elsewhere. At the Imperial Conference in 1911 suggestions were made for the separation of the business of the self-governing dominions from the Colonial Office to a new Dominions Office, that the powers of the High Commissioners should be enhanced, and that the Governor General should be "cut out" of correspondence between the governments.

Imperial Conference 1911.

Sir Joseph Ward, Premier of New Zealand, introduced a resolution, part of which provided "that the High Commissioners should become the sole channel of communication between Imperial and Dominion Governments, - Governors General, and Governors on all occasions being given identical and simultaneous information". Rt. Hon. L. Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, observed:

We should see very great difficulty about that direct communication, because it cuts across the theory of Ministerial responsibility, and of course you place the Governors General of the Dominions and the Secretary of State here, in a very difficult position, if they were outside the ordinary course of communication between the Governments of the Dominions and the Home Government.

Sir Joseph Ward replied:

Regarding the proposal made for the High Commissioners being the channels of communication, I

recognize what Mr. Harcourt says; but I want to point out what occurs in practice - and I speak subject to the local knowledge of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who are here. The Governors in our country take the place of the King; they are his representatives. We are not infrequently in the position of having a double channel of communication - the Governor is advised upon a matter, the High Commissioner is advised upon a matter. We receive frequently a duplication of the information. . . . In our country experience has shown me at all events that we frequently have a duplication of the work. We all lead pretty busy lives and it is only with a view to having what I call the most effective machinery that I desire to have established in our country a system similar to what you have between the King and the British Government. I am unable at the moment to see - although it has occurred to me you with your knowledge of detail here might be able to see, except in the case of a secret note or anything of that kind requiring to be sent to the Governor or Governor General, - where the disability would arise if those communications were sent out through the High Commissioner. The point in my mind when I gave notice of this resolution was to see that anything you wanted to convey to the Government came to the High Commissioners, so that it would be received instanter by the Government and conveyed instanter to the Governor. If the action of the Government could be taken only subsequent to the Governor himself receiving the despatches, everything would go on in the ordinary way. I propose that, entirely from the view of facilitating the work between the Home Government and the Dominions. . . . The reason that prompted me in putting the resolution was not with an idea of finding fault with the existing conditions, or suggesting a change merely for the sake of having a change made, but with a view of expedition of business between the Home Authorities and the oversea Dominion Governments, without displacing the Governor or doing anything to affect the channel of communication that the Secretary for the Colonies is in the habit of sending information through. . . .

The High Commissioner should become the sole channel of communication between the Imperial Government and the Dominion Government.

(Rt. Hon. H. Asquith: Literally read, that would seem to cut off all communication between the Secretary of State and the Governor).

I do not mean that. I mean matters which require to come to the Government. All I am anxious to insure is that there should not be two different channels, and that we should have the opportunity of sending on to the Governor everything that comes to us that affects the Government. All matters of communication which the Secretary of State requires to make, on which consultation between the Governor and the Government would be necessary, would remain as at present. (1)

It seems clear that this proposal was somewhat confused and anomalous; and it was eventually dropped.

During the discussion, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:

We communicate direct with the Imperial Government, that is to say, the Governor General communicates direct with the Imperial Government, but I am sure there are constantly occasions when a despatch is sent to the High Commissioner asking him to press the matter on and to see the Secretary of State for the Colonies and represent to him the views of the particular Dominion Government. We know that besides the official despatch there is the confidential talk, in which more meaning is conveyed than in a despatch. . . Therefore I think the High Commissioners serve a very useful purpose, and for my part I do not think the present arrangement can be improved. . . (2)

Apparently nothing came out of Sir Joseph Ward's suggestion at that time, and the question of any reform in the system was left in abeyance. The First War broke out three years later, and further discussions of principle were postponed, although in practice, for reasons of convenience, supplementary channels of communication were gradually adopted.

Imperial War Cabinet 1918.

When the Imperial War Cabinet held its second session in June, 1918, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, complaining that, despite cables and despatches,

(1) Proceedings of Imperial Conference 1911. Cd.5745.pp.80-82.

(2) Ibid. p. 85.

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he and his colleagues "were profoundly ignorant of all that had passed during their relatively brief absence," took the lead in proposing the right of direct communication, at their discretion, of the overseas Prime Ministers with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. (1) This practice actually developed of its own accord during the course of the year, for Mr. Lloyd George apparently sent messages direct to Borden, who was back in Canada, to return to England as soon as possible to discuss impending Armistice terms and preliminaries of the Peace settlement. (1)

Thus the feeling persisted, and was strengthened during the First War years, that the British Prime Minister should be more directly in contact with the Dominion Governments, and this was partly satisfied by the substitution of the British Prime Minister for the Colonial Secretary as Chairman of the Imperial Conference, although he was too busy to undertake control of the Colonial Office as far as the self-governing Colonies were concerned.

A modification of the channel of communication was manifestly overdue, because of the need for speedier decisions in war-time. The Colonial Office and Governor General channel was not entirely eliminated, but was relegated to a secondary role, which meant that the Governor Generals' chances of influencing policy were reduced to a minimum, as well as their function as liaison

(1) F.H. Soward: "Sir Robert Borden and Canada's External Policy". Canadian Historical Association Proceedings, 1941, p. 74. (See references there listed).

officers between Imperial and Dominion Governments.

In the Imperial War Conference and Imperial War Cabinet meetings in 1918, the question of administrative procedures was discussed. Although up to that time the Colonial Office channel still remained the primary official medium of communication for the Dominions with Great Britain, or with one another, there was in practice a good deal of correspondence outside this official channel.

Sir Robert Borden's Memoirs record that "On July 16th, discussion arose with Hughes and the other Overseas Ministers, respecting the proposed resolution regarding channels of communication. My diary notes:

" . . . Lunched with Asquith and discussed with him the development of constitutional relations. He entirely favours direct communication from Cabinet to Cabinet, but thinks that the Prime Minister could not undertake the additional duty of Dominion affairs, which I had suggested."

On July 17th in the Imperial War Conference, Hughes proposed the resolution for direct communication and I supported it. . . On July 25th discussion of channels of communication was revived in the Imperial War Cabinet, and eventually Lloyd George announced that direct communication was to be left in the discretion of the Prime Ministers. . . The sessions of the Imperial War Conference concluded on July 26th. . . Later (July 30th) it was taken up in the Imperial War Cabinet where, in the following form, it received unanimous approval:(1)

(1) The Prime Ministers of the Dominions, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet, have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and vice versa.

(1) Borden: Memoirs. II. pp.831-2.

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(2) Such communications should be confined to questions of Cabinet importance. The Prime Ministers themselves are judges of such questions.

(3) Telegraphic communications between the Prime Ministers should, as a rule, be conducted through the Colonial Office machinery, but this will not exclude the adoption of more direct means of communication in exceptional circumstances!"(1)

With regard to this resolution, Borden noted in his Memoirs: "In Canada the first part of the resolution did not carry matters much beyond the point they had already reached. Whenever necessary during the war, it had been my practice as Prime Minister to send a direct message to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. In form, the communication was from the Governor General to the Colonial Secretary embodying the exact text of the message. Replies were communicated through the same channel."(2)

It will be seen that the resolution for more direct Government-to-Government correspondence was not an innovation, but represented a gradual development. "The changes after 1914", as Miss Nuendorff has expressed it, "did not represent a break with the past, but only an acceleration of a process already long in motion. The War was responsible for the change in so far as it greatly strengthened Canadian nationalism and gave Canadian statesmen increased confidence in themselves, especially after Borden participated in the deliberations of the War Cabinet and Canada was officially represented at the Peace Conference and the League of Nations. The War was also responsible for change in that it made correspondence through the Governor General too slow in vital issues and necessitated his elimination as a channel of correspondence between

(1) Borden: Memoirs. II. p.828. A.G. Dewey: The Dominions and Diplomacy. I. p. 319.

(2) Borden: Memoirs. II. p.828n.  
Borden: Canadian Constitutional Studies. p. 109.

Dominions and Imperial Prime Ministers in matters of Cabinet importance. But the fact that this change had been suggested before shows that the tendency was already there. In the early days of the War there had already been direct correspondence between the Admiralty and the Foreign Office and the military and naval authorities in the Dominions, and at first the report on the progress of the War was sent direct to the Canadian Prime Minister, who had to ask permission to show it to the Governor General. But political correspondence continued to pass through the Governor General till 1918. The decision to change this rule had, in all probability, as much to do with the desire that the help of the Dominions should appear spontaneous and not as a result of pressure through the Governor General, as it had to do with the desire to save time." (1)

Even the agreement reached at the Imperial War Cabinet in 1918 to make greater use of the Prime Minister's channel failed to satisfy the extreme Nationalists in Canada, who seemed to aim at a complete divorce from the Colonial Office. For instance, during the Canadian debate on the Lausanne Treaty, Mr. Woodsworth, noting that the communications from the Home Government were signed by the Colonial Secretary, heckled the Premier as to why these had not come from the Sovereign to the Governor General. (2)

(1) Gwen Neanderff. op. cit. pp.265-266.

(2) H. of C. Debates. June 19, 1924. p.3409.  
Dewey: Vol.I. p.354n.

Proposal of 1919 at Paris

In 1919 General Smuts, representing the Union of South Africa, submitted a paper for Mr. Lloyd George's consideration. This memorandum was handed by Botha to Borden, at the League of Nations meeting in Paris on January 16, 1919. Borden referred it to Lloyd George, who apparently was unreceptive to the suggestions it contained.<sup>(1)</sup> In Smuts's memorandum, he suggested that the position of the Governor General should be approximated to that of the King, by severing his connection with the British Government; that he should cease altogether to be a channel of communication between the Dominion Governments and the Colonial Office, "if this office continues to exist in reference to the Dominions"; and the appointing of local citizens, instead of Englishmen, as Governor General. Each Dominion could then appoint a Minister in England as its representative and the British Government could use him for communications, or if they preferred, could appoint their own agent in the Dominions to represent their views and interests.

(Almost all these suggestions came to be fulfilled within a few years. The Governor General's status was re-defined in 1926, and in general his powers and duties were limited to ceremonial representation on behalf of the Crown. In 1926,<sup>\*</sup> moreover, he ceased to be the channel of official correspondence; the Dominions Office in 1925 replaced the Dominions Department of the Colonial Office. South Africa was one of the first Dominion Governments to appoint a native-born South African as Governor General; Canada appointed its first Canadian

(1) Borden: Memoirs. II. pp.900-910.

\* Actually, the discontinuance came into official effect on July 1, 1927.



Governor General, Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, in February, 1952. The High Commissioners in London were used as the channels of inter-governmental correspondence increasingly after 1921 and officially after 1926; and in 1928 the British Government appointed its own High Commissioners to Canada and some other Dominions.)

Imperial Conference 1921.

In 1920, as has been indicated, the Dominions' "right of Legation" was conceded by the British Government, and in the case of separate Canadian representation in the United States, by the United States Government. This reduced the dependency on the Colonial Office, and thus, in theory, the use of the Governor General as a link with the Colonial Office. In 1921 the position and status of the High Commissioner in London were enhanced; he was given revised instructions; and he was brought nominally under the Department of External Affairs, although he still communicated directly with the Prime Minister and sometimes with other Departments. At the Imperial Conference held in London in 1921, the structure of the Commonwealth and the constitutional status of the self-governing Dominions were again debated, and the ground-work was laid for the declarations of 1926. Canada displayed its independent foreign policy by persuading the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth members not to renew the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The transformation of the constitutional form of the Empire was developing apace. In 1923 Canada alone signed the Halibut Fisheries Treaty with the U.S.A.

The principle of direct communication between governments was endorsed by the Conference in 1921, (Cmd. 1474, p.10), and in 1926, (Cmd.2768, p.27).

The Governor General's channel was still in partial use up to the change introduced on July 1, 1927. In the Department of External Affairs Annual Report for 1925-26, submitted under the name of Mr. Mackenzie King, it was stated: "Correspondence by post and cable with the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and with His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington, through the Governor General, and with the High Commissioner for Canada in London, the Commissioner-General in Paris, and the Canadian Advisory Officer, Geneva, has been extensive and increasing. Correspondence with the other Dominions and with consular representatives of foreign powers in Canada is also growing. In most cases, the department serves as a clearing-house, transmitting enquiries and replies to the departments primarily concerned; other questions, falling within the scope of the duties of this department, are dealt with direct."

#### Imperial Conference 1926.

When the Imperial Conference of 1926 took place, out of its Committee on Inter-Imperial Relations emerged the famous "Balfour Report", defining the autonomous status of the Dominions in respect of their domestic or external affairs. One of the consequences of this assertion was that the status of the Governor General was made more exclusively symbolic and ceremonial, as representative of the Crown in more or less a vice-regal capacity, and

less political as a liaison between the Dominion Government and the Colonial Office. He was shorn of his role as a channel of official communications, although he was to continue seeing copies of despatches to and from the United Kingdom.

The report of the Imperial Relations Committee of the 1926 Conference declared:

In our opinion it is an essential consequence of the equality of status existing among the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, that the Governor General of a Dominion is the representative of the Crown, holding in all essential respects the same position in relation to the administration of public affairs in a Dominion as is held by His Majesty the King in Great Britain, and that he is not a representative or agent of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain or of any department of that Government.

It seemed to us to follow that the practice whereby the Governor General of a Dominion is the formal official channel of communication between His Majesty's Government in Great Britain and his governments in the Dominions might be regarded as no longer wholly in accordance with the constitutional position of the Governor General. It was thought that the recognized official channel of communication should be, in the future, between government and government direct. . . but it was recognized by the committee as an essential feature of any change or development in the channels of communication that the Governor General should be supplied with copies of all documents of importance and in general should be kept as fully informed as is His Majesty the King in Great Britain of Cabinet business and public affairs. <sup>(1)</sup>

In pursuance of the principle recognized in these words, it was subsequently decided that from the 1st of July, 1927,<sup>\*</sup> communications from the British Government would no longer be addressed to the Governor General, but would be addressed directly to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but would be shown to the Governor General and the Prime Minister. The same rule

(1) Cmd. 2768. p. 16.

\* See footnote next page.

applied to communications from foreign governments. All communications from a foreign or Imperial government, regardless of their subject matter or ultimate destination of their representations, were thenceforth to pass in the first instance through the Department. Officially, there was no direct intercourse between any outside government and any <sup>other</sup> Department of the Canadian Government or any Provincial Government, although certain Post Office correspondence is an exception to this rule.

The contretemps over the action of Lord Byng in the dissolution issue of 1926 is said to have played a part in the redefinition of the role of the Governor General made at the Imperial Conference of that year. But thereafter, the part played by Mr. Mackenzie King seems to have diminished. "Having played his part in getting a new definition of the Governor General's status, and having established direct communication between the Governments, he seemed to lose interest. Just as the Balfour Report was never formally approved of in the Imperial Parliament, but was only discussed one evening, long after the Conference was over, so in the Canadian Parliament Mr. King did not get beyond eulogizing the Report, and the motion of the Opposition, that the House should not be assumed tacitly to have acquiesced in the Report, which should not be acted upon until it had received the approval of Parliament, was defeated by 122 to

\* Note: The new system of direct communication between His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, without the intervention of the Governor General of the Dominion concerned, was inaugurated as between Great Britain and the Irish Free State, some time during the first half of the year 1927; and as between Great Britain and Canada, on July 1, 1927. (A.J. Toynbee: The Conduct of British Empire Foreign Relations since the Peace Settlement. (1928) p.81).

78 votes. That this was not caused by Conservative disapproval of the Report was shown in 1930 when they were in power and approved of the Report of the Conference of that year".<sup>(1)</sup>

High Commissioner's Office 1928.

Meanwhile, in 1928, to replace the discontinued role of the Governor General, the United Kingdom Government appointed a High Commissioner (Sir William Clark) to Ottawa as the agent-in-chief of the Dominions Office, the decision to do so having been reached at the Imperial Conference of 1926. Mr. Mackenzie King, in welcoming the new High Commissioner on November 4, 1928, said: "More and more the Governor General came to be exclusively the representative of His Majesty the King, and less and less the representative or agent of the Government of Great Britain, as distinguished from the Crown or the Crown plus the Government".<sup>(2)</sup>

During the abdication crisis, in 1936, the Canadian Government was kept informed by the Earnscliffe Office. Mr. Mackenzie King stated in the House that "Most of the communications from the Prime Minister of Great Britain came to our Government from the Dominions Office and nearly all communications from the governments of other self-governing dominions of the Commonwealth came through the Dominions Office. All reached us through the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Ottawa." <sup>(3)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Gwen Neuendorff: op. cit. p. 237.

<sup>(2)</sup> See H. of C. Debates, Mr. King: April 13, 1927, pp. 2465; January 18, 1937, pp.45.

<sup>(3)</sup> H. of C. Debates, January 18, 1937, p.45.

Imperial Conference, 1930.

At the Imperial Conference of 1930 the British Government indicated that it was ready to issue instructions to its Ambassadors and Ministers to receive communications directly from a Dominion Government in matters not of general and political concern, and to act without waiting for instructions from the British Foreign Office. In matters of general and political concern, it was agreed at the Conference that in case of urgency a Dominion might communicate directly with the British diplomatic representatives but that the latter would normally await instructions, if practicable, before taking any action, from the British Government, with whom the Dominion Government would simultaneously communicate. <sup>(1)</sup>

The Imperial Conference of 1930 agreed that the chief recommendations of the 1926 Conference should be embodied in an Act of the Imperial Parliament. The Parliament of each Dominion then agreed to request that the Act should be passed, and on December 11, 1931, the Statute of Westminster received assent. The Act made no mention of the status of the Governor General, but by implication left his powers abridged as they were in 1926.

The situation as regards inter-imperial correspondence could therefore be summarized, as Dr. Gwen Neuendorff has done, in the following terms:

(1) Text given in R.M. Dawson, The Development of Dominion Status, pp.404-45, and G.E.H. Palmer, Consultation and Cooperation in the British Commonwealth, pp.72-3.  
Cf. A.B. Keith: The Dominions as Sovereign States, pp.582-3.

(a) Inter-government communications through the Governor Generals' channel ceased between the Irish Free State and Great Britain early in 1927; between Canada and Great Britain on July 1, 1927; between the Union of South Africa and Great Britain in 1927; between Australia and Great Britain in 1931; and between New Zealand and Great Britain in 1938, and then at the request of the Imperial Government.

(b) In inter-government communication, not involving the King or Queen, the normal channel was from the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Dominion to the Dominions Office (subsequently, in 1947, named the Commonwealth Relations Office) and vice versa. On very unofficial matters, correspondence might pass on a more personal level between Under-Secretaries. (Both Pope and Skelton occasionally exchanged letters on procedural matters with the Permanent Under-Secretaries in London).

(c) Occasionally, but rarely, the Prime Minister exchanged personal letters with the British or other Dominion Prime Ministers. Mr. Mackenzie King occasionally addressed letters to other Heads of State, e.g. President Roosevelt, Hitler, and Mussolini.

The use of direct channel of correspondence between Prime Ministers was exceptional. In any case, the mechanics of it necessitated that the communications normally had to pass either through the "clearing-house" or "post-office" of the Dominions Office or

through the Office of the High Commissioner. Communications from overseas to the Canadian Prime Minister were addressed to him either as Prime Minister or, until 1946, in his capacity of Secretary of State for External Affairs; in either case, such communications were received, decoded, registered, etc., in the Department of External Affairs before reaching the Prime Minister, so the short-cut was more nominal than real.\*

(d) The Secretary of State for External Affairs does not communicate directly with the British Office, or vice versa; but he may and does do so, in matters of urgency, with British Ambassadors, Ministers or Consuls General in foreign countries where there is no Canadian dipomatic or consular representation. If time permits, however, he communicates with them through the Dominions (Commonwealth Relations) Office and thence through the Foreign Office.

(e) Communications are also increasingly exchanged through the channel of the High Commissioners. The Earl of Athlone was appointed to the Governor Generalship of Canada after the High Commissioner had had an audience with the King, to whom High Commissioners have the right of access. The High Commissioner

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\* Bruce Hutchison relates that Prime Minister King informed him that during the Munich crisis, he (laid up at Kingsmere with sciatica) personally decoded telegrams directly received from London; but Hutchison makes it clear that this was neither likely nor possible. (The Incredible Canadian. p.237)



obtained personally from the King his warrant for Canada's proclamation of war in 1939. The High Commissioners, under instructions, are in frequent contact with the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, or his Permanent Under-Secretaries of State; and may occasionally communicate directly with other British Ministries or Departments.

In reverse, the United Kingdom High Commissioner in Ottawa is frequently the channel of British communication to the Secretary of State for External Affairs in important matters, or the Under-Secretary in more routine or less important matters; or he or his deputies see Departmental officers on divisional levels on matters of detail.

While, in principle, other Departments of the Dominion Government do not communicate directly with the corresponding Department or Minister in the United Kingdom, some informal correspondence may occasionally occur between their "opposite numbers" on procedural questions. This is also accomplished by personal contacts between Attachés in the High Commissioners' Offices in either London or Ottawa. The general rule, however, is that all such communications between the departments pass first through External Affairs and the Commonwealth Relations Office.

(f) In addition to these channels, there is the personal contact of visiting Ministers to England with Ministers and Secretaries of State, both singly,

and in Prime Ministers', "foreign Ministers'", or Finance Ministers' Conferences.

(g) Occasional and less formal consultation between government representatives of the Dominions and the United Kingdom occur at the United Nations meetings and NATO meetings.

Wartime Developments

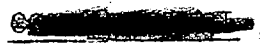
During the early part of the Second World War, Mr. Mackenzie King explained that whereas in the First War there had been an Imperial War Council in London, this was no longer necessary or desirable since the facilities of quick inter-communication were so much greater. "Each dominion has today its Department 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.

"There are thus, so to speak, three sending and three receiving sources, through each of which special classes of communications are sent and received: (a) from prime minister to prime minister direct - those which relate to matters of high policy; (b) through the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and

vice versa - matters more general in character and relating more particularly to information in detail on operation, and the progress of the war; (c) and finally, special communications supplementing those from the sources mentioned, from the high commissioner to the prime minister or to the secretary of state for external affairs and vice versa.

"I might mention that in each of the dominions there are similar means and methods of consultation and communication. 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 these countries we are also represented by our high commissions. . . There is not a day passes that communications in considerable number do not pass back and forth between Great Britain and Canada, many of which are identical with some of those sent to the other dominions. Communications sent by us to London which are likely to be of interest to the other dominions are also sent to the dominions. At the present time there are means of effective communication and consultation in all matters pertaining to the war, much more comprehensive than anything that existed during the last War. I doubt, indeed, if a more efficient arrangement could possible be made." (1)

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



4.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE DEPARTMENT

MR. W.L. MACKENZIE KING, 1922-1930

MR. R.B. BENNETT, 1930-1935

MR. MACKENZIE KING, 1935-1948

The Prime Minister and the Department

Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King (1925-1930)

The interest and participation of Mr. Mackenzie King in the Department from 1922 to 1926 has been outlined in the First Part of this survey. At the latter part of that period, the constitutional crisis and the election absorbed his attention, so that the Department, under the ageing Sir Joseph Pope until 1925, was not a centre of his interest. He invited Dr. Skelton, from Queen's, to accompany him to Europe in 1923 and 1924, and appointed Dr. Skelton as Under-Secretary in 1925 - a step of great importance to the history of the Department.

In his office as Prime Minister, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and President of the Privy Council, he found the burden increasingly onerous. In 1927 he gave the House of Commons a description of it, - although in 1943 he still claimed that the tasks could not be separated, but in 1946, almost twenty years after his description, he finally relieved himself of the titular responsibility for External Affairs.

In the chapter on the Prime Minister's Office, it has been indicated that that office was in part staffed (a) by his personal Secretary, (b) by politically appointed Private Secretaries, (c) by Private Secretaries seconded from the Department of External Affairs, and (d) by clerical staff belonging to the Department but serving in the Prime Minister's Office. In 1926 Mr. King asked Parliament for authority to appoint, outside of the Civil

Service Commission, at a salary of \$8,000 a year, a directing head of his Office, or "Executive Assistant" of tantamount rank of Deputy Minister. In justifying this appointment (which in fact was approved but never made), Mr. King told the House something of the multifarious burdens besetting a Prime Minister:

At the present time may I say that in addition to holding the office of Prime Minister I am filling the office of President of the Privy Council and also the office of Secretary of State for External Affairs. In the latter part of Sir Robert Borden's days those positions were held by other gentlemen with separate portfolios (sic) in the Cabinet. In addition to the executive duties of those offices, the Prime Minister has, as the House well knows, a very special responsibility to parliament. He is supposed to keep track of the business in the House and to be acquainted with the different questions that come up for discussion. He is the leader of his party and he has also the same responsibility as every other member of the House has as the representative of a constituency. . . . In addition to the executive work of the office and the work of the session in parliament, with which hon. members are familiar, there are other obligations falling upon the Prime Minister which occupy a great deal of time. I might mention, first of all, the relations with the Governor General. The Prime Minister represents the Government and Parliament in relations with His Excellency. These relations are of a personal character, and properly discharged, they take up a certain amount of time. There are the relations with the representatives of foreign countries, the personal relations with consuls-general representing their countries in a quasi-diplomatic way, and the impersonal relations carried on by correspondence through the External Affairs Department and which involve keeping abreast of events in different parts of the world. Very shortly a Minister will be appointed to Ottawa as the representative of the United States; he will expect to have personal interviews with the Prime Minister, especially if the Prime Minister is holding the position of Secretary of State for External Affairs. I understand that in all probability Great Britain will appoint a representative to Canada in a similar capacity, some one who will be in the position of a High Commissioner to the Dominion, who will expect more in the way of opportunity of personal contact with the Prime Minister than with other Ministers of the Crown.

As members of the House know, the Prime Minister is expected to be prepared to take part in the name of the country in numerous public events and upon ceremonial occasions of which I need not make mention, all of this regardless of the fact that he has from day to day without cessation a very heavy official and personal correspondence, has endless personal interviews and is supposed to give time and thought to the shaping of public policies.<sup>(1)</sup>

These domestic burdens were indeed onerous for the Prime Minister. In addition, he had to devote his attention to international problems which were gathering momentum. In 1923 and in 1924 he had visited England. Again in 1926 he was in England, and went to Geneva in 1928.

In 1928 Canada sought election to one of the nine non-permanent seats on the League of Nations Council, and was selected to that coveted honour in 1927. It was for a three-year term. During Canada's first year on the Council, the proposed Briand-Kellogg Pact, or Pact of Paris, was negotiated. To emphasize Canadian interest in the Pact, the Prime Minister of Canada decided to be present in Paris for the formal signature. He also announced his intention of attending the meeting of the Council and Ninth Assembly in 1928. Mr. King was the first Dominion Prime Minister from overseas to attend the Assembly sessions, although Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Edouard Herriot, the French Premier, and President Cosgrave of the Irish Free State had attended earlier sessions. Mr. King was elected one of the Vice-Presidents of the Ninth Assembly, and

(1) H. of C. Debates, April 13, 1927, p.2458.

actively participated in the committee work and the general debate on the work of the League. Dr. Skelton accompanied him, and also Dr. Riddell of Geneva, as substitute delegates.

Before those dates, as has been indicated previously, the League of Nations had been a matter of much attention for the King Government. The Government had opposed Article Ten of the League Covenant in the belief that it carried too many commitments, in a European field, for a distinct and uninfluential country such as Canada. It also opposed the Geneva Protocol of 1924 for similar reasons, and the Locarno Pact of 1925. But the King Government sincerely believed in the League of Nations as an international forum of debate and negotiation and protection of peace, and as a centre of social and economic cooperation, especially in international labour policy.

It demonstrated this interest by appointing in 1925 a Canadian Advisory Officer to be permanently accredited to the League of Nations in Geneva. Dr. W.A. Riddell, already well established there in connection with the International Labour Office, had no diplomatic status, but "helped to underline Canada's emergence as an international personality and did add to the Department of External Affairs' scanty stock of comment on international developments as assessed by Canadians". He sat on countless international committees and conferences, and gave great assistance to the successive ad hoc Canadian delegations to the League of Nations Assemblies.



It has been shown how hesitant Mr. King was to proceed with the plans - inherited from Borden and Meighen - to expand the diplomatic service and to establish a Legation in Washington. The proposal remained in abeyance for several years, - until after Mr. King's re-election. In 1926, however, he overcame his misgivings and hesitations, and - possibly influenced by the action of the Irish Free State in 1924 - at last decided to take action in opening Canada's first independent diplomatic Legation, with the nomination of Mr. Vincent Massey as first Canadian Minister Plenipotentiary to Washington. This followed the Balfour Report at the Imperial Conference of Prime Ministers in 1926, at which the principles of dominion autonomy and equality, adumbrated in 1920, were asseverated and confirmed.

Having established the precedent, Mr. King next raised the old Office of the Commissioner General in Paris to a Legation, in 1928, and established a third Legation in Tokyo in 1929. The details of their establishment and organization were left to Dr. Skelton and the Department to work out. In Ottawa, this development of diplomatic representation abroad threw new burdens on the Department, and the home staff had to be slightly enlarged to cope with the new tasks. Mr. King, moreover, continued the practice initiated by Borden, of co-opting certain departmental staff for assistance in the Prime Minister's Office; and Dr. Skelton himself soon found that his services were divided between those of administrative head of this Department and those of private adviser to the Prime Minister.

After 1929 and the Tokyo venture, however, the Economic Depression, beginning with the financial breakdown in the United States and the fall of the Hoover Administration, also quickly struck Canada. The consequence was a new general election, in which the plight of unemployment played a major part, and the resultant defeat of the Liberal Government in August 1930. The span of Mackenzie King's political reign was then interrupted for the next five years; and the responsibility of the Department of External Affairs fell into less interested hands.

Rt. Hon. R.B. Bennett (1930-35)

Mr. Bennett's Conservative Government, taking office on August 7, 1930, came in at the height of the Great Depression, and its tasks during its five years in office were mainly those of an economic character. Fallen trade and domestic unemployment were problems of the greatest magnitude, and supplanted other interests such as foreign affairs except in so far as foreign conditions affected Canadian markets and commerce. Bennett's efforts were largely directed toward expansion of trade within the Commonwealth, and the enlargement of imperial preferences. At the Ottawa Conference of 1931, these policies were discussed, resulting in the Ottawa Agreement.

Mr. Bennett, as Prime Minister, retained the portfolio of External Affairs, but also held the posts of President of the Privy Council, Minister of Finance, and Receiver-General (until 1932). He chose to keep his

Cabinet small; he also had a predilection for controlling the strings of government by concentration of power in his own hands. He had, in the first Meighen Ministry, served for three months as Minister of Justice and Attorney-General, and in the second Meighen administration, which lasted only three months, he was Minister without Portfolio, Minister of Finance and Receiver-General, and Acting Minister of the Interior, Mines and Indian Affairs. A burden such as these combined portfolios implied, was even more onerous than that of which Mr. King complained; but this did not seem to give Mr. Bennett too much concern or heart-searching. It tended, however, to diminish his interest in the Department of External Affairs which he had inherited.

After the general election of 1930 which brought the Conservatives into office, it is said that the Conservative caucus was strongly in favour of reducing some of the machinery of government, and of abolishing the Department of External Affairs and returning to the old-time arrangements by which the British Foreign Office or Dominions Office conducted Canada's external affairs. It is alleged that Bennett, the new Prime Minister, supported this view, but postponed taking any action pending further consideration. This story was told privately in 1953 by a Conservative Member of Parliament to Justice John E. Read - formerly Legal Adviser in the Department of External Affairs; but corroboration has not been obtained. The new appointments of Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Herridge as diplomatic Ministers would seem to recognize implicitly the need of continuance of a diplomatic headquarters at home.

Mr. Bennett was a statesman of great independence and self-sufficiency, and apparently considered that he needed little advice from technical experts in international affairs. When the Imperial Conference in London of 1930 was convoked, Dr. Skelton strongly urged Mr. Bennett to take some departmental officials with him, and suggested himself, as Under-Secretary, Mr. Read as Legal Adviser, and Mr. Pearson, then First Secretary. Mr. Bennett did not feel that he needed any officials to accompany him. He took with him, however, Col. W.A. Steel of the Department of National Defence as his Secretary. Col. Steel soon realized that professional advice on external affairs matters coming up before the Conference would be essential. The other Cabinet Ministers who accompanied him were not experts in external matters: Hon. Hugh Guthrie, the Minister of Justice, Hon. H.H. Stevens, Minister of Trade and Commerce, and Hon. M. Dupré, Solicitor-General.\* Mr. Bennett had gone to the Conference with the hope that it would make trade relations its main business. Instead, trade discussions did not amount to much and the main feature of the Conference was the Statute of Westminster.

When the Conference opened, Mr. Bennett attempted to handle the work in the Committee of Heads of Delegations

\* The Imperial Conference was held in London from October 1 to November 15, 1930. Almost at the same time, the eleventh Assembly of the League of Nations was being held in Geneva from September 10 to October 4. The Canadian Delegation consisted of Hon. Sir Robert Borden, Senator Thomas Chapais, and Mrs. Mary Irene Parlby; the Hon. Philippe Roy, Dr. W.A. Riddell and Col. G.P. Vanier were alternate delegates.

with the assistance of only those Cabinet Ministers who were with him. He found, however, that the absence of briefing, such as could have been provided by officials, placed him at a serious disadvantage in discussions with United Kingdom Cabinet Ministers attending the Conference, who were of course fully briefed by their own Civil Service advisers.

He declined to bring Dr. Skelton, with whom he had friendly relations and respect, on grounds, as Dr. Skelton later said, that "The Prime Minister told me he had to leave some one at home to keep the government running."

However, he began to use Mr. Read's services in this connection; and when he returned from the Conference he had begun to form a different opinion as to the possible usefulness of professional advice on external affairs questions.\* Closer acquaintance with Dr. Skelton's personality and ability further contributed to an alteration of his outlook. Subsequently he often sought out Dr. Skelton's advice.

Two years later, when the Imperial Economic Conference of 1932 was held in Ottawa, Mr. Bennett

\* In a confidential memorandum by Miss M. McKenzie, December 15, 1953, (on file 1-EA-1957), the statement of Mrs. Read to an officer of the Department in 1953 is quoted to the effect that Mr. Read was mainly responsible for convincing Mr. Bennett of the need of retaining a strong Department of External Affairs. Mr. Read and Mr. Bennett were close friends, came from the same district in the Maritimes, and their families had neighbouring grants of land resulting from service with Wolfe. Mr. Richard Bedford Bennett's name was derived from a John Bedford Read. Whether or not Mr. John Read was as influential in persuading Mr. Bennett, as alleged, Mr. Bennett's own realization of the need of an advisory Department seems to have turned his earlier doubts.

put the Department (mostly Mr. W.H. Measures) in full charge of organizing it, (with, of course, the assistance of other Government Departments concerned), and utilized the Department effectively in the proceedings of the Ottawa Conference.

He gave no encouragement to the development of further Canadian diplomatic Missions abroad, but tolerated without much change or expansion those already existing, - in Washington, London, Paris and Tokyo. The chief reason for this neglect was of course economic; diplomatic establishments were regarded as luxuries, which at that period the depressed Canadian economy could not support. The other principal reason was the traditional Conservative attitude (broken, however, by Sir Robert Borden) that independent Canadian representation tended to break the unity of the Empire and was derogatory to the central authority of the Crown which was represented by the Imperial Government in London. Nevertheless, Bennett conceded that in so far as diplomatic missions served the purposes of promotion of commerce, they might be justified and the existing ones might be retained intact, though not enlarged.

On July 30, 1931, Mr. Pouliot said: "I would remind the committee of what was said in my country during the last campaign. Conservative speakers said that it would be the policy of the Conservative party to abolish the legations at London, Washington and Tokyo and use the money thus expended for old age pensions. I am glad that the Prime Minister has acted otherwise than as announced by his followers." (1)

(1) H. of C. Debates, July 30, 1931, p.4341.

While Conservative Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bennett had opposed the appointment of a Canadian Minister to Washington. In the House of Commons on April 13, 1927, he said:

This country apparently is entering on a great adventure, the last great adventure in our relation to the British Empire. I am wholly opposed to the establishment of this embassy at Washington. It is but the doctrine of separation; it is but the evidence in many minds of the end of our connection with the empire. For that is what it means. It means nothing else ultimately because if we are a sovereign state we cannot belong to the British Empire. (1)

But by 1930 he had changed his view, and had accepted the Washington, Paris and Tokyo Missions.

Speaking in the House in 1931, Mr. King quoted a considerable number of previous expressions by Mr. Bennett opposing the principle of independent diplomatic representation, respecting both Washington and Tokyo. (2) Mr. Bennett had in various speeches in 1927 and 1928 denounced the opening of separate embassies and legations, as jeopardizing imperial unity, had favoured attachments of Canadians to the British Embassies, and had emphasized that what was needed were more trade commissioners, and not diplomats. On April 13, 1927, he said: "My views are well known. I do not believe Sir Robert Borden, when he desired to establish a representative in Washington, had in mind any such pretentious effort as is now being made. The desire arose out of the trade commissions we had in Washington during the war. I have always felt,

(1) Ibid. April 13, 1927, p.2472.

(2) Ibid. July 30, 1931, pp.4333-4; 4341-3.

and I still strongly believe, that Canada should have an active trade commissioner in Washington, a gentleman who, if you wish, should occupy a position similar to that which Mr. Larkin occupies in London. He is High Commissioner, and there might well be a high commissioner at Washington who would devote his attention to trade. . . . What we ought to establish is a trade commissioner's office, a high commissioner's office if you will. Just as we have in England various trade commissioners with a high commissioner at the head, so we should establish in Washington, not an embassy but a trade commissioner's office. We do not need diplomats but trade commissioners. . . ."(1)

In 1930, when Bennett came into office as Prime Minister, he found three Legations already established, in Washington, Paris and Tokyo; and he decided to leave them intact. As has been said above, the High Commissioner's Office was vacant in consequence of the death of Mr. Larkin, and Mr. Bennett appointed Mr. Ferguson as High Commissioner. The post at Washington was vacant, through the abortive transfer of Mr. Massey just before the change of government, and Mr. Bennett appointed Mr. W.D. Herridge as Minister. Mr. Roy and Mr. Marler were left undisturbed in Paris and Tokyo. In July, 1930, Mr. King said: "I should like to ask my right hon. friend to say whether he has modified his views." Mr. Bennett in reply sang the praises of the former Minister, Mr. Massey, and of Mr. Marler in Tokyo (although Mr. MacDonald, Mr.

(1) Ibid. April 13, 1927. p.2481.



Church and Mr. Pouliot expressed strong criticism),<sup>(1)</sup> and then made an effort to confirm his old objection and at the same time to justify the continuance of existing legations purely on commercial grounds. "So far as I am concerned I did not view with approval the establishment of legations in foreign countries on behalf of the Dominion. I rather believed the doctrine of Sir Robert Borden in the first instance was a sound one, namely that we should have our legation in the same premises as the British Embassy. . ." However, he went on, "I think it is now abundantly clear, from the observations that have been made publicly and otherwise by our Minister at Tokyo, that the legation in that place is an adjunct to our commercial activities, and permits him, by reason of his diplomatic position, to have audience - if I may use that term, which I believe would be the proper one under the circumstances - with the authorities of another country, more readily and more expeditiously than could be hoped for if he did not occupy that position. . . . With respect to Washington . . . there is no doubt that any minister representing this Dominion could, if he had the desire and the inclination to interest himself in commercial matters affecting the welfare of this country in its relations with the great republic, be of inestimable service, and more so by reason of the particular position which is accorded to the diplomatic representatives of countries in foreign capitals." (2)

[1] T.L.Church: "In my opinion, some politicians sent by us as Ambassadors have caused harm in connection with these foreign legations of ours. They do not understand anything about diplomacy and have had no training. . . . In the days of the Roman Empire, the Emperor Caligula appointed his horse as a diplomat and ambassador. I suggest that we do not train in Canada diplomats fit to go and take over such work." (H. of C. Debates, February 25, 1941, p.1012).

(2) Ibid. July 30, 1931, pp.4335-6.

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Mr. Bennett concluded by saying: "Like all other heads of parties who succeed to a position as distinguished from an idea, who have to deal with a concrete situation and not with a more academic problem, we found these legations, and we will maintain them to the very best of our ability, we will support in every possible way their usefulness, hoping that as the days go by a clearer appreciation of their value in the field of commercial activities may make their maintenance more desirable and more justifiable."<sup>(1)</sup>

"The onslaught of the Great Depression strengthened the tendency toward passivity. For almost a decade, whichever party was in power, the government was almost entirely preoccupied with the difficulties created at home by falling prices, shrinking markets, declining revenues and rising unemployment. The defeat of the King Government in 1930 could be attributed to the depression. The Bennett regime was hard at work during its five-year tenure of office endeavouring with more vigour than success to "blast its way into the markets of the world". Under such conditions economy in administration was the order of the day for every department of government. The Department of External Affairs with the Prime Minister as its Minister could obviously be no exception to the rule. The result was an almost complete cessation of staff recruiting despite the fewness of its personnel. There was even a tendency to raid its scanty ranks for other duties. Thus, L.B. Pearson was called upon to act as Secretary of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads.

<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid

The Annual Report of the Department for 1931, which listed the personnel from Tokyo to Geneva, revealed the fact that the largest number of foreign service officers in any one mission was four in Washington, - and one of these also served as Commercial Secretary." (1)

Mr. Mackenzie King, when explaining the reasons for not separating the office of Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, attempted to support his attitude by reference to the similar attitude of Mr. R.B. Bennett. "I am wholly right, I believe, when I say that <sup>when</sup> Lord Bennett became Prime Minister he had previously entertained the view that it would be desirable to separate the two offices, but he had been in office for only a very short time before he expressed quite frankly the view that it would not be wise to separate the two offices. He found that the Department of External Affairs was in many important particulars concerned with the work that the Prime Minister's Office would have to undertake in connection with very many of the questions that came up, and throughout the five years that he was in office he continued to hold the two positions. If those positions had been separated during the term of Mr. Bennett's prime ministership of this country it would have meant that we would have had a separate minister of external affairs in 1935." (2)

Reference has been made (in the chapter on "Dr. O.D. Skelton") to the fact that Dr. Skelton became almost

(1) F.H. Soward: "The Department of External Affairs and Canadian Autonomy 1899-1939". Canadian Historical Association. p.13.

(2) H. of C. Debates, April 2, 1946. p.490.

as important/confidential adviser to Mr. Bennett as he was to Mr. King; and Bennett valued his services accordingly, to the extent of several times proposing to honour him with a knighthood or other high award. In this way, Mr. Bennett, after his alleged earlier misgivings, came to have confidence in the Department of which he retained the titular headship. He also acquired great confidence in L.B. Pearson, of the Department, using him for special Commission work, obtaining for him an honorarium, and recognizing his services with an O.B.E.

Mr. Mackenzie King (Second Period) (1935-48).

When in 1935 Mr. Mackenzie King returned to office as Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs in the newly elected Liberal Government, he again delayed for a few years a further expansion of the diplomatic service. This was largely due to the aftermath of the Great Depression, which was still felt and which discouraged any ventures into new parliamentary expenditures. Mr. King also doubtless felt that the mood of the country was not yet prepared for further experiments in independent diplomacy; but during the next few years he nursed the idea in his mind, and was also prompted, as he later declared, by the insistent urgings of other countries to establish legations in Canada on a reciprocal basis.

His general foreign policy during the period between 1935 and the outbreak of the Second World War need not be examined in this survey of the Department.

Until 1939 in broad principle it followed the trend of the United States of reaction against European entanglements, and was basically "isolationist". Although unlike the United States, Canada was a very active participant in the League of Nations having taken a prominent place in the Assembly Committees and having held a non-permanent seat on the Security Council, its policy at home was based on the principle of no advance "commitments", a "wait and see" policy in European and international affairs, and a position that in any international involvements involving military action, "Parliament must be consulted". This was the democratic ideal, although something of a shibboleth, of the King regime.

During this period, the League of Nations was in sore straits, from which it failed to recover. The Manchurian aggression, which, in spite of the Lytton Report, the League did little to settle other than by censure, led to the secession of Japan. The Italo-Ethiopian aggression, followed by the collapse of sanctions, and to the dismaying Hoare-Laval compromise, led to Italy's secession from membership. The Spanish Civil War had further detrimental effects on the League unity. Canada grew cool to the League. Mr. John W. Dafoe blamed Mr. King; in an address at the biennial Conference on Canadian-American Affairs, in the summer of 1937, he expressed uneasiness for the future after "the League of Nations, with assurances of the most

distinguished consideration, was ushered out into the darkness by Mr. Mackenzie King."<sup>(1)</sup> In the summer of 1937 Mr. King visited Berlin and saw Herr Hitler, and came back to Canada reassured. In 1938 Hitler commenced his series of aggressions on Austria and Czechoslovakia; and the King Government's policy, morally supported by United States official attitude, continued to be one of isolationism, neutrality and no commitments. When Mr. Neville Chamberlain apparently staved off further German aggressions at Munich, King expressed relief and conveyed his congratulations. But the war clouds were gathering in Europe, and Canada's position was anxious but still non-committal. On September 8, 1939, Mr. King said in the House of Commons: "If at times I have been silent and seemed to be shirking responsibility in not discussing every point that has been raised, it has been because for the last three years I have been living with this awful dread of war." Nevertheless, events moved so rapidly in Europe that almost before the Canadians were fully aware or prepared, the debacle had commenced with the seizure of the Danzig corridor and the invasion of Poland, the resultant involvement of Great Britain in a state of belligerency, and the inevitable participation of the Commonwealth, including Canada.

<sup>(1)</sup> See Canada in World Affairs, the Pre-War Years, Chapter II, pp.23-40.

During the War, Canadian foreign policy under Mr. King's leadership fell into a more regular and unified pattern, in closest association and cooperation with all the Allied and Associated Powers, who had a sole and joint policy of defeat of the common enemy. This policy was co-ordinated with the United States, even in its period of neutrality, by agreements on joint defence measures, such as the Ogdensburg Agreement of August 17, 1940, for the establishment of a Permanent Joint Board on

Defence between Canada and the United States. This important arrangement, the basis of closer collaboration in later phases of the war, was achieved largely through the personal friendship between Mr. Mackenzie King and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had at one time been classmates at Harvard University. Mr. King stated in the House of Commons on November 12, 1940, "I should be the last to claim that the Ogdensburg Agreement was due wholly to the conversations between the president and myself, or to our reciprocal declarations in 1938. I am happy to know that, in a moment of crisis, personal friendship and mutual confidence, shared over many years between Mr. Roosevelt and myself, made it so easy for us to conclude the agreement reached at Ogdensburg. In reality the agreement marks the full blossoming of a long association in harmony between the people of Canada and the people of the United States, to which, I hope and believe, the president and I have also in some measure contributed. . ." (1)

This is but one significant illustration of the role played by the Prime Minister personally - and of course necessarily in the critical times of war - in diplomatic relations with other friendly countries. He explained more than once that, unlike Sir Robert Borden who so often visited England and joined in Imperial Cabinet meetings, Mr. King found it was <sup>more</sup> desirable to remain at home, close to the centre of government, rather than absenting himself by visits overseas; he justified this

(1) H. of C. Debates, November 12, 1940, p. 57.



by pointing to the fact that intra-Commonwealth and inter-allied communications - by cable, wireless, telephone and air-despatch - had become so perfected that collaboration could quite satisfactorily be maintained in Ottawa itself. Moreover, British and other Commonwealth and Allied officials and senior officers, and Canadian special officials, made constant exchanges of visits across the Atlantic, keeping in such a pattern of contact that the need was reduced of the Prime Minister's personal visits to London.

It is not pertinent here to pursue a further commentary on the foreign policy of Canada under Mr. Mackenzie King. That has been dealt with in other published studies.

The Department of External Affairs, still an executive agency, was not responsible for that policy. Its business, however, was to keep an informed eye on international developments, as well as on United States opinion, through information received from British and foreign sources as well as from its own six diplomatic outposts, in London, Paris, Geneva, and Washington, Brussels and The Hague.

It is difficult to ascertain what views were then held by Dr. Skelton, and expressed as his external affairs expert, adviser and consultant to Mr. King. It may be assumed that he supported the prevailing "isolationist" and "democratic-parliamentary" attitude of Mr. King up to the last moment; he is alleged to

have wished to go even further and on the outbreak of war to adopt the form of neutrality adopted by the Irish Free State and the United States, but was unable to prevail upon the Prime Minister or run counter to the strong tides of national opinion.

Meanwhile, as regards the Department itself, of which Mr. King was the titular head, the period 1936-39, and during the first war years, expanded domestically - (as is related in another chapter), and diplomatically abroad, (as is related in the chapter on "Representation Abroad").

Although the Prime Minister's Office had been set up as a separate entity, it was still manned in part from External Affairs personnel and occasional seconded officers, and some of the Prime Minister's perquisites, such as his motor-car and chauffeur, came from the Department. The Department was responsible for his cypher and code communications, and continued to be a co-ordinating organ for the distribution and treatment of documents appertaining to other departments and Ministries. The Under-Secretary of the Department, Dr. Skelton, was, as has been shown, an influential adviser to Mr. King. Mr. King emphasized to the House of Commons at various times up to 1946, how dependent he was, during the war years, on the Department of External Affairs.

As regards the outside service, from 1938 onwards, Mr. King was again ambitious to expand Canadian diplomatic legations abroad, and rapidly did so between 1939 and 1942.

(Minister?)

Mr. Pierrepont Moffat, the United States Ambassador to Canada (1940-43) has an interesting passage in his diary, reporting a conversation he had had with Mr. King on January 8, 1942. "He thought that the group in the Department of External Affairs was peculiarly able and deserving of all praise. Robertson and Pearson were obviously his two favourites. He said, however, that they always wanted to go a little too fast. For instance, they were pressing him to establish Canadian legations all over the place. He was inclined to think that a legation would soon be opened in Moscow, and I suggested that Mexico might have some merits. He said yes, but he had no intention of spreading too fast, particularly as he did not have the men to fill these posts. . . ." (1)

He was also encouraged in this tendency by Dr. Skelton, but he needed no persuasion since he was personally convinced of their desirability. As shown in the chapter on "Representation Abroad", each new Mission, such as those in Belgium and the Netherlands, promoted the desire for further ones. One in Italy had been contemplated, but the Italo-Ethiopian war had prevented it. Missions were accredited to most of the Allied Governments in exile as soon as war broke out. Consulates were opened in Greenland and St. Pierre and Miquelon as war-measures, consular powers given to the Charge d'Affaires in France and Japan, new Legations were opened in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and soon after, in Mexico and Peru. An Embassy was opened in the U.S.S.R. and one

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(1) The Moffat Papers, p.373.

in China. All these, some of them due to pressures from the other countries concerned, received the full encouragement of Mr. Mackenzie King; and he took the greatest care in selecting the first Ministers to open and head them. If, as he told Mr. Moffat, Robertson (who had succeeded Skelton) and Pearson seemed to want to go too fast, Mr. King himself had been going pretty fast in diplomatic expansion since 1939; and continued the momentum in the 40's as Robertson and Pearson apparently wished.

Until 1946 Mr. King adhered strongly to the conviction that the Department of External Affairs must remain under the control of the Prime Minister. But in 1946 the burden of this extra portfolio became too great for him, and he promoted legislation divorcing it from the Prime Minister.<sup>(1)</sup> On September 4, 1946, it was transferred to the control of the Minister of Justice, Mr. Louis St. Laurent, who resigned the portfolio of Justice and Attorney-General three months later (December 9, 1946) to take full charge of External Affairs.

On July 1, 1948, however, Mr. St. Laurent again became Acting Minister of Justice to September 9, and was re-appointed Minister of Justice on September 10, at which date he surrendered the portfolio of External Affairs, and Hon. L.B. Pearson was appointed the ~~first~~ independent Minister of External Affairs.

Mr. Mackenzie King retiring two months later (November 15, 1948), Mr. St. Laurent became Prime Minister, and retained Mr. Pearson as Secretary of State for External Affairs.

(1) See debates on the External Affairs Department Act A amendment Bill (Bill No.6), H. of C. Debates, 1946, pp. 23, 477, 493-4, 494.

Partly due to pressure of events abroad and for pragmatic reasons necessitating the opening of Canadian Legations, and partly from a personal predilection based on a good deal of early travel and diplomatic experience, Mr. King was probably more interested in foreign affairs than any other Canadian Prime Minister except Sir Robert Borden. This meant that he took his role as Secretary of State for External Affairs very seriously, and consequently leaned heavily on his Department, on the Under-Secretary, Dr. Skelton, the legal advisers John Read and Loring Christie in some matters, and on more junior aides such as Robertson and Pearson. He repeatedly declared that he could not relinquish that Departmental portfolio, so integrated was the Department with his Prime Minister's Office and duties. Thus he gave his full support to the small Department.

5.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

1929-1946

The Prime Minister's OfficeSalaries

From Borden's time the salary of a Cabinet Minister was \$10,000, and Borden also had an additional allowance - probably a car allowance - either as First Minister or as Secretary of State for External Affairs. According to the Auditor General's Report for 1917-18, Borden was in receipt of a total remuneration of \$12,000; this item was listed under the Department of External Affairs.

Sir Robert Borden was not sworn in as First Minister; and perhaps this explains why he did not draw an extra salary as Prime Minister. The first time a Prime Minister was sworn in as such was when Mr. Arthur Meighen took office. In 1921 Mr. Mackenzie King was sworn in as Prime Minister, Secretary of State for External Affairs and President of the Privy Council.

While the salary of a Cabinet Minister in Borden's time, under the Salaries Act, (T.S.C. Ch.4), was \$10,000 per annum, Order-in-Council P.C.3073 dated October 23, 1917, provided that the Minister occupying the position of Secretary of State for External Affairs should be granted an extra salary, to date from October 12th; it is not clear whether this measure was passed before an extra salary also for the First Minister had been enacted, or at the same time. Borden and Meighen drew their supplementary salary in their capacity of External Affairs Minister from an External Affairs vote. The extra salary as First Minister had been authorized in a salaries act prior to 1920, but so long as the incumbent was not sworn in as such, presumably he could not draw the extra salary in that capacity.

The Salaries Act was repealed in 1920, in a new consolidated Act, and was again consolidated in 1922, Ch.44. It appeared as Ch.182 of the R.S.C. 1927. The earlier provisions were continued, that whereas all other Ministers members of the Privy Council were to receive \$10,000, "the member of the King's Privy Council holding the recognized position of First Minister shall receive \$15,000 per annum"; this was a repetition of the first, pre-1920 Salaries Act, providing that "The member of the King's Privy Council holding the recognized position of First Minister shall receive in addition (to his salary as Minister) five thousand dollars a year".<sup>(1)</sup>

For a Minister holding two portfolios concurrently, double salary or extra salary could of course not be drawn. There was apparently an alternative of drawing a Minister's salary and, as First Minister, a statutory \$5,000 extra salary, or a Minister's salary and, as a Secretary of State for External Affairs, the extra salary. Borden's salary and \$2,000 allowances were paid by External Affairs. Up to 1929, Mr. Mackenzie King's salary and extra salary, of \$15,000, was paid to him as "Minister for External Affairs" out of the External Affairs vote.<sup>(2)</sup> After 1929 it was paid to him, as "Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs", out of a special vote for the Prime Minister's Office.<sup>(3)</sup> In view of this latter arrangement, it is inexplicable that Mr. Mackenzie King, as Prime Minister, said in the House of Commons as late as July 12, 1943,

<sup>(1)</sup> Pope: "The Federal Government": Canada and its Provinces. VI, p.305.

<sup>(2)</sup> Auditor-General's Reports.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid.



"What he receives in the way of salary comes to him from External Affairs." In 1943, according to the Auditor General's Report for that year, Mr. King received his salary, \$15,000 a year, from the Prime Minister's Office vote.

#### Prime Minister's Office

Prior to 1929, while there had existed what was officially designated and recognized as a "Prime Minister's Office", with its own printed stationery and letter-heads, etc., the Office was in fact a "bureau" composed of one or more personal secretaries (e.g. Sir Robert Borden had had A.E. Blount, Mr. King apparently used Mr. Lemaire, Chief of the Privy Council, as his personal secretary), three or four Private Secretaries (appointed outside the Civil Service Act but paid by External Affairs), a number of clerks, file clerks and typists, (loaned from the Department of External Affairs which paid them), and messengers, also supplied by External Affairs.

On March 18, 1925, Sir Joseph Pope had a list made of "Those receiving salaries from the Department of External Affairs." This list included 36 "permanent staff" in the Department proper in Ottawa, 5 "temporary clerks", 15 "temporary staff in the Passport Office", and 8 "temporary" (besides the Prime Minister) in "The Prime Minister's Office". This last list, initialled by Pope, was as follows:<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) File 2-EA-57.

The Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister .....	\$ 15,000
McGregor, F.A., Private Secretary to the Prime Minister .....	4,000
Measures, W.H., Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister..	3,000
Campney, R.O., Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister .....	3,000
Whitman, R.H., Senior Clerk Stenographer..	1,580
Beaudet, Miss M., Clerk Stenographer .....	1,140
Moore, Miss F., Senior Clerk Stenographer.	1,320
Zawitske, Miss L.F., Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,320
Allen, C., Chauffeur .....	1,440

Dr. Skelton himself in 1925 wrote out in his own hand the following outline:

Department of External Affairs  
Prime Minister's Office  
Secretary of State for External Affairs and  
President of Privy Council

Private Secretary in Privy Council:

L.C. Moyer (October 1, 1922)  
Assistant Private Secretary, in External  
Affairs: R.O. Campney (1924)  
Assistant Private Secretary, in External  
Affairs: W.H. Measures (1921)  
Assistant Private Secretary, in External  
Affairs: H.M. Urquart (1925)

Filing Correspondence:

Hazel Ferguson, Stenographer Gr.3 (1918)  
Ida Schryer, Clerk, Gr. 3 (1917)  
Gertrude Contlee, Typist Gr.2 (1917) (C.S.R.)  
Lillian Moss, Stenographer Gr. 2 (1918) (Nat.Def.)

Filing Documents and Clippings:

Sarah Drysdale, Clerk Gr. 3 (1917)  
Marie Beaudet, Stenographer Gr.2 (1921)  
Dorothy Giddens, Stenographer Gr.2 (1924).

Stenographers:

O. Robitaille, Secy. Ex. (1922) (in Privy Council).  
R. Whitman, Stenographer Gr. 3 (1919)  
Mary Cameron, Clerk Gr.3 (1905)  
Florence Moore, Stenographer Gr.3 (1921)  
Alice Walker, Stenographer Gr.3 (1917)  
Lucy Zawitske, Stenographer Gr.3 (1919)

Messengers and Chauffeur:

- J.S. Nicol, Confidential Messenger (1922)
- J.C. Smith, Confidential Messenger (1918)
- A. Tunwell, Messenger Clerk (1924) (in Privy Council)
- C. Allen, Chauffeur (1923)

In a list prepared by F.M. Baker in May, 1925, staff on the External Affairs pay-list who were employed with the Prime Minister (Mr. King) were:

	\$	<u>First Appointment</u>
McGregor, F.A., Private Secretary to the Prime Minister .....	4,000	1921
Measures, W.H., Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister .....	3,000	1921
Campney, R.O., Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister .....	3,000	1924
Whitman, R.A., Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,680	1919
*Cameron, Miss M., Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,680	1905
*Walker, Miss A., Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,605	1917
*Ferguson, Miss H., Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,620	1913
Beaudet, Miss M., Clerk Stenographer .....	1,200	1921
Schryer, Miss I.B., File Clerk .....	1,200	1917
*Drysdale, Miss S.E., File Clerk .....	1,335	1917
*Nicol, J.S., Confidential Messenger .....	1,200	1922
*Smith, J.C., Confidential Messenger .....	1,200	1918
Moore, Miss F., (temporary) Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,320	1921
Zawitske, Miss L.F. (temporary), Senior Clerk Stenographer .....	1,320	1919
Allen, C., (temporary), Chauffeur ..	1,440	1923

Mr. Baker noted that those marked \* were permanent and that "the others go out with the Minister." (1) \*

\* Whitman had been transferred from the Soldier Settlement Board; Miss Cameron from Department of Interior in 1919; Miss Ferguson, and Smith, from the Food Board in 1918; Miss Zawitske and Miss Schryer from Civil Service Establishment in 1923; and Nicol from the House of Commons.

(1) File 2-EA-57.

In addition to the services of the External Affairs staff for the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. King acquired an official motor-car (a Cadillac, costing \$7,150) in 1925, (1) for which the Department of External Affairs paid, and an official chauffeur (C. Allen, from April 1, 1925, at a salary of \$1,440 and uniform \$193.15) whose salary was paid by External Affairs. Mr. King received an annual motor-car allowance of \$2,000 under Appropriation Act No. 5, Ch. 61, Vote. 352 of 1931. (2) As has been mentioned in Part I under "Staff", his faithful valet, butler, messenger and factotum at Laurier House, J. S. Nicol, was on the payroll of the Department. What Mr. King said in 1943 had been perhaps in part true of the earlier period before 1929:

Matters of book-keeping and many other things of the Prime Minister's Office are managed by External Affairs. The two have been carried on, on the business side, pretty much exclusively by the Department of External Affairs. (3)

Again in 1946 Mr. King stated: "I might mention, at the present time, so far as the Prime Minister's Office is concerned, all the accounting of that office and practically all its business administration is managed from the Department of External Affairs and has been so managed since 1912." (4) In the same debate and context, Mr. King added: "In

(1) (In the fiscal year 1927-28, a Pierce Arrow limousine was provided for the Prime Minister, costing \$8,400 less an allowance on two turned-in Cadillac cars, of \$3,000). (Auditor General's Report, 1927-28).

(2) Ibid. 1943.

(3) H. of C. Debates, July 12, 1943, p.4670.

(4) Ibid., April 2, 1946, p.490.

this year's estimates for 1946-47 there is provided for the Prime Minister's Office a total of \$78,073, and for the Department of External Affairs, \$2,436,325. That speaks for itself of the extent to which these two departments have interlocked, and that over a period of thirty-four years . . . A main reason why a complete division of the two departments has not been made before this is that it will involve, when finally made, a very considerable readjustment of what will have to be provided in connection with the Prime Minister's Office and also changes of importance in the Department of External Affairs as well."<sup>(1)</sup>

This summary shows that in the years of Borden, Meighen, and King, there was a considerable staff attached to what was called the "Prime Minister's Office" who were on the pay lists of the Department of External Affairs. This, as shown above, was the situation in 1925, when Dr. Skelton became Under-Secretary, and for the next few years. The Auditor-General's Report made no separate category prior to 1929, of a "Prime Minister's Office" ; both his own salary and allowances, and those of his special staff, were all listed under the Department of External Affairs.

Proposal for Executive Assistant to Prime Minister

By 1927, however, Mr. Mackenzie King was

<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid. p.491.

beginning to feel that his somewhat makeshift staff and office, leaning on other departments for assistance, was inadequate. He gave a long review of the multifarious executive tasks which burdened the Prime Minister, and expressed a desire to have it re-organized "on a business basis" as a special department and headed by a senior officer tantamount to a Deputy Minister or chef du cabinet.

Mr. Guthrie said in 1927 in the House of Commons: "I remember that in former governments the office of Prime Minister was held by one person, that of the President of the Privy Council by another, and that office of Minister of External Affairs by another. There was a deputy minister in the External Affairs department. There was the equivalent of a deputy minister in the department of the president of the Privy Council, and I think the office of the Prime Minister was equipped with four private secretaries. That, I believe, is the equipment of the establishment today in regard to private secretaries."(1)

Mr. Mackenzie King himself, in the same debate, declared:

The Prime Minister is the only minister of the Crown that has no deputy minister. When he takes office as matters stand he goes into an empty room as far as staff is concerned, and from that time on he has no assistance other than that of a private secretaries. This arrangement may have worked in the past, by a process of combination with other departments of the government, but the work of the office of Prime Minister has grown to such an extent that in the public interest it is imperative that the office be organized

(1) H. of C. Debates, April 13, 1927. p.2459.

on a business basis just as other departments of the government are organized.\* What is required is a business manager to coordinate and supervise the work. . . (1)

Mr. King requested Parliament to approve an item, under the External Affairs Department vote, of \$8,000 for an "executive assistant" who would not be appointed under the Civil Service Act or by examination through the Civil Service Commission, but like Mr. Loring Christie would be specially chosen and presumably appointed by Order-in-Council. He was in practice, to be attached not to External Affairs Department but to the Prime Minister's Office, <sup>to act</sup> /somewhat as a deputy minister or administrative head of the Prime Minister's Office. Mr. King explained that since his office had assumed such large proportions, "it would seem that if the work is to be satisfactorily done, the Prime Minister must be given some officer of high standing, someone well qualified to fill a position which will correspond to that of deputy minister in other departments of government. I think he should be appointed by the Prime Minister himself." (2)

Mr. Bennett, leader of the Opposition, agreed that some such assistant was necessary, but argued in favour of appointing to this role a Parliamentary under-secretary or assistant. This suggestion did not quite meet the necessities envisaged by Mr. King.

Mr. Guthrie agreed that such an executive

\* There was no "deputy" head of that Office other than the senior-most of the Private Secretaries, no permanent Under-Secretary, and no Parliamentary Under-Secretary or Assistant.

(1) H. of C. Debates, April 13, 1927, p.2458.

(2) Ibid.

assistant was necessary, but argued that he should not be a patronage appointment but should be appointed under the Civil Service Act.

The question of permanency and non-partisanship was also discussed. Mr. Cahan observed that if the incumbent were to be a confidential executive, "this very fact carries with it the presumption that he will not be presumed to have any right to continue in office, when the Prime Minister vacates, if he ever does, his present position." To this Mr. King replied:

Certainly should it be the wish of the successor of one prime minister to appoint some other than the official the previous prime minister has had as a confidential assistant and executive he should have that right. But I would draw the attention of the House to this circumstance, which I think is deserving of note; that in England the Prime Minister has found it very much to his advantage to have as his chief assistant one who has served in the same capacity to his predecessors - not only one such chief assistant but two. It is becoming increasingly the practice in England, even in the Prime Minister's Office, to retain the services of those who become accustomed to the special duties pertaining to particular offices. I shall mention the name which will be well known to members of this House, that of Sir Maurice Hankey. Sir Maurice acted, one might say, in a confidential way, as executive to the Cabinet of Great Britain during the period of the war. He was with Mr. Bonar Law, he was with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, he is with Mr. Baldwin at present, and I have no doubt if another Prime Minister comes in his services will be retained.

(Mr. Bennett: He is secretary of the cabinet.)

That is more or less the position that is required here. Sir Maurice receives \$15,000 a year, and Mr. Thomas Jones, his assistant, receives \$11,000 a year. Mr. Tom Jones has been assistant secretary to three or four prime ministers in succession. These two chief assistants are in addition to other private secretaries, six in all, which the Prime Minister of Great Britain has, as well as the permanent staff of his office.



I wish to say however, with regard to the present position that it should be understood that whoever is appointed will retire with the prime minister unless his successor wishes to retain him. (1)

The item for a salaried position of executive assistant to the Prime Minister was agreed to on April 13, 1927; but it does not appear that it was implemented by any appointment of this category. Among his Private Secretaries, however, was newly appointed F.A. McGregor, in addition to H. Baldwin and W. Howard Measures from External Affairs.

Separate  
Prime Minister's Office

In 1929, ~~however~~ according to the Auditor General's Report, the Prime Minister's Office was recognized as a distinct department and separately listed. The Prime Minister's own salary of \$15,000 was listed under the Prime Minister's Office; in the section describing the External Affairs Department, it was then stated that the "Minister" (not "Secretary of State") of External Affairs' salary was "paid under the Prime Minister's Office"; and similarly, under the Privy Council, it was stated that the President of the Privy Council's salary was "paid under the Prime Minister's Office". Furthermore, most of the secretarial and clerical staff who had been formerly listed as on the payroll of the Department of External Affairs while on "loan" to the Prime Minister were thereafter listed, with their salaries, under the heading and section of the Prime Minister's Office. (2) These names included H. Baldwin, private

(1) Op. cit. pp. 2459-60

(2) Auditor General's Report, 1929-30.

secretary (\$5,000), W.H. Measures, assistant private secretary (\$3,500), and the following other staff:

Miss M. Cameron, clerk  
 Miss M. Drew, stenographer  
 Miss S.E. Brysdale, clerk  
 Miss H. Ferguson, clerk  
 E.A. Pickering, secretary to the executive  
 Miss I.B. Schryer, clerk  
 Miss G. Shields, clerk  
 A. Tunwell, confidential messenger  
 A. Walker, clerk  
 Miss L.F. Zawitske, stenographer  
 J.S. Nicol, doorkeeper

With this establishment, under the Prime Minister's Office, it would seem that - if Mr. King exaggerated when he said in 1927, "when he takes office as matters stand he goes into an empty room as far as staff is concerned, and from that time on he has no assistance other than that of private secretaries" - he was very much more misleading when he said as late as 1943 that "the Prime minister gets no appropriation from Parliament", received no direct salary, and the business side of things of the Prime Minister's Office is managed by External Affairs. His Prime Minister's Office since 1929 had its own appropriation; his salary was paid by that Office, and he had his own staff belonging to the Prime Minister's Office.(1)

(1) It is hard to reconcile this statement with the facts as they were at the date when it was made.

In 1943 the Prime Minister was in receipt of a salary of \$15,000 under statute: the Salaries Act C.182, Sec.4, of the R.S.C.1927, paid under the Prime Minister's Office; and a motor car allowance of \$2,000 under the Appropriation Act No.5. Ch.61, Vol. 352, 1931.

According to the "Public Accounts" for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1943, there were, as of March 31st, 20 employees in the Prime Minister's Office paid from special Vote No.250; the senior most of these of these included Mr. W.J. Turnbull at \$7,000; Mr. J.W. Pickersgill at \$5,000, and Mr. E. Handy. There were also 10 additional employees in the Prime Minister's Office paid from an allotment for this purpose under the War Appropriation Act; the chief of these was Mr. P. Acland, at \$6,500. Thus, in his own office, he had a staff of some thirty persons paid, not by External Affairs, Privy Council or Post Office, but by the separate Office of the Prime Minister, or under special votes allocated to his Office.

Even as late as 1946 Mr. King was reasserting this conception of his office. "When a minister other than the Prime Minister assumes a portfolio he goes into a department of state which is already thoroughly organized and has been organized for years past. The department has a deputy head; it has a secretary; it has its various branches; it has its staff of civil servants who know all the aspects of the work of the department and who possess the accumulated knowledge and information of which the department has become the repository for many years. When the Prime Minister assumes office he enters what to all intents and purposes is an all but completely empty office. If he is fortunate enough to have had them, he takes with him one or two secretaries who have served him in his capacity as leader of the Opposition if he comes into office after having been the leader of the Opposition. Otherwise he has no officers whatever in his department until he has had an opportunity to organize the Prime Minister's Office. He has no deputy head; he has no secretary of his office as such; he has no leading officials as such. There may be a few stenographers and typists and possibly a few members of the service who have had to do with the filing of communications. He has to ask himself whether those particular officials who have been serving political opponents are the ones to whom he wishes to have continue in the office with him having regard to all the intimate affairs of government with which the Prime Minister finds he is confronted. I am happy to say that I have found that it was not necessary to change these members of the service

to any extent, and one of the reasons is that they have been so few in number." (1)

Loan of Foreign Service Officers and Staff

As in the Borden period, Foreign Service Officers of the Department of External Affairs, who were civil servants not affiliated with political parties, were from time to time temporarily seconded to the Prime Minister's Office and in due course most of them were brought back into their own Department. Some of the External Affairs clerical staff, however, were more permanently seconded or transferred. In the early years of Mr. King's incumbency, L.B. Pearson, H.L. Keenleyside, K.P. Kirkwood, James Gibson, W.H. Measures and others were thus loaned. Mr. King, in 1946, continued: "So far as the Prime Minister's Office today is concerned, nearly all the officials on whom he relies in the Prime Minister's Office have been seconded to that office from the Department of External Affairs. It has been necessary to have experienced officials. Experienced officials, with like qualifications, were not to be found in any other department of government or outside the government service. More than that, let me say

(1) H. of C. Debates, April 2, 1946, p.490. Mr. King's reference to private secretaries who had previously served the Prime Minister while Leader of the Opposition apparently refers to Mr. F.A. McGregor. His reference to members of the service who had to do with filing pretty obviously referred to Miss Ida Schryer and her staff. His reference to "members of the service", apparently referring to the permanent civil servants attached to the Prime Minister's Office, contradict his claim of an "empty office", or of "officials who have been serving political opponents". No reference is made to a permanent senior official like Dr. Skelton or Mr. Robertson, who were not only deputy heads of External Affairs Department but in the former case was an adviser to Prime Ministers of both parties. As indicated in the Auditor General's Report, a staffed Prime Minister's Office was in existence.

in passing, there can be no better field of training for the officials of the Department of External Affairs than the Prime Minister's Office. I think it very desirable, when these departments are separated, as I hope they will be before very long, that some members of the Department of External Affairs should continue to serve in the Prime Minister's Office and to obtain, while there, all the knowledge they possibly can on questions that are all-important in government. It is the best school of training for the young men and women who are to be entrusted with the larger responsibility, of later filling great positions and representing our country in other lands."<sup>(1)</sup> Among those who were permanently transferred from the Department of External Affairs to the Prime Minister's Office, on the clerical level, were several typists, such as Miss Cameron and Miss Zawitske, and a filing clerk, Miss Schryer.

Reference was made in Part I ("Staff") to Miss Ida B. Schryer, who joined the Department of External Affairs as filing clerk on December 10, 1922. It was not long before she was seconded to the Prime Minister's Office, and rose to be head clerk of the filing division with a staff of thirteen under her. She served in that division for 35 years before retiring in 1957. The Prime Ministers, whose correspondence files Miss Schryer had under her supervision, always with maximum security being involved, were Mr. Mackenzie King, for three periods

<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid. Mr. Pickersgill, ~~with Miss Schryer~~ and one or two others, formerly of External Affairs, remained in the Prime Minister's Office after the departments were separated in 1946.

totalling about 22 years; Mr. R.B. Bennett, Mr. L. St. Laurent for nine years, and for a short period Mr. J. Diefenbaker. Two other groups of officials with whom she came in close contact over the years embraced a succession of private secretaries to Prime Ministers and clerks of the Privy Council. Among these were Fred A. McGregor, Harry Baldwin, L. Clare Moyer, Norman Rogers, Norman Robertson, Arnold D.P. Heeney, Miss Alice Miller, Roderick K. Finlayson, Hugh L. Keenleyside, John W. Pickersgill, Robert B. Bryce, and Leonard W. Brockington, a special assistant to Mr. King during the war years. Miss Schryer recalled how Prime Minister Bennett, at the farewell office party in 1935, declared: "The filing office is the hub of the Prime Minister's Office; if the filing office does not operate smoothly, the whole Prime Minister's Office breaks down." \* (1)

This brief outline of the development of a special department, that of the Prime Minister's Office, is of interest because it indicates the stages of transfer of the External Affairs group of Prime Ministers' secretarial and clerical assistants away from the Department of External Affairs itself and into a new and separate entity, the Prime Minister's Office. Except for a certain number of Foreign Service Officers temporarily loaned or seconded to that Office, (a rotational practice

\* On retirement in 1957, Miss Schryer stated that about 35,000 pieces of correspondence pass through the Prime Minister's Office and the filing division each year. She said she could not begin to estimate the greater amount of material from the Privy Council Office. Correspondence from the two offices kept about 30 filing cabinets going all the time with "active" material.

(1) Ottawa Citizen, January 2, 1958.

which had survived until the present), the Prime Minister's Office became detached from the External Affairs Department although up to 1946 the Prime Minister continued to hold the portfolio of Secretary of State for External Affairs, and thus had two departments under his charge.

In 1946 the Prime Minister ceased to be Secretary of State for External Affairs. He thus lost direct charge of that Department, and had to rely more on his own Prime Minister's Office with its own staff, plus an adviser or two loaned from time to time to him by the External Affairs Department.

#### Private Secretaries - Mr. Bennett

By the time Mr. Bennett took office as Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Prime Minister's Office was an established body, with a permanent staff of a dozen or more clerks and "assistant private secretaries". Two grade 4 clerks, Miss M. Cameron and Miss A. Walker, were listed as "private secretaries" but these were probably more ~~of a~~ personal or confidential clerks. W.H. Measures continued as an Assistant Private Secretary. Hamilton, for a few months (till January 31, 1932), A.D. MacLean, and in 1933-34 J.J. Saurier were listed as Assistant Private Secretaries. But the two Principal Secretaries upon whom Mr. Bennett relied appear to have been R.K. Finlayson from 1933, and Mr. Bennett's personal Private Secretary of<sup>a</sup> long preceding period, Miss Alice E. Millar. Mr. Bennett, while Prime Minister, depended on the advisory services of the Under-

Secretary for External Affairs, Dr. Skelton, on domestic and political matters as well as on external matters, and other officers of the Department from time to time, including L.B. Pearson, First Secretary, for special duties, and J.E. Reid as Legal Adviser.

Private Secretaries - Mr. King

Apparently Mr. Mackenzie King never acquired his authorized "executive assistant" or "deputy minister to the Prime Minister's Office" (see above). He had, however, several senior Private Secretaries. Although these changed from time to time - allegedly worn out or broken in health by the strain of the work - several remained with Mr. King for fairly long stretches. Among these were F.A. McGregor, H. Baldwin, A.D.P. Heeney, J. Pickersgill, and W.H. Measures. For shorter periods, as has been stated, External Affairs officers such as L.B. Pearson, Norman Robertson, Hugh Keenleyside, James A. Gibson, and several others were attached temporarily to the Prime Minister's Office.

Fred Alexander McGregor, C.B.E., was never attached directly to the Department of External Affairs, although he was listed on its payroll;\* but he was for six years Private Secretary to Mr. Mackenzie King while Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs. McGregor had been in the Post Office Department in his early years, and became Private Secretary to the Deputy Minister, Mr. Acland. Between and after studies at McMaster University, he also acted as Private Secretary to the then Deputy Minister of Labour, Mr. Mackenzie King, for whom he had a devoted regard and friendship. He had several spells of serving Mr. King -

\* File 9-25. "Separation of F.A. McGregor from External Affairs".



and used to drive him out to Kinsmere in a buggy in those pre-war days. In the summer of 1914, he became a regular Private Secretary to King, while the latter was out of Parliament, was engaged in research work in industrial relations for the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, and was writing his book Industry and Humanity, the manuscript of which was typed by McGregor. Mr. King became leader of the Liberal Party in 1919, and McGregor stayed with him. When King was elected Prime Minister the next year, McGregor was still at his side.

According to King's biographer, Bruce Hutchison, McGregor was "a gentle soul with a heart of steel". In his youth he had worshipped King, and King took cruel advantage of that worship. "Over-worked, unconsidered, and harassed as King's secretary, McGregor quarrelled with him (according to legend, threw an ink-bottle at the Prime Minister in a much envied gesture) and quit. . . Yet the old friendship was relighted, warmer than ever. It was to McGregor, his last familiar, that King left the management of his estate."<sup>(1)</sup> Another recorder, summarizing the period of service, wrote: "McGregor took it on the chin for six years in one of the most exacting and strenuous posts there is in Ottawa, private secretary to any Prime Minister. When he left that job he had to take six months holiday to recuperate."<sup>(2)</sup>

J.W. Pickersgill was one of the members of the Department of External Affairs who served mainly with the

(1) Bruce Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, p.39.

(2) Carolyn Cox, in Montreal Standard, December 6, 1946.

with the Prime Minister and ultimately became a Cabinet Minister himself. Manitoba born, in 1905, John Whitney Pickersgill took a B.A. in History, Economics and French at the University of Manitoba in 1926, an M.A. in 1927, and spent two years in History at Oxford, later teaching History at Wesley College, University of Manitoba, and doing post-graduate courses at Oxford and Paris during the summers of 1930, 1933, 1935 and 1937. He joined the External Affairs Department by examination in October, 1937, as Third Secretary, but two months later was loaned to the Prime Minister. He made such a good impression on Mr. Mackenzie King that he remained as a Private Secretary, accompany<sup>ing</sup> Mr. King to the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in May, 1944, to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in 1945, to the Consultations of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in May, 1946, and other conferences. He steadily was promoted to the official grade of Counsellor (F.S.O.7), but actually became one of Mr. King's closest secretaries, advisers and speech-writers. "King had borrowed Pickersgill from External Affairs for minor duties", remarks Hutchison, "Soon he was leaning heavily on an assistant with the rare qualities of independent mind and no fear of expressing it to anybody. In everyone else, King liked subservience. From his brilliant factotum he received, and liked, candour often brutal"<sup>(1)</sup>. Pickersgill's participation in preparing speech material for his chief, over a period of more than ten years, has been described by him in The Queen's Quarterly of the Autumn, 1950, with

(1) B. Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian. p. 268.

great candour. Mr. L. St. Laurent became Prime Minister on November 15, 1948, on Mr. King's voluntary retirement; and in that Ministry a few years later (1953) Pickersgill left his secretarial duties to enter politics, and was appointed firstly Secretary of State for one year (June 12, 1953), then, in 1954, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, until the Liberal Government was defeated in June, 1958. A seat was found for Pickersgill, the Westerner, in Newfoundland.

Arnold D.P. Heeney, Q.C., M.A., B.C.L., became Principal Secretary to Mr. Mackenzie King on October 1, 1938. He was Secretary to the Cabinet War Committee, 1938-1945, and on March 25, 1940 he was appointed Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, until 1949.<sup>(1)</sup> Montreal-born, son of Rev. Canon Berthal Heeney, he was educated at St. John's School, Winnipeg, and Manitoba University (B.A. 1921, M.A. 1923), and was a Manitoba Rhodes Scholar to Oxford University (1923-26). He took his B.C.L. degree from McGill University in 1929. Like so many others, he took up teaching, at St. John's College, Winnipeg, for a year, and then, having been admitted to the Bar of Quebec in 1929, practised law from 1929 to 1938, and was a sessional lecturer on the Faculty of Law at McGill. He was appointed a K.C. on February 17, 1941. Among other activities he was President of the Montreal Junior Board of Trade, 1931-32, and Counsel and Secretary to the Quebec Protestant Education

(1) See Part I: Chapter on "The Privy Council and External Affairs".

\* After serving as Secretary of State and Clerk of the Privy Council.

Survey in 1933. On March 15, 1949, he was appointed Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, in succession to L.B. Pearson, who had become Minister; he held this office until April 15, 1952, when he was appointed Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council and Organization for Economic Co-operation (O.E.E.C.) in Paris, and then as Ambassador to the United States from July, 1953.

William Howard Measures was in and out of various government positions. Born in Norwich, England, on October 16, 1894, he attended the Jamaica College in the British West Indies, and then worked for the Passenger Department of the C.P.R. in Toronto from 1913 to 1915. He enlisted in the University of Toronto C.O.T.C. in 1915, and served until discharged in January, 1918. He then became Private Secretary to Mr. Vincent Massey, of the War Committee of the Privy Council, Ottawa, in 1918, and Head of the Claims Branch of the Board of Pension Commissioners in 1920. After a year with the Riordon Pulp and Paper Company in Montreal, he joined External Affairs in December, 1921, as Private Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Mackenzie King. He continued in the same capacity in the Prime Minister's Office during the Bennett regime. He accompanied Mr. King to the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926 in London, and from 1930 was in charge of Protocol and Government Hospitality, becoming the Department's chief protocol expert. He was Secretary of the Hospitality Committee of the Imperial Economic Conference held in Ottawa in 1932, which Mr. Bennett had convoked, and of the Empire Conference of

Statistical Officers in 1935; he was Secretary to the Interdepartmental Committee on Their Majesties' Royal Visit to Canada in 1939. Although an officer of the Department of External Affairs, he was nearly always listed as attached to the staff of the Prime Minister's Office. In 1946, with the rank of First Secretary, he was appointed Acting Head of the new Diplomatic Division of the Department, and the following year named Head of Protocol Division. His expert knowledge of protocol matters resulted in the publication of a standard reference work, "Styles of Address". Subsequently he transferred to the Department of the Secretary of State, as protocol adviser.

L. Clare Moyer, D.S.O., Q.C., was another of Mr. King's Private Secretaries, from 1922 till 1927. Born at Preston, and educated at Galt, he received his bachelor of arts degree at the University of Toronto in 1910. He was editor of "Varsity" at Toronto and later engaged in newspaper work in Toronto and Regina. He was admitted to the bar of Saskatchewan in 1915. He served during the first World War in France, Belgium and Germany, and was twice awarded the D.S.O. and twice mentioned in despatches. On his return to Canada he practised law in Regina for two years and was then named to the Attorney-General's Department. It was in 1922 that he was appointed Private Secretary to Prime Minister Mackenzie King; he held this post until 1927 when he was Secretary of a Dominion-Provincial Conference. In 1928 he entered the practice of law in Ottawa

and in 1930 was named a King's Counsel. He became Clerk of the Senate on December 20, 1938, following the retirement of Austin E. Blount. He retired from this post, and as Master of Chancellery, about 1955; but even in retirement he held his interest in Parliamentary work and often visited the Red Chamber. While on vacation in Florida, he died on October 5, 1958, at the age of 70. (1)

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The foregoing notes serve to indicate the close integration of the Department of External Affairs with the Prime Minister's Office. This was natural, since the portfolios of Secretary of State for External Affairs and of Prime Minister were held jointly from 1912 to 1946. In an Appendix, there is given the account of the separation of these two portfolios and the creation in 1946 of a separate Secretary of State for External Affairs, - which step was the outcome of pressures existing before and through the second World War. In England, only in the period of Lord Salisbury, and in more recent times, the period of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, had the Prime Minister combined the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. In Australia, the Prime Minister had only occasionally been also Minister of External Affairs. But in Canada, under Borden, Meighen, Bennett and King, the two portfolios had been combined for 34 years. Arising from this situation, The Department of External Affairs and the Prime Minister's Office, if not merged, were closely integrated, and shared personnel.

(1) Ottawa Journal, Ottawa Citizen, October 7, 1958.



6.

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE

FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

1925-1948

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State  
For External Affairs

In part I of the survey, the institution of a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, following similar appointments in other Departments, was described for the decade 1916 to 1926.

By degrees the designation appears to have changed to "Parliamentary Assistants" to the various Ministers.

It was noted that Mr. Hugh Clark and Mr. F.H. Keefer were appointed to External Affairs during the First War, but that their office lapsed at the close of the War. On December 29, 1921, Mr. Mackenzie King appointed, on an informal and unsalaried basis, Mr. Lucien Pacaud as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, but the following year he was transferred to the Office of the High Commissioner in London. For some years he was not replaced.

There was apparently no Parliamentary Under-Secretary during the remainder of Mr. King's first Premiership, during Mr. Meighen's short Ministry, in Mr. Bennett's Premiership, or in Mr. King's later Ministry.

Mr. Bennett's Proposal

In 1927 Mr. Mackenzie King felt the necessity of appointing a senior officer or "executive assistant" tantamount to a deputy minister, in the Prime Minister's Office, for which he asked Parliament to approve a salary of \$8,000. Mr. R.B. Bennett, the Leader of the Opposition, suggested a different kind of appointment, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary, to relieve the



Prime Minister of some of his duties. "I thought perhaps he might have followed the course that was tried, not without some favourable result, in days gone by, of the Prime Minister appointing some member of the House to act as his executive assistant, without his being subject to an election, but retiring with the administration. He would then be able not only to discharge his duties to the Prime Minister as his executive assistant, but he might be able to make statements for the Prime Minister . . . .

For instance, the Parliamentary Secretary in England very frequently has served the Prime Minister without compensation. Sir Philip Sassoon acted for Mr. Lloyd George, without any salary of course. In a country such as this it does seem to me that it may offer an opportunity to well qualified, ambitious young men to get an excellent knowledge of parliamentary practice and procedure while serving a very useful purpose, not being in the Cabinet but acting as the confidential secretary and adviser or representative of the Prime Minister. He must have some buffer between him and the public. That buffer might well be able to come into the House and discharge very important duties without being a member of the Cabinet, and yet carry practically Cabinet responsibilities with respect to the Prime Minister. I think my right hon. friend overlooked the fact that we had several under-secretaries during the war. Between 1911 and the breaking out of the war, Sir Robert Borden discharged the duties of President of the Council, Minister of External Affairs, and Prime Minister. The Department of External Affairs was at that time in charge of Sir Joseph Pope. Sir

Robert had no deputy as Prime Minister, nor had he as President of the Council, except to the extent that the clerk of the Privy Council then discharged, and still discharges, more or less confidential duties with respect to the Prime Minister.\* He is a permanent official and retains his place notwithstanding changes of administration. The same may be said with regard to the deputy minister of external affairs. Since these two are continuing officials, it might be regarded as somewhat unfair to impose upon the country - using the word not in any offensive sense - a third official whose salary would become a permanent charge upon our revenue unless at the very threshold of his employment it is clearly stated that he is being paid the salary of a deputy minister with the understanding that he retires with the administration. No doubt if a place were found for him in parliament and he could discharge the duties that the members of the cabinet are too busy to discharge in many instances it would be all the better. Because it will be remembered that Sir George Murray, who came out here at the request of Sir Robert Borden, made a special report upon the matter and he suggested that these under-secretaries might serve very usefully in the organization of the Canadian administration. It was tried during the war, as I have said, but I am not sure that it was the success Sir George Murray hoped it would be. I still think with respect to the Office of the Prime Minister the experiment might be made." (1)

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\* Mr. E.J. Lemaire, Clerk of the Privy Council, also acted as Mr. King's Private Secretary.

(1) H. of C. Debates, April 13, 1927. p.2460.

However, this proposal did not at the time find favour with Mr. King; nor indeed was it implemented by Mr. Bennett himself, when he became Prime Minister from 1930 to 1935. (The vote for salary of \$8,000 for an administrative Executive Assistant in the Prime Minister's Office was carried,\* but no appointment was made, then or later).

Further discussion in 1936

At the Fourteenth Annual National Conference of the League of Nations Society in Canada held in May, 1936, the following motion was adopted: "That the Society respectfully recommend that the Government should appoint, at an early date, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of External Affairs, one of whose duties it should be to see that more time is given in the House and in the Committee of the House to Canada's League and External relations." (1) This was an outcome of the widespread feeling that Parliament was not being adequately taken into the confidence of Mr. Mackenzie King's Government in questions of foreign affairs, that debates and discussions were too few, and too limited.

The resolution also no doubt was instigated by the discussion of the proposal, made in the House of Commons a few months previously, arising from an intimation contained in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of that year's session, that Parliamentary Secretaries would be appointed.

\* H. of C. Debates, April 13, 1927, pp. 2459-60.

(1) Independence, XIII, 3-4, pp. 262 ff.

In opening the address on the Speech from the Throne, in February, 1936, Mr. A.G. Slaght said: "We find a proposal to create parliamentary secretaryships, and this proposal will, I hope, meet with the approval of every hon. member of this house. It is established in the mother of parliaments and I believe is fully approved by British statesmen regardless of party affiliations. It should create the building up in this house of a body of men who because of the experience gained as under-secretaries will be better able in the future to carry on the responsible duties attaching to cabinet positions. It will afford a measure of relief to the ministers of the day who can very properly turn over some of the exacting details of their offices to under-secretaries, and do so without impairing the efficiency of their work. From every viewpoint I submit to the House that this administrative reform is one that will be found of benefit to Canada." (1)

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bennett, replied: "With respect to the creation of parliamentary secretaries, there is nothing new in that; it was done here once before. We had parliamentary secretaries here in this country, in this parliament. When Sir Robert Borden asked Sir George Murray to come here and make a report, he did so; he reported in favour of parliamentary secretaries and they were appointed. I recall this very vividly, and I recall the result. Somehow in this country, under the conditions that exist, it will be found that they do not function successfully. This

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(1) H. of C. Debates, February 10, 1936. p.31.

is the experience of the past and I do not think times have changed in that regard. I wish it were otherwise, because personally I favoured such a system at that time and I favour it now if it were possible to make it work out successfully, but I am afraid it will not for reasons that are known to many members and that must be known to those who have studied conditions as they existed at that time." (1)

It does not appear that any action was taken to implement this governmental intention for a good many years, although the reasons for this postponement by Mr. King are obscure. Not since 1921 that the position been one of additional emolument, and it is possible that no member of Parliament was sufficiently interested or qualified to take on such an extra Parliamentary burden on an honorary or unrewarded basis. At that time, also, with the Prime Minister by statute continuing to hold the portfolio of External Affairs, there was not the inducement of a putative promotion from Parliamentary Under-Secretary to Cabinet rank as Secretary of State for External Affairs, as later occurred in other departments.

Proposal of 1943

In 1943, however, Mr. Mackenzie King again advanced the proposal. In a statement in the House of Commons, he outlined in some detail the many ways in which the assistant can discharge his primary function of lightening the load of his Minister:

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(1) Ibid: p. 64.

"Other duties of assistants to Minister would be to assist the Minister in Parliament, to answer questions - not all questions - and also to take part in departmental debates so that the House may be given fuller information in regard to some matters than it otherwise could. To assist in the explanation of the estimates. I can conceive of occasions when an assistant to the Minister might relieve the Minister entirely of a large part of the explanation of the estimates. To appear before the House committees on behalf of the Minister, to keep the House itself informed more promptly on matters which may arise in the course of the debates; to assist in the planning of some of the post-war work of the Government which will have to be done under the direction of the Minister. . . Also to receive deputations - the Ministers are beset with deputations - they cannot possibly see many of them. An assistant to the Minister could see them and I should hope be able to be of real assistance in seeing that their representations were carefully considered. . . Then there is the matter of a link with members of Parliament. . . An assistant to the Minister will be mixing with members generally and will be able to bring to the Minister many matters that otherwise could not possibly be brought to his attention. . . Then there is the deputizing for the Minister on different occasions, fulfilling specific duties. The duties will vary between one department and another, one Minister may wish his assistant to perform certain duties and another other duties. Then there is the signing on behalf of the Minister of many documents that otherwise would require his signature. There is the

supervision of officials in some branches where an assistant minister can be of great help. The assistant to the Minister can be of great help in regard to outside engagements as well as engagements inside the House. Almost any service that will help relieve the Minister of a burden and give the House of Commons and the public more information with regard to the public business is the kind of position which the parliamentary assistant to the Minister will be expected to fill." (1)

An interesting interpretation of the authoritativeness or representativeness of a Parliamentary Secretary was given by Prime Minister King, in answer to an Opposition query in 1946. Mr. Graydon had stated: "I think it might be well if we could have some declaration from the Prime Minister as to whether or not a parliamentary assistant, being a member of what may be regarded as a junior cabinet, so to speak is conveying the views of the administration or merely his own views when he speaks on a matter of government policy. Just where does the differentiation be? How far must we separate the cabinet ministers themselves from those who are parliamentary assistants, and who, according to the explanation which was given when they were first appointed, would be the spokesman for their ministers in the House of Commons?"

To this question Mr. King replied: "A parliamentary assistant is in the same position as every other hon. member in the matter of his right to speak for himself and express his own opinion. I do not think that it is to be assumed that when a parliamentary

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(1) H. of C. Debates, April 20, 1943, pp. 2366-7. See July 12, 1943, p. 4670. See also Dawson: The Government of Canada, pp. 265-267.

assistant is expressing his views he is necessarily expressing the views of the government. . . . There are occasions when a parliamentary assistant may be expressing to the house the views of the government. Those occasions will be apparent; when, for instance, he is speaking of matters referring to the department of which he is parliamentary assistant, and makes it clear that he is expressing the views of the administration. The line of demarcation is very clear." (1)

Mr. Coldwell, on July 9, had said: "I know that the Prime Minister is busy. I know that he has many weighty affairs to which he must give his attention, and I was therefore surprised, when the assistants to the various ministers were appointed, that no assistant was appointed to the Prime Minister in his capacity as Minister for External Affairs. It seemed to me that if there was one place where assistance was necessary, it was in that particular department, and I had hoped that some additional attention would be given to external affairs by the appointment of an assistant." (2)

But still Mr. Mackenzie King held off such an appointment, which he claimed was so necessary. What Mr. King wanted was clearly a Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister, and not a Parliamentary Under-Secretary for External Affairs. This was explained in the debate in the House on July 12, 1943:

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(1) H. of C. Debates, July 12, 1943, p. 4648.

(2) Ibid, July 9, 1943, p. 4567.



In not appointing an assistant to the Minister of External Affairs, I have not lost sight of the fact that I am in daily contact with my colleagues, and my colleagues, particularly those who are members of the war committee of the cabinet, are the ones immediately concerned with matters relating to external affairs, so that they are in a position to assist me, as in fact they do. They carry much of the responsibility that I have to assume in that particular position. (1)

#### Appointment in 1948

Finally, Mr. Walter Edward Harris was appointed Parliamentary Assistant from October 30, 1947, to November 14, 1948, after the External Affairs Department had been divorced from the Prime Minister and placed under its own Secretary of State, Mr. St. Laurent. Then he became Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister from November 15, 1948, to January 17, 1950.

When Mr. St. Laurent, on the retirement of King, became Prime Minister in 1948, there was a succession of Parliamentary Assistants to the new External Affairs Minister, Mr. L.B. Pearson:

Mr. Hugues Lapointe (January 19, 1949 - April 30, 1949; and from July 12, 1949 - August 23, 1949) until he was appointed a member of the Privy Council and entered the Cabinet as Solicitor-General.

Mr. Jean Lesage (January 24, 1951 - December 31, 1952) until he became Parliamentary Assistant in Finance.

Mr. Roch Pinard (October 14, 1953 - June 30, 1954) until he was appointed Secretary of State.

Mr. Lucien Cardin (February 9, 1956 - June 10, 1957) until the Government was defeated at the General Election.

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(1) Mackenzie King: H. of C. Debates, July 12, 1943, p. 4670.

From this record it will be observed that one of the often-repeated arguments for Parliamentary Under-Secretaryships, as means of training Members of Parliament for higher political appointments,<sup>\*</sup> was indeed fulfilled. Omitting those who were Parliamentary Under-Secretaries or Assistants for other departments, those who served in the field of External Affairs almost all eventually attained Cabinet rank: Mr. Lapointe as Solicitor-General in August, 1949; Mr. Walter Harris as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in 1950, and later Minister of Finance; Mr. Lesage as Minister of Northern Affairs in 1954; Mr. Roch Pinard as Secretary of State in 1954.

It may be noticed that most of the Parliamentary Under-Secretaries or Parliamentary Assistants above-named, who have held that position to date, have been French-speaking Members of Parliament. This perhaps has logic to it; for in a country which is bi-racial and bi-lingual, and in an administration where, because of the population and electoral distribution, the majority of Cabinet Ministers are of English-speaking origins and background, it is reasonable to have English-speaking Ministers' understudies or spokesmen in Parliament - where such are appointed - French-speaking; and in the case of the Parliamentary Assistants for External Affairs, where the Secretary of State for External Affairs

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<sup>\*</sup> e.g. Sir Richard Cartwright in 1909, Mr. R.B. Bennett in 1927, and other speakers in various debates.

has been English-Canadian (e.g. Mr. Mackenzie King and Mr. L.B. Pearson), a French-Canadian deputy in Parliament preserves the balance and niceties of a bi-racial national legislature. This, however, is doubtless more accidental than a regular rule.



7.

THE SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Standing Committee on External Affairs

Although Cabinet sub-committees were not uncommon before the First War, and necessarily proliferated during the War, the creation of Parliamentary committees was a rather recent innovation in Canada. There has never been developed a practice of powerful committees of the legislature such as the Congressional Committees in the United States. The creation of ad hoc Commissions of Enquiry and Report was an old device; and certain permanent administrative organs, not "parliamentary", such as the Civil Service Commission, and the International Joint Commission, bore the designation. But Parliamentary Standing Committees were a more recent experiment. The one which interests us was the outcome of the League of Nations' International Labour Organization, to which Canada appointed a permanent delegate, Dr. W.A. Riddell.

On the motion of the Prime Minister, Mr. King, there was set up in 1924 a select standing committee of Members of Parliament on Industrial and International Affairs. This marriage of strange convenience, as Corbett calls it, was due apparently to the government's desire to sound out parliamentary and general opinion on the expediency of ratifying certain international labour conventions. The Committee's report was a recommendation that the question of competent authority should be referred to the Supreme Court. "After this effort it hibernated until 1928; it awoke then to deliberate in the session of that year and the following session, on civil service councils and unemployment insurance. Finally, in 1930, it came upon great days." (1)

(1) Corbett: "Public Opinion and Canada's External Affairs" Queen's Quarterly. Winter 1931. pp.7-8.

\* See footnote next page.

\* Footnote:

As early as 1922, if not before, the suggestion of a parliamentary committee on foreign affairs had been hinted at. Dr. O.D. Skelton, addressing the Toronto Canadian Club on January, 1922, referred to the need of greater parliamentary participation in matters concerning external affairs. He said: "If parliament does not know enough about a problem to discuss it, it does not know enough about it to sign an agreement concerning it. In some way then, possibly by the formation of foreign affairs committees, by discussions in the House on the results of conferences in which Canadians participated, whether at Geneva, Washington or London, our parliament will have to take a more systematic, more responsible interest." (Addresses: Canadian Club of Toronto, 1921-22. p.153).

At the meeting of the Committee held in 1930, Mr. Graham Spry, one of the witnesses, remarked that "I understand that this committee has been in existence for some five years as a committee on Industrial and International Relations and yet, I am informed, that this is the first reference to any international subject to this committee." By this he meant that in previous sessions, questions of labour legislation arising out of the conventions of the International Labour Office had alone been discussed, but that other matters of general external policy had not been given attention. "May I ask, for example, has there been any expression of the policy of the League of Nations of Canada in the Council with respect to the European minorities? Has there been any debate on that excellent body, the International Labour Office at Geneva? . . ." (1)

The meeting of this Standing Committee held in March-May, 1930, for the first time took up a discussion of international education and training, on the basis of the proposed motion in the House of Commons of Miss Agnes McPhail, ~~xxxx~~, concerning the establishing of chairs and scholarships in Canadian Universities for the purpose of promoting a better understanding of the international problems of the world. In this lengthy Committee discussion, at meetings on March 20, 25, 27, April 1, 4, and May 13, evidence was given by Dr. Skelton, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Graham Spry, National

(1) Minutes of Select Standing Committee on Industrial and International Relations, March 27, 1930, p. 28.

Secretary of the Associated Canadian Clubs, Dr. Norman A. Mackenzie, Professor of Constitutional and International Law at Toronto University, and Professor P.E. Corbett, Dean of the Faculty of Law, McGill University. Submissions were received from Dr. H.M. Tory, Dr. Murray of the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. R.A. MacKay, of Dalhousie University, Dr. Robert C. Wallace of the University of Alberta, and others. It was intended to invite Professor J. Shotwell, of the Carnegie Peace Foundation, and other outside witnesses, but this was not carried out. The discussions included comments on the training of future candidates for the External Affairs Service, and on the suggested cooperation of the Department of External Affairs in a centralized Ottawa library on international subjects for reference and research, and in a possible summer institute of international studies to be held in Ottawa. Dr. Tory again appeared at a meeting of the Standing Committee held on May 21 and June 5, 1931, to discuss solely the question of scholarships in international studies.

This excellent start, however, was not continued in this direction. The Standing Committee on Industrial and International Relations did not meet again until 1935 and 1936, when it discussed only shipping employment questions. No topics of external affairs were brought before it for discussion. Thereafter it appears to have been dormant, subject to call by the House of Commons but never called, for the next nine years. Its revival, as



solely a Select Standing Committee on External Affairs, takes us into a period beyond the scope of this present survey, but as the projection of the earlier start, may be referred to in the next few pages.

The question of a Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs was a long time in abeyance, but was revived from time to time during the war period, largely because of the complaint that insufficient time was allocated in regular Parliamentary sessions to a discussion of external affairs estimates and programmes and foreign policy generally. For instance, Mr. H.C. Green said on July 9, 1943: "It has always seemed to me that it would be very helpful if we were to have set up in this house a committee to be known as a foreign affairs committee, or one at any rate which would deal with questions of foreign affairs. For that matter there might also be a similar committee set up in the senate. I am confident that if this step were taken it would mean that the government of the day would get help in settling problems having to do with foreign affairs. It would also mean that members of both the Senate and House of Commons would be far better informed on foreign questions, and it would help the Canadian people to get a better grasp of the different problems." (1) Mr. Coldwell and others supported this view. Mr. King pointed out that "there is a standing committee of the house, and any hon. member may ask that it be called. My hon. friends know that and they have not asked that it be done." (2) Mr. Coldwell replied: "It

(1) H. of C. Debates, July 9, 1943, p.4561.

(2) Ibid. p. 4566.

is all very well for the Prime Minister to say that there is a committee and that any hon. member may request that it be called; but, as he well knows, members of the house usually wait for some move from the government or from the government side of the house to encourage the calling of such a committee." (1)

These and subsequent suggestions had their effect, and two years later the proposal was brought into effect.

Among others, apparently it was Mr. John Bracken, Leader of the Opposition, who in 1945 proposed the re-activation of the Standing Committee and its division into two Committees, one on industrial matters and the other on external relations. On September 12, 1945, he proposed in the House: "Two of the most important subjects with which the House must deal are labour and external affairs. Under the existing arrangements both these subjects fall within the jurisdiction of one committee, the Standing Committee on Industrial and International Relations. . . In my opinion there should be two standing committees, one on labour and industrial relations and the other on commonwealth and international affairs. Thus we would be assured of the opportunity for more adequate study by duly constituted committees of both these vital subjects, which have now achieved an importance far greater than at the time the existing committee on industrial and international relations was first established." The Prime Minister, in reply, said that the suggestion was one which had been made at previous sessions; he explained why in

(1) Ibid. p.4567.

(2) Ibid. September 12, 1945, p. 109.

the past the two subjects had been inter-related and thus came under a single committee; but added that the proposed bifurcation was one that deserved very careful consideration, and agreed that it would afford some improvement; he would consult his colleagues immediately as to the desirability of instituting two committees instead of one.

In due course, the same year, the Select Standing Committee on External Affairs was instituted.

The Standing Committee on External Affairs met again in 1946. Mr. Graydon, after the 1946 meetings, expressed his general satisfaction. "This standing committee on external affairs," he said, "has had this session for the first time, the consideration of estimates of a government department in full. In other words, the Department of External Affairs has been the guinea-pig for a new experiment in the specialization of the efforts of members of this house. The setting up of the external affairs committee was undertaken in the first instance after considerable pressure and many suggestions by the opposition and members in other parts of the house as well. We had gone too long without a proper external affairs committee meeting regularly each session as a standing part of our procedure, and so when Parliament met last September (1945) I welcomed the suggestion of the government to set up a committee which had been asked for on so many previous occasions. I also welcomed the opportunity of having the estimates of the Department referred to in ~~the~~ committee. No other estimates in full of an

entire department have been so referred to a committee before". He then went on: "I should like now to make one or two brief observations on the committee's work. It was a good committee; it did a good job, and I wish to pay a tribute to the care and consideration which every member gave to the work, particularly the chairman of the committee, the member for Cochrane (Mr. Joseph A. Bradette) who has presided over it since its inception. A good many sittings were held, and the deliberations did credit to the members of the committee and all those involved in the work. Its recommendations, while not voluminous, were such as, I believe, parliament may properly be asked to concur in. One suggestion was the recommendation for an international hour each week in parliament." (1) The chronic complaint was made by various other members that discussion of Canada's foreign affairs was neglected, was curtailed, or was frequently postponed until the final days of a dying session.

Besides the opportunity the Committee gave for hearing a review of general foreign relations, the examination of the detailed estimates enabled the Parliamentary members to discuss the administrative policies and practices with respect to the Department and with Canadian diplomatic representation abroad. Mr. Graydon and others stressed the value and convenience of examining the estimates in the special standing Committee before being approved in the Committee of Supply, or of the whole, which was the full Parliament. Mr. Graydon said: "I do

(1) Ibid. August 31, 1946, pp.5729-30.

not think we can any longer carry on without being made ridiculous in the eyes of the public generally under the system of parliamentary procedure which we follow in this house, having regard to the volume of business and the amount of money that is being expended by the dominion government. I do not think we can hope to retain public confidence if we continue to have the estimates dealt with as they have been during the past week. I am not blaming anyone for that. I do blame the whole parliamentary procedure, and I would blame the parliament itself if we continued that system. We cannot afford to do so. My suggestion therefore is this. The External Affairs Committee has gone over the estimates of external affairs in detail, with great care, and over a considerable period, and I think it is time for Parliament to make its decision and see to it that we bring under the same policy other departments of government. Then there will be no difficulty about last minute consideration of estimates being rushed through in this way. If they are rushed through at least a committee will have previously dealt with them. But that is vastly different from the present practice of having item after item passed through without the slightest attention being given to anything in detail. Indeed, many items have passed respecting which there has been very little knowledge on the part of any member outside the government or the head of the department concerned. (1)

(1) Ibid, p.5729.

It became customary, when in 1946, the Standing Committee on External Affairs was resuscitated and met annually or at each time a new budget was being prepared, to have the Department's estimates examined in the External Affairs Standing Committee, prior to being presented to the House Committee of Supply for final debate and approval. (1) Mr. Mackenzie King, explaining this in 1946, said:

Last session the estimates of the Department of External Affairs were referred to the Committee on External Affairs. This is to give the Committee an opportunity to discuss anything that relates to external affairs. . . I do not believe its members will be able to think of anything relating to external affairs which it will not be possible to bring up by reference to some particular appropriation. (2)

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Curiously enough, one of the greatest authorities on government committees, Sir Maurice (later Lord) Hankey, while advocating a Cabinet standing sub-committee on Foreign Affairs, was not in favour of a Parliamentary Standing Committee. In 1945, in an address on "The Control of External Affairs" given on October 11th at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, he said:

(1) H. of C. Debates, July 31, 1946, p. 4129.

(2) Ibid, May 10, 1946, p. 1395.

A supplementary proposal that has been canvassed is a Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, or, as I should prefer, on External Affairs as a whole. It is argued for that plan that it would be of some value in removing misgivings amongst the rank and file of the Opposition parties about the special information given to their leaders, and it is claimed that it would result in keeping Parliament better informed than at present. But a good deal is already done informally, ad hoc, and the informal method has its advantages. There were frequent examples during the 1939-45 war of Members of Parliament of all parties being addressed by Ministers. The tendency of the Opposition parties to organize their work by setting up committees of their own members should help Opposition leaders in this process of informal education. But there really are considerable objections for the plan of a formal Standing Parliamentary Committee. It would put an almost unendurable strain on the Ministers and staff of a Department already much over-worked, and it would constantly put Ministers in the dilemma of having to choose between giving an incomplete account of events, and taking the risk of giving rather widespread knowledge on vital secrets. A Minister must be able to tell the truth if he talks to a body like that, but if he tells the truth he does spread secrets too widely; and, as stated in the admirable Liberal pamphlet on Problems of Foreign Policy, "experience of the effectiveness of all such committees abroad is not encouraging as an example to follow". On the whole, therefore, I sum up against it. (1)

Lord Hankey was supported by his Foreign Office colleague, Lord Strang, former Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He remarked in 1954 of "the system of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs" that "the manner in which some of the already existing committees in other countries make their influence felt is not, to say the least of it, well calculated to us to follow suit. (2)

And Professor R. MacGregor Dawson, writing of Canadian practice, says: "While the Standing Committees are superficially impressive, they are in fact not a very important part of the legislative machinery. They are of almost negligible importance, for example, if compared

(1) Lord Hankey: Diplomacy by Conference. pp.170-1.

(2) Lord Strang: The Foreign Office. p.199.

with committees in the United States Congress."<sup>(1)</sup>  
He notes that the Committee on Industrial and International Relations, for example, went eight years without a meeting.

The fact remains, however, as is evident to contemporary observers, that the fairly recent revival of a Standing Committee on External Affairs has done much to interest a large number of Members of Parliament not only in the intimate details of Canadian diplomatic problems and foreign policy but also in the intimate details of the Department's role, functions and activities. This, at a period when such matters were shadowy and obscure, was a great advance, from the point of view of Parliamentary understanding, appreciation and interest; and has had a salutary effect in familiarizing inexperienced Members with foreign affairs and with departmental practice.

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Another gain in this respect has been the initiation from about 1921, of the practice, thereafter regularly observed, of appointing lay Members of Parliament to Canadian delegations to League of Nations Assemblies and other international conferences; these delegations almost invariably include one woman member. In this way these conferences became (as Borden called them) "kindergartens" where Canadian Parliamentarians were indoctrinated with some knowledge, however

<sup>(1)</sup> Dawson: The Government of Canada, p.410.



sketchy, of foreign affairs; and were then able, at home, to play a more active part in the Canadian Parliament on external matters, and to appreciate the value of the Department of External Affairs.\*

One of the aspects of the Standing Committee meetings is that the Members of Parliament are enabled to meet and hear the principal Civil Servants who administer the Department and its work. Normally Civil Service chiefs work behind the scenes and in relative public obscurity; they rarely assist in Parliament and then only from the wings. They are sometimes better known to Members by name than by sight. Their appearance in Parliamentary Committees has a salutary effect, and usually result in a mutual respect between the Members of the Legislature and the professional members of the executive departments.

The Standing Committee on External Affairs, like other Standing Committees, serves the purpose of saving the time of an over-pressed Parliament in

\* This practice was more fully developed after the War in the Canadian Delegations to the United Nations General Assembly sessions in New York. But in the pre-war period, of the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva, the principle began.

In the IVth Assembly of 1925 Hon. Hewitt Bostock was an alternate delegate.

In the Xth Assembly of 1929 Miss Agnes C. MacPhail and Hon. Malcolm McLean were alternate delegates.

In the XIth Assembly of 1930 Hon. Mrs. Mary Irene Parlby was an alternate delegate, and Senator Thomas Chapais.

In the XIIth Assembly of 1931 the delegates included Senator C.P. Beaulieu, Mrs. H.P. Plumptre and Hon. Martin Burrell, Parliamentary Librarian.

the detailed examination of departmental estimates and expenditures, of departmental organization and operations, and to some extent of external policies generally. Discussion and debate in Committee are more informal and intimate, even more probing, than in full Parliament. In Committee, Civil Servants and the senior officials of the Department, and even expert "witnesses" invited from outside, may appear, for questioning, where they could not present themselves before Parliament. Although most of the Members of Parliament attending the Standing Committee meetings are those who have a more personal interest in external affairs than other Members of Parliament, the Committee meetings do provide a special forum for the education of Parliamentary Members who may be interested but who seek to become more familiarized with such matters.

The meetings are open to the press and in that sense are public; their verbatim minutes of proceedings are published as public documents; and thus the public, as well as Members of Parliament, are provided with intimate information concerning the operation and activities of the Department of External Affairs and concerning governmental policies on foreign affairs generally - supplementary to the major policy statements made to Parliament in full session by government leaders.

One difficulty may be noted. Under Canadian practice, the secret or confidential matter in the possession of the Government or of the Department is normally not shared with the members of the Standing Committee, the non-government party members, or the press. The Opposition Members are not let into the arcana of secret lore which is preserved by the Government. In Australia and New Zealand, on the other hand, the members of their Standing Parliamentary Committee are taken into the confidence of the government in most diplomatic and external matters; but this can be done only under the condition that such Committee meetings are secret or closed, without the presence of the press or releases to the public. In lieu of this sharing of "inside" or confidential government information, which for obvious reasons cannot be made public, the informal practice has been developed of the Prime Minister offering to show confidentially to the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition - and at times even to the leaders of any other recognized minority parties in the legislature, any secret or confidential information which he has, unless classified by sending countries. This sharing of privileged material may, in certain instances, be valuable in keeping the debates on the rails, or "off the rails" as the case may be, in matters of great diplomatic sensitivity or delicacy; but it does not reach Parliament, and at times it may embarrass an Opposition Leader to have knowledge of

facts which may tie his hands in debate or which he must withhold from his colleagues. The practice, used with discretion, is, however, a governmental courtesy, similar to that of allowing duellists to previously examine each other's foils.

While the Select Standing Committee on External Affairs of the House of Commons has since its commencement been the most active and important, because much of its work is in connection with estimates, there was also created a Select Standing Committee on External Affairs in the Senate. Mr. R. Barry Farrell has summarized the role of this body in 1949 in the following words:

"Legislation is customarily sent to the Senate late in the Parliamentary session when little time for debate is available. Most of the Senate's work is done in committee. Its External Affairs Committee has made useful recommendations improving the drafting of bills and has been the forum for interesting discussions on problems of international relations. However, it is somewhat removed from political dynamics and few government witnesses have made important statements to it. . . . On foreign relations the main functions of the Senate and its External Affairs Committee have been to defer to the House on matters of policy and politics but to provide secondary amendments and attend to matters with which the House has not time to deal."<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) R.B. Farrell: "The Planning of Foreign Policy in Canada". World Politics, Vol. 1, No.3, April, 1949, p.373.



B.

DR. OSCAR D. SKELTON, I.S.O., PH.D.

UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

1925-1941

Dr. Oscar Douglas Skelton

Dr. Skelton's life falls into two parts. The first was academic and professional, the second was official, as a government servant. The first was associated with Universities - Chicago and for twenty-six years, (1908-1924), Queen's. The second was, for seventeen years, associated with the East Block in Ottawa. Of the first part, little need be said here.\* Of the second, his long period as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, as successor to Sir Joseph Pope, some notes are warranted. For the history of the Department in that period is overshadowed by the quality of the man who was its chief - just as in earlier days the history of the old Colonial Office and Foreign Office was largely that of several great men who were the Permanent Secretaries or Under-Secretaries of State in Great Britain.

Early Life

Oscar Douglas Skelton, the son of Jeremiah Skelton, a public school teacher, and Elizabeth Hall Skelton, was born at Orangeville on July 13, 1878. He received his secondary education in Orangeville and Cornwall, and then went up to Queen's University, where he studied English and Classics and took his B.A. and M.A. degrees. In 1900 he received the Gold Medal in Classics, and earned other medals. Like many another adventuresome and ambitious Canadian graduate, he was attracted to the British Colonial

\* Descriptions of Dr. Skelton's life and work in the academic field have been given by W.C. Clark in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada, May, 1941; by G.S. Graham in The Canadian Historical Review, June, 1941, pp.232-4; and by W.A.M. in the Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, May, 1941, pp.270-8.

Service, and apparently had applied for entry into the Indian Civil Service, but this prospect did not materialize. While an undergraduate, he had spent several of his summer vacations in England, selling stereopticon slides. Later, while with the Book-lovers' Magazine, he made several further visits to Europe, photographing the paintings of the old masters, and trying to sell them.

On the strength of a Chicago offer of "what seemed like an assured salary of fifty dollars per month but which on nearer view proved only half so lucrative" he married in 1904 a classmate of his college days, Isabel Murphy. The intellectual capacity of this lady was later demonstrated in studies of Thomas D'Arcy McGee and the Canadian Backwoodswoman which she published, but it must have taken all the resources of intelligence and character which the two Skeltons possessed to surmount the obstacles of those first years of family life. Two sons and one daughter made up the family. The daughter, Sheila, married Arthur Menzies, a Far Eastern expert in the Department of External Affairs, who later (1958) became <sup>High Commissioner</sup> ~~Ambassador~~ to the newly-created republic of Malaya, and Ambassador to Burma. Alexander Skelton lost his life in a fatal sailing mishap in the heart of Africa. In 1901 Oscar Skelton went to the University of Chicago for a further course of Greek study. Then he took a position for three years as assistant editor of the Booklovers' Magazine in Philadelphia, associated with the

Brampton, Ontario-born John C. Kirkwood. In 1905, however, he returned to Chicago and, inspired by Veblen and others, became attracted to the study of economic theory, in which field he took his doctorate (Ph.D.) in 1908.

Writings

In 1909 he submitted an essay The Case against Socialism, which won the \$1000 prize offered by Hart, Schaffner, and Marx; this award was at that time recognized as the outstanding economics prize on the continent, and it brought him immediate recognition. He was appointed professor of political science at Queen's University, filling the place of Dr. Adam Shortt who had been called to service in Ottawa. In 1919 he became Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Queen's, <sup>a position</sup> which he held for the next five years.

A work which was the fruit of his graduate studies at Chicago was published in Boston in 1916, entitled Socialism: A Critical Analysis. This immediately won high favour, and was translated into some forty languages, including Russian. Both G.D.H. Cole and Lenin described it as the best serious criticism of Socialism written up to that time; Lenin ordered a copy to be placed in his tomb. According to 1941 press reports, a copy of this book lies in the great mausoleum-tomb of Lenin in the Red Square in Moscow. Whether this is still true is not known.

With this auspicious start, it was not long before Skelton was writing further successful books of historical scholarship. He had a period of great productivity. Besides numerous articles in the learned journals, he wrote



a General Economic History of Canada 1867-1912, which was published in 1913 in the series Canada and its Provinces. In 1916 he wrote The Railroad Builders, in the Chronicles of Canada series, and in the same year was published The Day of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, a forerunner of the official biography. In the same year he published The Canadian Dominion, a Chronicle of Our Northern Neighbour, in a Yale series "Chronicles of America". In 1920 his Life and Times of Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt appeared, and also in 1921, the two-volume authorized Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. As early as 1910 Skelton had come into contact with Laurier, and shortly afterward he was chosen by Sir Wilfrid to write his biography; it was published within two years of Laurier's death.

Imperial Relations

While still a Professor and Faculty Dean at Queen's University, Dr. Skelton, on January 20, 1922, gave an interesting address to the Canadian Club of Toronto on "Canada and Foreign Policy". He first referred to the claim of the older imperialists that there should be complete unity in imperial foreign policy, and that this should be dealt with by the central imperial authorities in London. He questioned this, and argued that, in this period, there must be recognition of "severalty and distinctive national standing", recognition "that each part of the British Empire has its own problems and must make its own policy". "There are many questions of relationships with other countries which primarily concern each part of the British Empire, and the British Foreign Office must deal with these affairs peculiarly through the Canadian parliament when these questions concern Canada." Dr. Skelton questioned the emphasis on "unity", as expressed, for example, by Mr. Lloyd George concerning the Irish constitution:

No one, however strongly he might be inclined to a unified Empire, is going to propose that any central authority should take control of many of the questions which Canada for example has in the past been dealing with in her own right. No one is going to propose that it would be logical to conclude from Mr. Lloyd George's statement that Britain and Australia and South Africa should join in settling our problem of the St. Lawrence waterway, or other issues. That would be the logical outcome of an absolutely unified Empire and policy of Empire. What Mr. Lloyd

George has in mind is something not quite so sweeping. It is simply that in what are problems of Britain's foreign affairs, the Dominions should assume a measure of control and a measure of responsibility; that in the commitments which Great Britain undertakes in Asia, Europe or Africa, there should be a policy which would bind the whole Empire and every part of the Empire, and every part of the Empire would be obliged to back an execution. It would mean, I think, a sham control and real responsibility. . . . I do not think there is any possibility of the policy of Great Britain on certain questions being controlled or determined, particularly in the essential matters of detail by day to day negotiation, by representatives of the Dominions - certainly not by so casual a method as an occasional meeting of Premiers at an Imperial Conference. . . .

Dr. Skelton then referred to the line of thought of some people that "we must make a dividing line between certain kinds of foreign problems that each part of the Empire could deal with separately, and other questions must be dealt with jointly, on which there must be absolutely a unified policy". To this view, he replied that it was not possible in advance to determine what problems were of concern only to particular dominions and what were of concern to the empire as a whole. "I do not think it is possible to divide foreign affairs according to whether they require unity or do not require unity. . . ." But he forthwith added: "Yet I think most of us would agree that a line can be drawn between those matters that primarily concern only one part of the Empire and those matters that may be of common concern. It may be difficult in actual practice to draw that line, but theoretically it exists. I think in many cases it will have to be applied".

He continued:

We are a member of the British Empire. We are bound by common traditions, common sentiments, common sacrifices and many common interests to the other parts of the British Empire and we are not only a member of that great league but we are a member of the wider league of nations, and whether through that mechanism or otherwise we doubtless must continue to take our part, accept our responsibility, to recognize our interdependence, with all the nations of the world. . . . We are only a nation of eight millions, and it will not rest with us solely to determine the fate and fortune of the world. We have not been born to put these details that are out of joint wholly to rights. But a modest part, and an intelligent part, we must take. I think then we might take the position that there are certain matters of foreign policy that primarily concern each part of the Empire and should be controlled by its people through parliament. There may be other questions of foreign policy which by their magnitude, by the particular circumstances in which they arise, which mean that more than the interests of one part are involved, require a certain common consideration or common consultation. Now just how to determine what these instances are is a difficult problem, and what machinery to be employed is a matter which will require much discussion. . . .

This summary of Dr. Skelton's views outlined in his address of 1922 shows the direction, even then, of his thinking in matters of foreign affairs and imperial relationships. It was not given to him then to foresee that two or three years later he was to be a part of the policy-guiding machinery of the Canadian Government, and that these "theoretical" problems of independent or interdependent foreign policy were to become actual problems which, in large part, he was to be responsible for determining. His inclination, as here expressed, was toward the

development of separate dominion foreign policy, and away from a unified Empire foreign policy, except where a "common front" was obviously required; and even then he was not prepared explicitly to say in what manner, or by what machinery, such a "common front" in imperial foreign policy was to be attained, since he deprecated the value of occasional Imperial Conferences, and did not endorse the Round Table notions of an Imperial Federation structure.

Entry into Department of External Affairs

Largely, it is said, on the strength of Skelton's biography of Laurier, (1) Prime Minister Mackenzie King invited him to act as special adviser at the Imperial Conference held in London from July 30 to December 1, 1923. On that mission, besides his travel expenses, he received an allowance of \$50 per diem, (2) charged to the Department of External Affairs.

In 1924, while he was still Dean at Queen's, he was attached, at Mr. King's invitation, as adviser on the Canadian Delegation to the League of Nations Assembly at Geneva.

It is possible that on either of these occasions he met L.C. Christie, who in 1923 resigned from the Department of External Affairs and was residing in London engaged

(1) F.H. Soward: "The Department of External Affairs and Canadian Autonomy". Canadian Historical Association, 1956.

(2) Auditor General's Report, 1923-24.

in business; or Skelton may have previously known him. Thereafter Christie maintained with Skelton a certain amount of personal correspondence from London, largely on political topics.

Counsellor

Late in 1924, Dr. Skelton was persuaded, after much urging, to join the Department of External Affairs more permanently, with the initial rank of Counsellor. Thus, after much indecision, and reluctance to leave his Alma Mater, he doffed his academic robes and the Deanship of Arts, to enter a new career of government service. It was a hard choice: he was fond of teaching, he liked students, and he loved Queen's. He found the life of scholarship and writing to his taste. He found it hard to tear himself away, and even when his friend Mr. Mackenzie King applied pressure, he did not burn his bridges completely. He went to Ottawa on a year's leave of absence from the University. Long afterwards he said that the Dean's Office loomed in retrospect as a peaceful haven of rest. He missed his books, his students, and the serenity of Kingston College life.

Moreover, while Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Queen's, he found himself, as Counsellor at Ottawa, in a subordinate position to the aging Under-Secretary, Sir Joseph Pope, and the Assistant Under-Secretary, W.H. Walker; but doubtless this did not bother the 46-year old scholar-administrator. It is probable that he played a sort of independent role, which Christie had played, as special adviser to the Prime Minister. Although not a

lawyer nor a legal adviser, he was indeed soon filling a position of confidence left vacant by Christie in 1923.

Autonomist

When Dr. Skelton entered the Department, still under Sir Joseph Pope, as Counsellor in 1924, he took over in certain respects the advisory position formerly held by Loring Christie. Among other matters, he was faced - or the Government was faced - with the prospect of the imminent convening of a Preliminary Imperial Constitutional Conference in London (which was, in the event, cancelled). It was expected to consider, among other things, the relation of the various parts of the Empire, the unity or otherwise of their respective foreign policies, and the improvement of imperial consultation and information.

Dr. Skelton immediately set to work formulating the Canadian attitude, and in August, 1924, produced a memorandum on "Policy of Canada"<sup>(1)</sup> for Mr. Mackenzie King's and the Cabinet's consideration. This was, as he said, an attempt to express Mr. King's own views.

In this memorandum he made it very clear that, in place of control of foreign relations affecting the Empire by the British Imperial Government and Foreign Office, each of the Dominions was to have full control, albeit with due consultation, of its own foreign relations. ~~This was a great divergence from the reliance on British machinery that characterized Sir Wilfrid Laurier's day.~~ Decisions in 1918-20 for separate Canadian

(1) File 844/1924.

diplomatic representation and machinery, participation in the League of Nations, and the independent signature of the Halibut Treaty in 1923, had been among the precedents for Canada's more independent attitude. To this Dr. Skelton, <sup>subscribed.</sup> ~~though pro-British, even more pro-Canadian,~~ subscribed.

A part of his memorandum may be quoted as a clear indication of the position which he thought Canada had reached and which should be sustained. (It was very effectively sustained at the crucial Imperial Conference of 1926).

(a) The starting point in the consideration of our foreign relations should be the conception of each self-governing part of the Empire as a distinct unit, carrying on negotiations with foreign countries on any matter of primary concern to it, and, if need be, negotiating, signing, and ratifying treaties under Full Powers from the King; this is the policy adopted by Canada in connection with the Halibut Treaty, and presumably what will be adopted in any agreement upon the St. Lawrence Waterways proposal. Great Britain and each other part of the Empire to carry on negotiations in the same way on matters of sole or primary concern to itself; understood that any other part of the Empire incidentally interested to be kept informed.

x x x x

(c) When two or more or all parts of the Empire are interested in the same international question, all so interested should take part, but each in its own right, separately invited, and with Full Powers for its own representative.

(d) The counter-assumption is that there must be one foreign policy for the Empire, that the British Empire must be considered a unit in foreign affairs and foreign conferences. This is possibly the attitude, to judge from his speeches, which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald would take, and which New Zealand, and it may be Australia, would support. This assumption has some ground in the procedure followed in Paris and Washington, where the British Empire was considered as the international unit. This, is, however,



contrary to the conception underlying our membership in the League of Nations, where the distinct units of the Empire are members each in its own right. It seems essential to decline to accept this view of the Empire as a whole being a single and in fact the only international unit. It is contrary to our position in the League of Nations and to the principle laid down in the Halibut Treaty. Unless it is recognized that each self-governing part of the Empire is a distinct international unit, it will be impossible for us to claim with any logic either our present distinct representation in the League or distinct representation in future international conferences.) In a covering note to Mr. Mackenzie King, Dr. Skelton said: "I have drawn up on the attached memorandum a very brief summary of what I take to be your position on the subject. If this is not correct or complete, I hope you will be able to get time to indicate corrections before I leave, so that in the event of a preliminary conference to be held in October we will know the Government's position". (1)

On December 4, 1924, Dr. Skelton prepared a letter to Col. Reid Hyde, Advisor in the Office of the Canadian High Commissioner in London, in which he said:

We should not be drawn into admitting in any way the favourite British contention that there can be only one foreign policy for the Empire and that this policy must be administered by the British Foreign Minister, with or without the advice or consent of the Dominions.

Before despatching this, Skelton submitted it for approval to Mr. King, on December 6th. Mr. King marginally commented "by all means" to send it. (2)

On December 12th this attitude was re-emphasized in a despatch partly prepared by Dr. Skelton and sent by Mr. King in a long cable on December 15 to the High Commissioner, Mr. P.C. Larkin. The latter part read:

(1) File 844-1924.

(2) Ibid.

We assumed that the meeting of the High Commissioners with the Prime Minister Mr. Baldwin was a purely informal one and that the discussion of foreign policy arose casually. From subsequent developments it would appear, however, that this meeting was possibly intended as a prelude to regular meetings of High Commissioners collectively with the Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary to discuss foreign policy. Such group meetings, in our opinion, involve approach to proposals of an imperial conference in London steadily rejected by Laurier and the country generally, and which bring with them more responsibility than control. In case a further effort should be made to involve Canada, through her High Commissioner, in a joint responsibility with British Government in matters of foreign policy we desire to have it made clear that our Government cannot sanction any such arrangement unless adopted after full consideration and as part of agreed machinery of inter-imperial relations. We are prepared to discuss fully such foreign affairs as are really of joint interest but do not consider all Britain's foreign affairs of direct interest to us \* any more than our foreign affairs, especially with the United States, can all be considered of primary interest to England or Australia. We would not wish to drift or be manoeuvred into accepting the contention of some so-called Imperialists as to single Empire foreign policy and general responsibility therefor. . . .

This whole matter we regard as of more concern and importance than any before us at the present moment, and are most anxious therefore to take any and every step possible to avoid misunderstanding of our position either with the British Government or with the public in Great Britain or our own country. (1)

The foregoing notes indicate Dr. Skelton's own concept of Canadian autonomy in foreign relations.

The following year, 1925, Mr. King urged Dr. Skelton to sever his connection, temporarily interrupted, completely with Queen's and to join the

\* In the context of other correspondence at this time, the Geneva Protocol seems to be one of the affairs impliedly referred to. (K.P.K.).

(1) Ibid.

Department permanently. It is not clear if King's invitation, or initial appointment of Skelton as Counsellor in 1924, was made with a foreknowledge of Pope's impending retirement the following year, and was deliberately preparatory to offering Skelton the Under-Secretaryship; or whether Skelton "fell into" the senior position after Pope's resignation had been proffered and accepted as from March 31, 1925. At all events, as Mr. King said much later, "It was wholly from a sense of duty and with great reluctance that in 1924 he yielded to my personal urgings to give up his professorship at Queen's University to become [Counsellor and later] Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs."<sup>(1)</sup>

The Order-in-Council P.C.448 of 30th March, 1925, was based on a recommendation drafted by Sir Joseph Pope and signed by Mr. King on March 19th and read:

The Committee of the Privy Council, on recommendation of the Right Honourable W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, advise that Oscar Douglas Skelton, Esq., M.A., Ph.D., of the City of Kingston in the Province of Ontario, be appointed from the 1st April, 1925, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs at a salary of \$8000 per annum in the room and stead of Sir Joseph Pope, K.C.M.G., to be retired.

Dr. Skelton was sworn in as Under-Secretary on March 31. On May 1 the Department of the Secretary

(1) Ottawa Journal, January 29, 1941.

of State forwarded to him his Commission under the Great Seal, for which he was asked to pay \$20. (1)

Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs

Dr. Skelton replaced Sir Joseph Pope, when he retired, as Under-Secretary on April 1, 1925. Thereafter he had little leisure or time for private scholastic researches or historical writing, though he occasionally contributed articles to periodicals or wrote introductions for others' work. Henceforth most of his writings were in the form of confidential memoranda for the Prime Minister or Cabinet, important official correspondence, and numerous reports.

Dr. Skelton, almost without awareness or deliberate effort, made his influence felt on the young Department, which slowly grew in numbers and facilities during the decade and a half of his tenure as Under-Secretary. He carefully chose his assistants, and gave them personal help and encouragement. He took a personal hand - experienced as he was in academic affairs - in the preparation of the Civil Service Commission examinations for ~~Foreign Service~~ Officers in the External Affairs Department; he drafted the questions; he read the written papers turned in by candidates; he chaired the panel of examiners in the oral examinations; he recommended to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (i.e.

(1) File 459-25. (Records Centre).

the Prime Minister) and the Civil Service Commission the successful candidates he wished to have appointed.

Thus Mr. King was justified in saying:

"Around him Dr. Skelton had gathered a band of young men who found in his character their example, and his wisdom their inspiration. His influence was a real benediction to those who worked with him. He was always generous with praise for the work of others. No one ever sought less for himself. He forgot his own merits in the encouragement he so freely gave to the efforts of his fellow-workers."<sup>(1)</sup>

But so preoccupied was his serious mind with affairs of state, with advisory opinions on policy, and with the mounting problems of international affairs and crises, that he devoted only a fraction of his attention to purely administrative matters around his office. These, as far as possible, he left to his assistants - W.H. Walker, F.M. Baker, and J.F. Boyce and Miss McCloskey among others, directed for a time by Mr. Jean Desy, his Counsellor, and later by others in the senior ranks of the Department. Although by modern comparisons, his Department was small in numbers, and he was reluctant to delegate tasks to others which he preferred always to deal with himself, he turned over the details of some of the administrative matters to

(1) Ottawa Journal, January 29, 1941.

his assistants while exercising a personal over-all supervision and control.

The departmental staff, as is shown in another chapter, was augmented. For instance, the code and cypher work was transferred in 1926 from the Governor General's Office to External Affairs, and J.R.M. Walker was transferred from the older one to the new one. Dr. Skelton brought into the Department one of his former Queen's students, Miss Marjorie McKenzie, as his special secretary, and she became his devoted and skilled assistant and collaborator. J.F. Boyce was raised to Chief Clerk and was another close henchman. Miss McCloskey, with her natural energy, was not only Chief Accountant but performed a great deal else in the administrative sector.

The growth of the departmental staff during Dr. Skelton's regime is elaborated more fully in the chapter on "Staff" and in the chapter dealing with the expansion of Representation Abroad, and need not be recapitulated here. Suffice it to say that in this phase materialized in part that initial aspiration of Joseph Pope, back in 1907, to build up a corps of trained officers in the field of international diplomacy. Both Prime Ministers King and Bennett and Dr. Skelton himself, were reluctant to enlarge the Department too rapidly. Bennett, if abandoning his first

alleged impulse to abolish it, kept it static; King, while more ambitious for diplomatic representation, moved slowly in the face of an economy-minded Parliament, and if we are to accept Mr. Pierrepont/<sup>Moffat's</sup> report of a dinner conversation in 1941, Mr. King thought that Pearson and Robertson, whom he approved, "wished to go too fast" in the direction of diplomatic expansion.<sup>(1)</sup> Dr. Skelton, while he lived, also sought to make haste slowly, preferring to burden himself rather than delegate work to assistants. But practical necessity and the increasing demands of international events forced him to recruit both additional officers and a larger clerical staff.

#### Characteristics.

Dr. Skelton was very quiet and unassuming, but was a devoted and indefatigable worker. He would arrive at his office in the East Block very early, and would be there until late in the evenings, particularly on the days when there were Cabinet meetings. The press often found him waiting in the ante-room of the Prime Minister's Office for the Council meetings to end so that he could consult with the Prime Minister. Among his many duties he used to attend at the station when distinguished diplomats or Important Personages came to Ottawa. He rarely missed welcoming home the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Crown. Although Skelton attended official functions when he had to, he disliked them, and preferred informality to formality at all times. One who knew him well, Mr. Grant Dexter, wrote: "He detested society as such; abhorred

(1) The Moffat Papers. p. 373.

receptions, balls, state dinners, the glamour and glitter of a national capital. His favourite headgear was a peak cap and he wore it pulled well down over his eyes, looking odd but very well pleased with it. He simply could not abide contraptions like silk toppers, boiled dress shirts and state uniforms."<sup>(1)</sup>

Dr. Skelton's personality and tastes had a strong but invisible influence on the officers who worked with or under him. They too acquired a sense of dedication, anonymity, and of simplicity. It was perhaps this abhorrence of Skelton's formal attire that prevented the senior staff of the Department from becoming the "striped pants" boys described in other Foreign Offices and State Departments. It was perhaps also this attitude that discouraged the general adoption of diplomatic uniforms abroad.

Departmental Head

Grant Dexter describes him as he was after he became head of the Department at Ottawa. "You would find him in his office in the East Block, desk, couches and chairs piled high with files. A straggly fern reached pathetic fronds toward the window. His hair was always tousled. His shaggy eyebrows trailed over his spectacles. In later years there was a hurt,

<sup>(1)</sup> Grant Dexter: "Oscar Douglas Skelton", Queen's Quarterly. Spring, 1941, p.5.



tired look in his eyes. There he would sit, patient, kindly, understanding. He was never in a hurry, never distraught. He never lost his temper and he simply didn't know how to be rude. He liked newspapermen because, at heart, he loved journalism. He would look up at you with a kindly, shy smile, push up his spectacles which were forever getting low on his nose. 'Well' he would ask, 'what is the news?' This, of course, was always rhetorical. He had an uncanny sense of knowing your business before you mentioned it."<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Op. Cit. p.3.

Skelton had an amazing quick reading eye. It was almost photographic. He tried to read practically every despatch, telegram, press clipping or other document that concerned his Department. He did so with extraordinary rapidity. He could take in a whole page of text as rapidly as most people can read a sentence.

When he wrote something that required study and careful thought, he turned to a smaller desk behind him, against a wall. When he was thus engaged, with his back to the room, it was understood by his staff that he was not to be disturbed. It was as though he had locked himself away in an invisible inner sanctum. But when he sat at his large principal desk, he was, as any deputy minister is, being constantly interrupted by telephone or intruded upon by his officers or clerks or outside visitors; that, during "working hours", was unavoidably his duty. But in the early morning hours, or in late evenings, when the intrusions ceased, he could quietly pursue his thinking and his composing, his memoranda for Prime Ministers or Cabinet, his reports of conferences, and his voluminous correspondence.

Outside his door, in the ante-room which was also the visitors' waiting-room, sat his faithful Private Secretary, Miss Marjorie McKenzie, whose desk was always stacked high with incoming and outgoing documents. Almost everything documentary that circulated in the Department crossed her desk; everything that went to Dr. Skelton or came from him she saw and dealt with. The next closest to his business was J.F. Boyce, the Chief Clerk, who had long past experience under Sir Joseph Pope and in the Prime

Minister's Office.

One of the characteristics of this scholar-official was his constant philosophical good temper and sweetness of disposition, even when he was visibly tired or under strain. Even weighted down with increasing responsibilities, especially after the war broke out, Dr. Skelton preserved to the last a unique sense of humour. Tired though he might be after a heavy day at the office, he was a genial companion at many informal gatherings. He loved to joke and to see the bright side of everything. "It was 'off the beat'," as Dexter says, "that Dr. Skelton became the delightful companion. Often when he looked about his cluttered office, he must have recalled Lord Grey's wish - that some day his accumulation of papers might be burned and the ashes used to mulch his roses. To get home to his garden, to dig in the earth, to sit at his fire-side and enjoy a friend or a book - these meant much to him."

It is difficult to pin down<sup>to</sup> Dr. Skelton any particular series of achievements. The whole work of his Department became his bailiwick; and not only that, but he took a deep concern in the whole Civil Service, and beyond that, the work and direction of government itself. His historical and biographical studies had made him familiar with the political as well as of the administrative field. His early friendship with Mr. Mackenzie King, based on mutual interests in sociological questions, as well as mutually in the life and work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was supplemented very soon by intimate relations

with other leaders in the Government and with his Civil Service confrères in other Departments.

Political Contributions

Dr. Skelton's influence went far beyond the limits of his own Department. From the very beginning of his public career he was the confidant and trusted adviser of Mr. Mackenzie King. His valuable advice was immeasurable. Mr. King later said: "It would be impossible for me to say what, in my present position, I have owed to Dr. Skelton's wise counsel and unfailing help in the years of our close association. The Cabinet itself not infrequently sought and received the invaluable assistance of his thoughtful intelligence. He was, as it were, the elder statesman in the Civil Service of Canada, trusted and honoured by all who knew him." (1)

As Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, he was the Counsellor of successive Prime Ministers from 1925 onwards. They relied on him; he never failed them. He was consulted on every major domestic reform. "Officially he was the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs; actually he was the Deputy Prime Minister of Canada. There is, of course, no such position. But Dr. Skelton's authority and responsibility could not be delimited by mere Orders-in-Council. His position was a purely personal one, the result of his own extraordinary gifts as a public servant. Down the years it became the custom of Ministers, Members of Parliament, and civil servants to turn to him for advice. When problems seemed completely unmanageable - no

(1) Ottawa Journal, January 29, 1941.

matter what kind of problems they happened to be - some one would hit on the happy idea of deferring the decision until Dr. Skelton had been consulted." (1)

His associations with the Cabinet Ministers were barely affected in successive changes of Government. Mr. Meighen's incumbency was very short, yet Dr. Skelton almost certainly lent his advice and gave his suggestions during the constitutional crisis of 1926.

When, for five years, Mr. R.B. Bennett held office as Prime Minister of a Conservative Government, there was only a short doubt as to what Dr. Skelton's relationship and position would be. Mr. Bennett quickly accepted him as his own adviser and as his confidant and friend. The new Prime Minister abandoned whatever misgivings he and his Conservative followers may have had toward the Department of External Affairs; Mr. Bennett remained Secretary of State for External Affairs; he retained Dr. Skelton as Under-Secretary; and he came to trust him in more general political matters. This signalized Dr. Skelton's great qualities of breadth of experience and view. Serving under the two Prime Ministers of different philosophies, "he was the permanent official incarnate. He never permitted his political predilections to colour or cloud his judgments, to interfere with what he conceived to be his duty to the Government or Prime Minister he served. As an administrator, as a trusted adviser, he was first of all a realist, a realist of indestructible loyalty." (2)

(1) Grant Dexter, op. cit. p. 1.

(2) Ibid.

When Mr. Mackenzie King returned to power in 1935, there was renewed the former relationship with his former chief that lasted for six more years until broken by Skelton's death. And as those years were the most pregnant with international problems, "the gathering storm" and the outbreak of war, Skelton's guidance and advice to the Prime Minister and his ministerial colleagues were immeasurable.

#### Diplomatic Missions

Dr. Skelton was not only an East Block man; he was also a conference man. In 1923, as has been mentioned, Mr. King had taken him, as an unofficial adviser, to the Imperial Conference in London, and to the League Assembly in 1924. After he became Under-Secretary in 1925, his overseas trips continued from time to time. He attended the 8th Assembly of the League of Nations held in Geneva on September 5-27, 1927. He was chairman of a conference of Canadian and United States representatives held in Ottawa, January 7-10, 1929, to discuss the problem of commercial smuggling (mainly liquor smuggling) across the international border; Dr. H.L. Keenleyside, then a Third Secretary in the Department, also was attached.

He attended the inter-Imperial Conference on the Operation of Dominion Legislation and Merchant Shipping Legislation held in London, October 8 - December 4, 1929; Jean Désy, Counsellor in the Department, and John E. Read, K.C., Legal Adviser, also attended.

He was chairman of the Imperial Committee on Economic Consultation and Co-operation held at Canada

House in London from February 14, to April 11, 1933.

Mr. L.B. Pearson was Secretary of the Conference, and Col. G.P. Vanier, Secretary of the High Commissioner's Office, also assisted.

In February, 1932, into 1933, Dr. Skelton attended the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in Geneva.

He was on the Canadian delegation to the 15th session of the League of Nations Assembly held in Geneva September 10-27, 1934 .; the delegation was headed by Mr. R.B. Bennett, and other members included Dr. Riddell and Jean Désy.

He was an alternate senior delegate on the Canadian delegation to the 17th League of Nations Assembly in Geneva September 21 - October 10, 1936.

#### Further Writings

The bibliography of Dr. Skelton's writings after he entered the public service in 1924 is slender, and includes only a few articles, and various government reports. He contributed a historical chapter "Canada under Responsible Government 1854-1867" to the Cambridge History of the British Empire; this was written after he came to Ottawa but was based on earlier researches. Four inaugural lectures given at Fulton, Missouri, in 1937, were published as Our Generation, Its Gains and Losses in 1938; he wrote some articles for Queen's Quarterly on Dafoe's Sifton and on current events, and an article on Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, and contributed to the Journal of the Canadian Bankers' Association.

Otherwise his writings were of an official nature. They included the drafting of Reports of the Imperial Conference of 1923, 1926, 1932, and 1937; Report on the Operation of Dominion Legislation and Merchant Shipping Legislation, 1929; Report on the Imperial Committee on Economic Consultation and Cooperation, 1932; and evidence on Civil Service Councils, (March 21, 1928), evidence on establishment of chairs and scholarships in Canadian universities on international studies, (1930), and evidence before a Special Committee of the House of Commons on the British North America Act, (March 5, 1933).<sup>(1)</sup>

Of Dr. Skelton's services in an official capacity, W.C. Clark has written: "Enduring monuments to his career in his strict official capacity are to be found in the able and vigorous Department of External Affairs which he developed; in the Canadian diplomatic service which he created; in the recent trend of constitutional developments in Canada and the British Commonwealth of Nations which he notably influenced; in the growing influence of Canada as a power promoting goodwill and understanding among the nations, particularly the various branches of the Anglo-Saxon family; in a series of great state papers which came from his pen; and in the enhancement of the power and prestige of the Canadian Civil Service of which he was so universally recognized as the leader, without peer. He also played a conspicuous part as chief adviser to the Canadian Government in nearly all Imperial Conferences since 1923, and in this capacity had won the esteem and

(1) See W.A.M. "O.D.Skelton": Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, May, 1941. pp.277-8.



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the close friendship of many of the leading men of other parts of the Empire. It was, however, as General Secretary of the Imperial Conference held at Ottawa in 1923 that the exceptional character of his capacity, his judgment, and his personality called forth universal plaudits." (1)

#### Refusal of Honours

Dr. Skelton was to the public service of Canada what Sir Maurice (afterwards Lord) Hankey was to the Civil Service in Great Britain. His services were so much recognized and appreciated that, in his recommendations for King George V's New Year honours in 1934, Mr. Bennett wanted to recommend Dr. Skelton for a knighthood, similar to that of his predecessor, Sir Joseph Pope. But he refused the distinction. In its place he accepted the Imperial Service Order, an honour that is awarded only to Civil Servants for long and distinguished service. It was the most coveted Civil Service decoration.

With regard to honours, Dr. Skelton was a deeply imbued democrat who cared naught for such marks. He would have disagreed with Napoleon's dictum "Mankind is led by baubles", and might have agreed with Voltaire's comment on books: "In the eyes of a philosopher, titles of books are like those of men. He judges nothing by titles." Mr. Mackenzie King told the House: "It is a matter of common knowledge that Mr. Bennett, who knew and appreciated the eminent virtues of this great public servant, offered him

(1) "Oscar Douglas Skelton": Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada. May, 1941. p. 146.

a Knighthood which Dr. Skelton felt obliged to decline. I wished to submit his name to the representative of the King for a privy counsellorship, not as an honour or reward but as a sworn relationship which I deemed appropriate to the performance of his highly confidential duties. This position he was unwilling to accept. He believed that men in the public service could best carry on their work by remaining in the background of anonymity and retiring from the light of public favour. He refused to accept any honour or position which would appear to remove him from the level of his fellow workers or create any barrier or embarrassment between him and them. He hated notoriety, controversy, publicity and everything that was blatant or garish. He knew that the best things in life are wrought in the stillness and solitude of the mind of man, and that reflection and silence become a trusted servant of the people far more than speech and the glitter of the limelight. By his own modest acceptance of these high traditions of the public service, which he did so much to create, he fashioned the pattern of the Department of External Affairs."<sup>(1)</sup>

#### The Sanctions Issue

The election which overthrew the Conservatives under Mr. Bennett and reinstated Mr. King as Liberal Prime Minister took place on October 14, 1935. On October 2 the Government of Italy ordered its troops

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941, p.818.

across the border of Ethiopia. Mussolini was on the march in Africa in the tradition of the Roman emperors. In Geneva, the League of Nations was soon considering the obligation and practicality of sanctions against the Italian aggressor. Mr. Howard Ferguson, High Commissioner to Great Britain, was the Canadian delegate, assisted by Dr. W.A. Riddell, Canadian Advisory Officer at Geneva. On the defeat of Mr. Bennett, Mr. Ferguson promptly resigned, leaving Dr. Riddell as chief Canadian representative. The issue of sanctions came up, and Riddell cabled three times for instructions, but because of the political upset in Ottawa, the reply was delayed. He therefore made a statement on the basis of his general estimate of Canadian Government policy. On November 2 he proposed that petroleum, coal, iron, and steel be added to the list of strategic materials which the League members would not sell to Italy. Tired by the election campaign, Mr. King had set off for Georgia to replenish his exhausted strength. He had taken with him his expert adviser and confidant, Dr. Skelton. Mr. Lapointe, Minister of Justice and Acting Prime Minister, was left in charge of affairs in Ottawa. When the Italian Consul General protested to the Canadian Government against the new sanctions policy, Lapointe at first endorsed Riddell's initiative, but, three days later, on December 1, he <sup>was</sup> persuaded - partly by French-Canadian opinion traditionally sympathetic to the Italian people, to disavow the action of

the Canadian official representative. Doubtless he consulted King by telephone and King agreed, taking full responsibility for his deputy's action; doubtless also, he consulted Skelton who was with King. On December 6 the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, in secret with Laval, made a pact with Italy recognizing a dismemberment of Ethiopia. It does not appear what advice Dr. Skelton gave in this grave issue. Dr. Skelton had frequently been an interpreter of United States opinion which, although the U.S.A. was not a member of the League of Nations, was opposed to the risks of severe sanctions which might provoke war; on the other hand, Dr. Skelton was an international moralist who could not condone the Italian aggression and might have supported any effective League measures to stop it, provided that this did not incur war.

#### Outbreak of War

Dr. Skelton, a great democrat and idealist, had been disillusioned by the successive derelictions of international conduct by other countries, and the deviation from international morality. There was the Italian aggression against Ethiopia, the Spanish Civil War, the Japanese invasion of Chinese Manchuria, and the attack on North China; the German inroads on Austria and Czechoslovakia, in the Danzig corridor and elsewhere; and the dubious delaying tactics of Munich. Canada, a secondary power outside any of those troubled zones, had no direct

involvement in what was happening; but for idealistic Canadians who sought only world peace, freedom of peaceful commerce, and continental security, these ~~presented~~ disturbances abroad and international immoralities were of deepest concern. Finally, the paranoic ambitions and war-mongering aims of Adolph Hitler, like those of Kaiser Wilhelm two decades earlier, produced the European war. All the efforts of European and British diplomacy had failed disastrously. Dr. Skelton, like thousands of others, was bitterly disappointed. On the brink of calamitous war, his optimism and high faith were shaken. If the evidence of an intimate journalistic observer who was in the Parliamentary Press Gallery in those years and who claims to have been given the private confidence of Mr. King, is to be relied on, the outbreak of war was a shattering disillusionment of all Dr. Skelton's hopes.

At one o'clock on the morning of September 1, Bruce Hutchison relates, "The Canadian Press telephoned Pickersgill, one of King's Secretaries, to report that the German armies had crossed the Polish frontier. Pickersgill was living with Norman Robertson, of the External Affairs Department, and the two of them followed the press reports through that night of waiting. They decided that it was useless to rouse their chief, for he could do nothing. At six o'clock they telephoned Skelton, who called Kingsmere and got the Prime Minister out of bed. King received the news in silence. He dressed and ate a leisurely breakfast. He motored to town, entered his office as calmly as if this were a day of routine business, and summoned Parliament for September 7."<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Bruce Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, p.249.

In the opinion of many who claim to have known Dr. Skelton's beliefs and philosophy, he was profoundly a man of peace at any price. The unpopular term "pacifist" is opprobrious; but apparently his sympathies inclined that way. He may have hopefully shared Mr. King's over-optimistic trust in Hitler's professed restraint in 1937. He may have shared, like most Canadians, the relief and confidence over the deceptive and illusory promises of Munich, as was optimistically expressed by the Government and Parliament. He appears to have ardently hoped for Canadian neutrality if war broke out in Europe; there were the eventual policy of Ireland and the policy of the United States as examples to sustain this opinion. But these views, if held, were unrealistic; and showed Dr. Skelton to be to some degree an abstract philosopher, an idealist, with a scholar's rather than a practical politician's mind. The Prime Minister, equally devoted to peace "if possible", knew as a political leader that if war came and Britain was involved - and thus inevitably gravely endangered - the Empire would be involved also, even with "no prior commitments". He knew that in Canada, not only would the nation immediately prepare to go to the defence of Britain, as the bastion of the Empire, but that under modern war techniques, the enemy could and would extend its attacks to Canada's coasts, so that there was no choice of decision as to Canada's

involvement in war. The only decision to be reached was the question of degree and form of participation.

In the face of this crisis, Mr. King and his advisers were confronted with a grave decision; and it is alleged that the Prime Minister and Dr. Skelton for once did not see eye to eye. The United States Minister to Canada, Mr. John Pierrepont Moffat, wrote in his memoirs: "For better or worse the other members of the Canadian Government took little interest in foreign affairs, which thus came under the almost exclusive purview of Mr. King and his North American-minded Under-Secretary, Dr. Skelton. Both men recoiled from Canadian participation in a second world war...The war, when it came, marked the crumbling of their hopes and plans. But being realists, they did not waste a moment's time in regret for the collapse of their policies; they made an about-face and as a team are still guiding Canada's foreign policy." (1)

Nevertheless, Dr. Skelton seems to have yielded to the government's decision only after a most intense mental struggle. Bruce Hutchison, at that time an Ottawa journalist in the close confidence of Mr. King, relates that "Skelton, his most trusted adviser on foreign affairs from the beginning, insisted with all the power of his experience and integrity that

(1) The Moffat Papers. p.342.

Canada must remain neutral. As King told that story in his last days, Skelton argued that the surrender and hypocrisy of appeasement, from Ethiopia onward, had undermined all the moral purpose for which the war was ostensibly to be fought. Since no moral question was involved, Canada, like Ireland, should keep out. Being a North American nation, it might exercise some mediation in the course of a conflict morally chaotic". Hutchison goes on to relate, as it was told by Mr. King, how "for two days, with only Lapointe privy to their secret, King and Skelton wrestled with their consciences, in perfect amity and insoluble disagreement. At the end of the second day, Skelton was at last persuaded. After the travail of that lonely and honourable decision he never wavered again."<sup>(1)</sup>

Whether that version as to Dr. Skelton's views at the moment of the outbreak of war is a correct version, is unclear. Those who knew him, however, think that he accepted the necessity and decision for Canada's participation in the war only with the greatest reluctance, and that this unwilling obligation affected both his energy and his physical health. For the remaining year and a half of his life, he was a sad and tired man, dutifully performing his vast task, and straining his heart to a breaking point. In 1940 he was confined to bed with his first heart attack, but found it difficult to relax in his work.

<sup>(1)</sup> Bruce Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, pp.250-1.



Deficiencies

Some of the characteristics and idiosyncracies of Dr. Skelton have been described. He was the head, the leader, the chief of the Department for a decade and a half. His character left its imprint on the Department and its members; some of that imprint continues. But emphasis on these characteristics must not be exaggerated. Dr. Skelton was too humble, shy, and simple a man to be a great leader; he was too scholarly-minded to be a great administrator or builder; in scholarship he was uneven, sometimes original rather than profound, sometimes biased rather than purely objective. In political views, although he guided or advised both Mr. Bennett and Mr. King, it is doubtful that he showed a political flair. He seems to have taken less interest in United States policies and affairs in the keen way Christie did. He was apparently not enamoured with Great Britain, or with anything of the old Imperial concept. He was a simple "Canadian" at heart, but perhaps not precise or clear in his own mind as to the shape and form, constitutionally and otherwise, this Canadianism should take. Christie scrutinized these problems far more intensely, being law-trained, dispassionately and analytically. There is little evidence that Dr. Skelton fully scrutinized all these difficult problems. He had inherited some of them. For example, the decision had been made in

1920 for separate diplomatic representation at Washington, whether or not this might jeopardize imperial unity; it was left to Dr. Skelton, after 1925, only to study and advise on the ways and means of implementing that decision when in 1926 the Prime Minister gave the signal. Other stages of constitutional evolution were already facts: Canada's place in the League of Nations, its independence of foreign policy in European and Middle East entanglements, its treaty-signing power after the Halibut Treaty. Dr. Skelton was to carry on from that stage; the direction was already reconnoitred if not marked out. The innovations had to a large degree been instituted by Sir Robert Borden aided by Loring Christie. The ball had been set rolling by their impulse and under outside currents of events, in the direction of Canadian autonomy in external affairs. Dr. Skelton had only to keep the ball rolling, but as far as can be seen, neither sought to deflect the preordained direction nor tried to either retard, or to increase, its velocity. It gained momentum by pressure of outside events, especially the looming Nazi menace which culminated in the World War and Canada's inescapable involvement. In those latter fateful years, Dr. Skelton

seemed to be borne along on the stream, reluctant but committed. It was apparently not Dr. Skelton who achieved the working arrangements of military supplies, with the United States bound by its Neutrality Act; these were achieved through the intricate legal negotiations manipulated by Loring Christie and by the direct contacts between the two heads of ~~state~~ <sup>government</sup>, Mr. King and President Roosevelt on a foundation of intimate personal friendship and empathy. By this time Dr. Skelton was saddened and discouraged at heart, and also was overworked and gravely threatened in health.

These defects in Dr. Skelton's character had some adverse effect on the Department, to be set against the great services and benefits which at the same time he rendered. He had emerged from the cloistered life of a comparatively small university, Queen's; he entered, and a year later took charge of, a small Department having three officers and a handful of competent clerks. At the beginning, he felt that he could handle all matters himself, and had no impulse to delegate his tasks or to expand the organization. But the Department was organic, and by the pressure of need, grew, in duties and responsibilities, and in personnel. Dr. Skelton, by the nature of his simple and self-sufficient character, did not grow proportionately. He could not wholly learn to delegate work, or to reorganize. He still attempted the impossible: to deal personally with every matter, political and administrative. The rapidly increasing weight and pressure grew too burdensome for

one pair of shoulders. He worked day and night; he often returned to his office desk at midnight. He overworked himself, strained his health, and failed to streamline his growing Department so that it could relieve the concentrated burden. For his laborious industry and diligence behind his green baize door of the Under-Secretary's Office, his officers and assistants respected and admired him; for his gentleness and human kindness, they loved him. But they were concerned that the work was not "farmed out", that they were not given wider responsibilities, that there was not more practical "division of labour" and coordinated teamwork. The Department grew only slightly; its work was not spread, but remained concentrated in Dr. Skelton's own office; and because of these defects, the Department suffered. To some extent, because of Dr. Skelton's character, it was retarded, instead of taking a great progressive leap ahead at a time of need.

#### Illness and Death

Four years before, Dr. Skelton had had indications of heart-strain, and had been warned that, unless he worked less hard, his life would be forfeited. The strain of the life he led, the unremitting devotion to the varied duties of his great office, had brought on the first attack. For a few weeks he was confined to his bed and for a few months thereafter he paid perfunctory respect to the warnings of his doctor by trying to get away from his office before 6 p.m. But even then he would take his unfinished work to his home and soon he

was wholly back in his old routine. After the outbreak of war, the regimen became almost intolerable, for one even in the prime of health. As his responsibilities increased, he expended the last ounce of his energy to meet them. More and more burdens fell on him, which he indefatigably attempted to carry. Finally his physical machine broke down, his heart failed him.

On January 28, 1941, after a hard morning's work, he had lunched and was driving back to his office up O'Connor St. toward Sparks at 2.15 p.m. when he slumped unconscious over the steering wheel. A policeman and several others witnessed this. On the instant, his uncontrolled car went on and collided with an east-bound streetcar on Sparks St. When he was lifted out and taken to the hospital by ambulance, he was no longer alive. The Prime Minister was at his side very soon, and Mrs. Skelton, quickly notified, arrived within a few minutes; but it was too late. One of his closest friends, W.C. Clark, has written: "How on the day of his death he happened to be coming up Metcalfe Street ~~at O'Connor?~~ when he slumped over the wheel of his car is still a mystery, but it is a good guess that after a hasty luncheon at a small cafeteria he had taken out his car to do an errand of kindness to some humble friend." (1)

His funeral in Ottawa was attended by a large number of statesmen, senior Civil Servants, diplomats

(1) W.C. Clark: "Oscar Douglas Skelton", Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada, May, 1941. p.144.

and other sorrowing friends. Great tributes were paid in speeches and in the press. Across Canada, across the United States, and in overseas centres, his notices followed the <sup>exhortation</sup> ~~precept~~ of Ecclesiasticus: "Let us now praise famous men, men of little showing."

In mid-winter weather and deep snow, his body was transplanted to the countryside. He was buried in the little cemetery of St. Mark's just outside the village of Pakenham, about 45 miles from Ottawa.

#### Summary

On his death Mr. King summed up his services in a speech of eulogy in the House of Commons. He said in part: "Seventeen years ago Doctor O.D. Skelton entered the service of Canada at my request. For sixteen years he was Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs... The outbreak of war and the anxieties of the years which immediately preceded it threw new and heavy burdens on the Department of External Affairs. In spite of failing health, the advice of his doctor and the entreaties of his friends, Doctor Skelton insisted on shouldering far more than his full share of them. I have never seen anything which surpassed his devotion to duty as exemplified in his daily work. His death was marked by expressions of sorrow, admiration and affection almost unprecedented. Many notable messages bore witness to his great work, not only for Canada and the British Commonwealth but for the cause of international goodwill and human understanding the world over. Only those

who have had the closest association with Doctor Skelton during those seventeen years could begin to know what his life meant to the public service of this country. Selfless and self-effacing labour, the highest integrity, and the enlightened use of whatever leisure was granted to him were the measure of his devotion to his native land. Throughout the many tributes that were paid to his work and his memory there ran the theme of his modesty, his kindness and the example he set and created for the young men who grew up with him in the diplomatic service of the department of which he was the permanent head. It is impossible for me to express in words what I owe to his wisdom, his experience, his counsel and his faithful friendship." (1)

The contribution of Dr. Skelton to Canadian history in its international relationships, to the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers in Ottawa, and to the Civil Service, may be left for others to describe. His contribution to the development of the Department of External Affairs has already been indicated. Unlike his predecessor, Sir Joseph Pope, who was not concerned with advisory policy-making, Dr. Skelton, like Loring Christie, was deeply connected with policy-making, not only in the foreign field but in domestic matters as well. Under Sir Joseph Pope, the Department, which he had helped to create, remained relatively static; but under Dr. Skelton, largely through the pressure of circumstances and war, the Department **rapidly** expanded. Dr. Skelton guided it; and selected

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941. p.818.

its new and competent staff; several of his "Skelton boys" in due course carried on his torch, and in their turn became Under-Secretaries<sup>or Assistant Under-Secretaries</sup> of the Department (N.A. Robertson, Laurent Beaudry, H.L. Keenleyside, F.J. Wrong, L.B. Pearson) or career Ambassadors and High Commissioners representing Canada abroad (Robertson, Wrong, Riddell, Keenleyside, Pearson, Kirkwood, Macdonald, Renaud, Escott Reid, and others) who had been trained and inspired by their chieftain.

The death of Dr. Skelton in the initial stages of the War was a tragedy; but in some aspects was not a vital loss to the Department. The Under-Secretary was in precarious health; he was overburdened with work, yet had been unable to develop the art of delegating or farming out the tasks to his associates. He was probably out of sympathy with Canadian participation in the War and therefore laboured without flaming enthusiasm. As the Department slowly expanded, he became isolated among his papers in his Under-Secretary's Office, or preoccupied with consultations with the Prime Minister and other leaders (his access to his chief, Mr. King, got more and more difficult and rare as the Prime Minister took on the full burden of the war and external affairs and of government at home). Dr. Skelton's own shyness and retiring nature left something to be desired in the way of departmental leadership. His



touch on the various problems of administration was light and indifferent. He was slowing down in energy, and feeling the strain on his physique; medical advice was apparently trying to put a brake on his detailed and unrelaxing work; he himself may have acted as a brake on the Department.

It was perhaps time for a change at the helm. New diplomatic missions were rapidly being opened in 1941; the United States was edging into non-belligerent cooperation, through the Ogdensburg Agreement, Lend-Lease, intervention in Greenland and Iceland, and, at the end of the year, was plunged into hostilities at Pearl Harbour; and this brought Canadian affairs more thoroughly into contact with its great neighbour and ally. The whole "Western" Grand Alliance meant more integrated diplomatic relations, which placed a greater responsibility on the Department as a "foreign office". All this new dynamic demand and strain and energy gave the Department, under Dr. Skelton's successor, a new sense of reality and purpose. It is doubtful whether Dr. Skelton, had he lived longer, would have been able to cope with this situation with the freshness and zeal that was required. His death in the commencing stages of the war left the way open for a new forward movement, invigoration and attitude of realism in the Department.

9.

LORING C. CHRISTIE

AFTER 1923

Loring C. Christie

In Part I of this survey, reference was made to the services from 1913 to 1923 of Mr. Loring C. Christie as Legal Adviser, in the Department of External Affairs, to Sir Robert Borden and Mr. Arthur Meighen. A year after his resignation, Dr. O.D. Skelton was brought in to fill the gap, in the capacity of Counsellor; and the year following, in 1925, Pope retired and Dr. Skelton became Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Christie, after his decade of public service, spent the next decade or more engaged in business, and did not re-enter government service until 1935.

Christie's Intermission

Dropping out of official diplomatic affairs in 1923, Christie joined the merchant bankers' firm of Dunn, Fisher and Company in London, where he remained for about three years. In this connection he was a member of the Bondholders' Committee of Mexico North Western Railway, and a director of Cellulose Holding and Investment Company, a holding company interested in British Cellulose Ltd.

But while in England, he kept in very close touch with public men and affairs there and with scholars and writers on international affairs. Among the many important friends he had in these sets were Philip Kerr, (later Lord Lothian), Lionel Curtis, Lord Eustace Percy, Prof. Harold Laski, and others of the "commonwealth" group in England.

While in England, Christie was on the Council of the new British Institute of International Affairs,

which established its headquarters at the historic residence of a former great Prime Minister, and accordingly took the name of Chatham House. He was also invited to join a Dominions Committee of the League of Nations Union in London, but declined, possibly because of pressure on his time. In one of his letters he spoke rather doubtfully about the value of this Union. He was, however, elected to the editorial committee of the Round Table, and was invited to attend, each quarter, their series of dinners and discussions, where he met the British leaders of that imperial movement.

It is not necessary in this memoir to recount Christie's activities in the business world, first in England and later in Canada. Suffice it to say that keeping up his old political contacts in England, he followed imperial developments closely, associated himself with the Round Table movement, and maintained a steady private correspondence with Sir Robert Borden, Hon. Arthur Meighen, Dr. O.D. Skelton, and other political friends in Canada.\* Much of his correspondence with the Round Table group in England, he passed on confidentially to these Canadian friends.

On June 10, 1924, while employed with Dunn, but still keeping in close touch with politics, Christie wrote another of his frequent personal letters to Borden:

\* Similar Round Table groups were established in Canada and had some distinguished patronage, and for a while were active and influential. (See Canadian Historical Review, March 1957: James Eayrs - "The Round Table Movement in Canada").

I am very grateful to you for letting me see your memorandum on the Lausanne Treaty. I have shown it in strict confidence to Lord Beaverbrook and Geoffrey Dawson, both of whom ask me to send you their thanks.

At Mr. Meighen's request I gave him some time ago my comments on the matter, and I am very glad to find that I happened to reach the same conclusions as you did on the substantial issues and consequences involved. I did not however appreciate fully the political realities in Ottawa, and your memorandum accordingly makes the position much clearer.

Christie then, in characteristic manner of most of his correspondence with Borden, gave several pages of commentary on the discussions in the British Parliament and press on the Lausanne Treaty, analysing them from the viewpoint of the Dominions. The manner in which he kept Borden informed or "advised" is seen in the following portions of Christie's letter:

I am enclosing the "Times" report of the further debate on the Treaty held at Westminster last Friday (June 6), and also the "Times" comment and Prof. Smith's letter. Mr. Lloyd George's object in bringing on the debate, I understand, was not to propose any specific steps with regard to the actual Lausanne Treaty (for practically that is beyond recall), but to get a declaration from the Government repudiating the procedure there adopted and thus to prevent that procedure as far as possible from being taken as a precedent. He did get a sort of repudiation out of the Prime Minister, but Ramsay Macdonald seems to have a specially developed faculty for putting out pronouncements that may mean anything or nothing, and I feel by no means sure of the result of the debate.

The truth is there is a strong partisan background to the whole affair here (just as presumably there may be in Ottawa!); it is indeed perfectly evident in the debate and also in the "Times" performance. Labour will say nothing whatever that could be construed to the advantage of the Liberals and especially nothing that might be in favour of Mr. Lloyd George. The Conservatives naturally have a similar attitude, and they have to protect Lord Curzon. Their share in the performance has been

left to Die Hards like McNeill, Sassoon and Ormsby-Gore. The "Times" too seems to think chiefly of protecting Curzon and they foolishly do it at Mackenzie King's expense; for, inept as Mr. King has certainly been, it would surely be wiser for the "Times" to leave him to be dealt with by his Canadian critics, who are quite capable of doing it. I have tried to point this out in various directions.

I hear that at the outset Downing Street asked Ottawa to waive representation (1) because otherwise the French would insist upon representation for ~~Algeria~~, etc., and (2) because time was pressing. While this doesn't excuse Ottawa giving away our whole case without a murmur, one can understand that it might impress the comparatively inexperienced Cabinet at Ottawa and conceivably to some of them it might afford a welcome pretext for inaction and peg for argument.

This French claim was trotted out once before two or three years ago only to be promptly sat upon. It seems to me utterly preposterous on every ground - the Dominions' war effort, their present power and resources, and their future possibilities. The fact that a British Foreign Minister could be found to swallow this absurdity in 1922 so soon after the days of Paris, and the fact that governments could be found in Ottawa and the other dominions to take the dose without outcry - these surely are significant and disturbing items each in their own way.

If a further discussion takes place at Ottawa, I hope it will avoid legal niceties as far as possible and go to the realities of the idea of co-operation and the relation of that idea to the substance of foreign policy. For myself I feel certain that if the Dominions do not assert a voice, the danger of finding this country involved in a series of military guarantees and alliances on the Continent will be very real. To enter upon such a course without the understanding support of the Dominions and with the United States outside seems to me demonstrably inexpedient from every point of view. The whole Empire should resolutely decline to give any further pledge of its naval force whatever, unless it can also carry the United States - that seems to me at all events the only rule both in our own interest and in that of general peace; nor would I admit any exception or compromise, however benevolent it might appear in relation to immediate troubles, because the future incidence of these things is incalculable.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald wound up his remarks in

the debate by adumbrating some fresh move in the direction of improving our Imperial machinery. I haven't heard what he has in mind. This part of his speech does however suggest that he has already learned that something is wrong; so the Lausanne affair may not be all loss.

How at once fascinating and exasperating the Empire is as a potential problem! One can talk forever on it. I'll try to close up this exercise in verbosity right away! -and one can find material for almost any argument. On the other hand the Dominions may look on themselves as being the only western countries where the answers to these fundamental questions of national life and status are not settled and taken universally for granted. The existence of the uncertainty and controversy consumes much time and mental energy that would otherwise be applied to social problems of immediate urgency; often indeed it cuts across the consideration of these latter problems and perhaps bedevils them. I often wonder whether a citizen of Mars would not conclude that however great the fascination, it is a somewhat expensive luxury." (1)

#### Locarno Treaty

When the Locarno Treaty was under discussion, Christie kept his friends in Canada informed of his views which, as usual, came to circle round the position of Canada in the Empire. He wrote ad lib, saying in one letter to Meighen on December 18, 1924: "Your comments I fear will stimulate my verbosity, for the space between us puts you at my mercy and you cannot stop me, while you must have the common decency to read on till you find my signature!" (2)

The implications of the Locarno Treaty for Canada puzzled some of the statesmen in Canada, for while it purported to afford a certain system of security in Europe, it contained some implications of Dominion

(1) Borden Papers, Folder 58. Correspondence with Christie (1) (148084). L.C.

(2) Meighen Papers, Vol. 55. File 28. L.C. Christie.

involvement in strictly European affairs. Meighen himself, then sitting in Opposition, was undecided, and appreciated Christie's comments. In a private letter of January 4, 1925, he wrote to Christie:

I must say my mind is quite disturbed on the subject of this Locarno Treaty, and I cannot say that I have any mature view on the matter at all. Sir Robert Borden seems in about the same position. I have made an effort to get some time to study the treaty itself and the various articles written on it, but have not got to it yet. However there will be an adjournment of the House before we ever reach it and I will then have time. The treaty itself has been received with acclaim in Canada and seems to be as yet almost universally regarded as a great triumph of British diplomacy. On the other hand your argument is to me perfectly understandable and disturbs me very much. I will read carefully the articles you have indicated and will welcome with thanks any further data you can provide. I don't expect the Government will ask for ratification here. (1)

The Dominions, as Prof. MacGregor Dawson points out, (2) had rejected the Geneva Protocol of 1924, and had contracted out of the Lausanne Treaty, and did not welcome any additional obligations other than those which they had already assumed under the League of Nations. The Imperial Government therefore resorted to the device of sending delegates to Locarno who represented Great Britain rather than the Empire, while informing the Dominions of the status of the delegates and the circumstances leading to their appointment. The Dominions were not consulted during the negotiations, but they were kept continuously informed of their progress. They were, moreover, assured that they would in no way be

(1) Meighen Papers, Vol.55, File 28. L.C. Christie.

(2) Dawson: The Development of Dominion Status, 1900-36, p. 101.



bound without their consent,<sup>(1)</sup> a promise which was later implemented by Article 9 of the Treaty which excluded the Dominions and India from its provisions unless the individual governments chose to accept its obligations. The Treaty of Locarno was negotiated like a second Lausanne, but with the significant difference that, whereas the earlier treaty had endeavoured to commit the whole Empire, the later one bound only that part which was actually represented at the negotiations. Neither the Dominions nor India availed themselves of the opportunity under Article 9 to become parties to the Locarno Treaty.

On this issue Christie wrote various letters, and on February 8, 1926, prepared a private and confidential memorandum, which he sent to Meighen and Borden, based on discussions by the Dominions and Foreign Policy Group of the British Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House on that date. Excerpts of that long memorandum are given below, as revealing some of Christie's thoughts on the "freedom" of the Dominions and their relationship to the Empire:

In the field of foreign affairs the theory of trusteeship exercised by Britain is gone, as Article 9 of the Pact recognizes. The idea of Imperial Federation is not practical politics. The Imperial Co-operation project evolved during the war has also vanished into the pale irony of the void. Out of that phase there remains to Canada the international status evolved in her membership in the League coupled with the constitutional convention of equality of stature within the Empire. There remains to her now the further new fact of Article 9 of the Pact. In view of this Article the Foreign Secretary told

(1) H. of C. (Canada) Debates, June 26, 1925.p.5049.

the House of Commons that the Dominions 'liberty and freedom of action are safeguarded specifically under the Treaty'. It is an illusory freedom of action. If the King goes to war tomorrow under the Pact Canada becomes subject to the status of belligerency which means certain limitations on her freedom of action. Her only way to real freedom at that time would be a declaration of independence. This would be desertion at the moment of danger.

X X X X X X

At one time a Special Constitutional Conference was to cure the anomalies. That is gone. The Resolution of 1921 indicated that the Empire would have to wait for science to improve communications - airships, wireless telephone and so on. This seems to recognize the germ of the theory, which now holds the field, that in the field of foreign affairs the world is to be regarded as divided into separate regions in which each member of the Empire will determine its place for itself.

X X X X X X

Meanwhile the abandonment of any approach to the problem means in actual practice, first, that such constitutional documents and fighting plans as we have are being settled not deliberately on British soil but spasmodically at the whim of other nations in the hotel bedrooms and lounges of romantically named summer and winter resorts of continental Europe, and second, that they are settled, not by Canadian political delegates, but by metaphysicians called legal draftsmen who are now so accomplished in their arts that the plain man can no longer understand their efforts, which as Mr. Hughes of Australia said, must be taken like the Holy Trinity on faith.

X X X X X X

Some are for clearing the chaos by a complete out and out cutting away from the Empire. . . There is very great force in their whole position and the trend of events goes to strengthen it. But the forthright solution suggested has the natural effect on men's minds and is apt to inhibit frank and coherent discussion. You do not come from a clear sky, and in the absence of some inescapable event to force you, suddenly break off such old intimate associations, lift your hat and say thank you but I am through with you. You try to find wherein you can continue to work together and on what basis. In this case we have to ask whether the world would be well served by breaking completely the last important political tie between North America and Europe. (1)

X X X X X X

(1) Meighen Papers. Vol. 55. File 28. (L.C. Christie)

Having thus expressed himself on Canada's automatic state of belligerency "if the King went to war tomorrow"; on the Dominion autonomy in foreign policy; on secret diplomacy "in hotel bedrooms and lounges"; on "metaphysicians called legal draftsmen"; and on the impracticality of Dominion secession from the Empire, Christie ended, denying that he was offering any "advice" to his old friend Mr. Meighen, or to Sir Robert Borden.

But I am <sup>not</sup> writing to urge any line on you now, and I have no intention of publishing anything. Whether you agree or disagree with my broad thesis, the problem of what to say or do in the immediate political situation in Ottawa is one on which I can offer no useful suggestion from this distance. If Locarno comes up for debate in the House, I do not see how anyone can say anything real without opening up the whole question of our Imperial relations. But this may not be a good time for anyone to fling that issue into the arena; and so, for all I know, your line and everyone else's may have to be to say as little as possible.

X X X X -

P.S. I am venturing to send the notes and a copy of this letter to Sir Robert.

Christie at this time was, as is evident, a prolific correspondent with Meighen as with Borden. His many letters were long, reflective, and sometimes otiose, but usually contained some suggestive views, which were appreciated by their recipients in Ottawa. On January 13, 1926, Mr. Meighen wrote to Christie in London: "Please don't apologize about writing me on any subject. On matters of external affairs, I value your views more highly than any other I know and will be very much helped in the present situation by the suggestions you have already sent me." (1)

(1) Meighen Papers. Series 4. Vol.55. File 28. L.C.Christie.

Other Correspondence: Plebiscite Before War.

While Christie was in England, as has been mentioned, he was in intimate though often dissentient relations with Lionel Curtis and Philip Kerr, and was on the editorial board of the Round Table quarterly. At one time he found himself so exasperated with their imperialist views that he considered dissociating himself from the editorial board, but was encouraged by Borden not to do so.

In 1925 Christie endorsed the contentious view expressed by Mr. Meighen in a speech in Hamilton, that on a major issue of foreign policy like the Locarno Pact, or war commitments, or conscription, it was essential for the Canadian Government to go to the country by means of an election which would be tantamount to a plebiscite or referendum. Christie, in a long letter dated December 14, 1925, to Kerr, confined his comments on Meighen's thesis to the question of war and despatch of Canadian troops overseas, which he felt called for a prior election. Kerr in a long letter in reply, dated December 17, took a more generalized position, as regards the role and duties of Parliament and Executive, which was entrusted by the electorate to represent them, and the need of wider education in an ill-informed public before they could or should be appealed to in matters of foreign policy.

The letter is interesting but too long to quote in full. Kerr said: "I have of course no objection whatever to any government in the Empire, either on the outbreak of war or after it has broken out, deciding in the full knowledge of the circumstances of the time that a general

election or a referendum is necessary in order to enable it to take the action it conceives it ought to take. Manifestly Sir Robert Borden was right in taking that action in 1917, as Billy Hughes was right in Australia in the matter of conscription. . . ." But in general Kerr upheld the "responsible system of government". "A nation ought to act through its Parliament and through its executive. It ought to give its Parliament and executive the powers which are appropriate to its responsibilities, instead of insisting that every question should be referred back to itself. . . . A nation ought to elect a Parliament and executive of such calibre that it will have confidence in it. The method of referring back, of refusing to trust responsible representatives was what finally destroyed the civilization of Greece, which ruined the Dutch Republic, and which destroyed Poland. It is the great weakness of democracy - the reluctance to entrust responsibility to its leaders. I have all the more doubts because, so far as I can see, the really important thing for the Dominions is not the creation of more safeguards against precipitate action or to secure unity, but the obtaining of adequate information about foreign affairs and active participation in the diplomacy of the world. That is why I said to you that if it became necessary to give the undertaking that Meighen discussed at Hamilton, I thought it was essential that it should be coupled with the creation on the part of the Dominions of a complete Diplomatic Service, not only in London and the Capitals of the Empire, but in the Capitals of the whole of the rest of the world. . . .

"It is essential that you should enable the rank and file to understand what it is they are going to decide about, and that simply cannot be done at the last moment. . . In the case of war you wont have six weeks' notice or anything like it, and the information which will be available will be inevitably very meagre and very difficult for the rank and file to understand. . . You are still <sup>left</sup> face to face with the essence of the present-day problem that the Dominions, if they are to become independent nations, members of the British Commonwealth of nations, must have at least as good information about the international problems of the outside world with which either the Parliament or the electors will have to deal, as every country great and small. . . " (1)

Christie, from London, wrote lengthy private letters to Meighen on his Hamilton speech and sent him the comments of Amery and others on it. In acknowledging these, Meighen wrote on December 24, 1925:

My dear Christie: I received this morning your letter of the 14th, and copies of the two letters as enclosed. You will scarcely realize how much I appreciate your opinion on this subject. . . You have given more concentration, I think, to this question than any other man whom I know. The considerations advanced in your two letters are indeed valuable. . .

I am not sure whether your letter was written before receipt of a communication from me asking for a full exposition of your view on the Locarno Treaty and of the wisdom of our adherence. While appreciating what you have sent would very much like to have a fuller treatment of the subject from you. (2)

On December 23, 1925, Christie, as usual, also

(1) Borden Papers. Folder 58. Correspondence with Christie (1)

(2) Meighen Papers. Vol.55. File 28.

sent privately to Sir Robert Borden, a copy of Kerr's private letter on Meighen's Hamilton speech. On December 29, he wrote another long letter to Borden rediscussing the question and summarizing the views of Lord Eustace Percy. Borden acknowledged receipt of the Kerr copy, on January 5, 1926, and expressed his own opinions on some particular points.

In sending his notes and copy of letter to Meighen, to Sir Robert Borden on February 25th, he wrote, again "Private and Confidential", by hand a six page commentary in his usual fashion, much fuller than his letter to Meighen, but added: "My dear Sir Robert, -About the the enclosed letter in my own hand, I preferred writing it to you. But I have no objection at all to your showing it to Mr. Meighen if you should think it worth while to do so."

Christie wrote, again personally and by hand, to Borden on March 29th: "A few days ago I cabled you to the effect that I had mailed you four letters on the subject - the one of the 25th February and others of 17th, 22nd, and 23rd March - and asking you to await the arrival of the last and consider them as a whole. I do not in the least mind you showing any or all of these letters to Sir George Perley or to anyone else and I leave all that to your complete discretion. So far as I am concerned personally I would be quite prepared to publish the whole substance of what I have written over my own name if that would do any good. But I don't feel it would be any good to do that sort of thing from here.

". . . As regards the letters from Lionel Curtis and Philip Kerr which I enclosed with my letters to you of the 22nd and 23rd March, I have sent them to no one else and have no authority to circulate them. Philip Kerr is in frequent touch with Mr. Lloyd George. . ." (1)

These are among various examples of the manner in which Christie, although out of office, maintained contact with his former chiefs in private correspondence on political, international and imperial topics which he kept an active interest in while in London. How far they influenced Borden and Meighen in their own views is impossible to say; in any case Borden had retired from political life and Meighen was plunged into it mainly on a dramatic domestic issue of constitutional procedure, and thereafter ceased to participate in parliamentary debates on international affairs.

#### Return to Canada

Tiring of England at last, and restless to return to Canada, as he wrote in various private letters to Borden and others, Christie came back in 1926. He considered several invitations to join outstanding industrial corporations as a legal adviser or public relations counsel, and finally accepted a position with the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario at Toronto, where, from 1927 to 1929, he was Special Assistant to the Chairman, Mr. C.A. McGrath. From 1929 to 1935 he moved into a position with the Beauharnois Light, Heat and Power Company, at

(1) Borden Papers. Letters to Christie (2). Folder 59.



Montreal, as Legal Officer, and from 1932 to 1935 as Secretary-Treasurer. When political scandals were exposed in connection with this Corporation, Christie immediately resigned.

He continued, however, to keep in touch with his friends in Canadian political and government circles. In addition to his interest in England in the Round Table, he was greatly impressed by the potentialities of the International Joint Commission (set up by the Convention of 1909) as a durable form of diplomatic machinery. He felt that in certain respects it was even more effective than the creation of Canadian Legations.

#### Diplomatic Machinery

After his transfer to Toronto, Christie was still busy writing letters to his government friends. Among these was Dr. O.D. Skelton. On July 12, 1927, he let go a ten-page typewritten letter, marked "Private", and addressed "My dear Skelton", which was very largely devoted to the importance of the International Joint Commission as the ideal type of state machinery or diplomatic organ for negotiation, arbitration, or other adjustments. In his customary style he went on to expound in analytic form his arguments and reasons for this belief. Among his paragraphs are these:

2. As far as state machinery is concerned, our relations with the U.S. in the last resort - or rather in the next to the last resort - are wrapped up in the business of maintaining the integrity of the system created by the Treaty of 1909 and studying its improvement as time goes on. In providing a set of general principles, an independent tribunal and a growing body of practice and habit, to which an important class of specific questions arising from time to time can be relegated with a fair assurance that they will be

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determined with something of the certainty that municipal courts achieve in their sphere, the system has clearly shown an advance over the precarious method of sporadic inter-governmental negotiation. Upon these "boundary water" and "frontier" questions referred to it, the International Joint Commission seems to have functioned, now as an arbitral tribunal, now as a board of enquiry, now as an administrative body - and it has been a very successful experiment. There is still in reserve the general arbitration function contemplated in Article 10 of the Treaty. No occasion for invoking it has yet arisen. But there it is; it was put there for a purpose, and I do not see how it can safely be overlooked in estimating what to do about the Commission. There also remains the duty of its members of suggesting improvements upon the system whenever conditions make that practicable - regarding it as a plant susceptible of growth, as Europe does the League.

In view of the fact that in later years L.C. Christie was to be appointed Minister to Washington, the next paragraph of his letter is of interest:

3. Our vital necessity to preserve the system at

full strength is not lessened in the least degree by reason of the establishment of our Legation at Washington. A diplomatist is simply an agent; his establishment no more than a convenient extension abroad of the departmental machine at home; his job more to bargain on the lay of the cards at the moment than to administer a set of rules and build an ordered regime. So far as this discussion is concerned, all that the establishment of the Canadian Legation meant was moving a set of files and office furniture across a Washington boulevard and changing the persons who manipulated them. It is an essential instrument, and I have not the least intention of belittling its great value; but diplomacy has its limitations as we discovered in 1914. The Old World found it had to invent another system as well, and it is still busy with the League. Our own Treaty of 1909 system can handle certain problems which diplomacy is physically incapable of handling:- for example, where continuous joint administration of some common property or work is required, as under the various Joint Control Boards subject to the International Joint Commission - the Lake of the Woods Control Board, the Niagara Control Board, and so on. Doubtless all this is elementary in the minds of the Departments at Ottawa, but I am less confident about public opinion. The public in Canada

throughout and since the war has been taught by publicists to think so much in terms of status and so little in terms of other realities that heaven knows what dangers it is unwittingly courting. The publicity attending the Legation is inevitable, but let us hope that "public opinion" will not be so naive as to imagine that, having thus gone into an old game, it is somehow relieved from worrying about the new 1909 achievement. . . (1)

But in other letters he seemed to be more favourably disposed toward Canadian representation abroad. He did not, of course, foresee that some thirteen years later he himself was to head, as Minister, a Legation which was "no more than an extension abroad of the departmental machine at home."

Government Service Again

Loring Christie was induced, in 1935, to return to government service. During his decade of absence, Pope had retired, Dr. O.D. Skelton had first been Counsellor and then became Under-Secretary, and Mr. John E. Read had been first a Counsellor and then became Legal Adviser. L.B. Pearson, J. Scott Macdonald, Laurent Beaudry and other senior officers were already in the Department. Christie rejoined as Counsellor, instead of Legal Adviser.

The exact circumstances of Christie's return to the Department have not been elucidated from the files so far available. It seems probable that Mr. Bennett - possibly on the recommendation or suggestion

(1) Borden Papers. Folder 59. Correspondence with Christie (2). (Document 148403-12).

of his former Conservative colleagues and Christie's patrons, Sir Robert Borden or Mr. Arthur Meighen - invited Christie to rejoin the Department. It must have been evident to Christie, however, that Mr. Bennett's tenure as Prime Minister would not last much longer, and that Mr. King would doubtless return as Premier, (which he did a few weeks later).

As there seems to have been no departmental appropriation covering the position of an additional Counsellor on the Ottawa "inside" strength, but apparently an unused allocation remained under the Tokyo vote, Christie was nominally appointed as Counsellor to the Canadian Legation in Tokyo. He never proceeded to Tokyo, or took up a posting there. The assignment there was purely departmental for book-keeping purposes, and as a means of fitting him into the Department under a category for which no funds were specifically available at that time. His former position of Legal Adviser was at this time held by John E. Read.

Christie's appointment was made on August 30th to take effect from September 1, 1935. The Order-in-Council P.C. 2705 dated August 30, 1935, read:

The Committee of the Privy Council, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, advise that Mr. Loring C. Christie, who from 1911 [sic]\* to 1923 occupied the position of Legal Adviser for the Department of External Affairs, be appointed to the staff of the Canadian Legation at Tokyo as Counsellor at a salary of \$6,000 per annum, such appointment to be effective from the 1st September, 1935.

E.J. Lemaire  
Clerk of the Privy Council (1)

\* Christie was first appointed as Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs by Sir Robert Borden in June, 1913.

(1) File 46-L-40.

It is probable that Christie was persuaded to rejoin the Department as Counsellor at the behest of the Rt. Hon. R.B. Bennett, another Maritimer by origin. There was always a certain clannishness among the Maritimers. Bennett also would have had excellent reports of Christie from his Conservative colleagues like Sir Robert Borden and Meighen. Christie was not perhaps a real intimate of Dr. Skelton, a Liberal and a Mackenzie King man; and when Christie rejoined the Department under Skelton, he seems to have followed his own path, but he had been well acquainted and had corresponded with Dr. Skelton for some time past.

His services under Mr. Bennett, however, were to be very brief, for the Bennett regime was defeated at the polls only a few weeks later, on October 14, 1935. (He tendered his resignation to the Governor General on October 23rd.)

He continued to serve, however, for the next four years under Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King in Ottawa until his appointment as Minister to Washington in 1939.

In the past, Christie had never had much affinity toward Mr. Mackenzie King, and even made aspersive remarks about him in his personal letters to his old Conservative friends, Borden and Meighen.\* It was apparently due to Mr. King's coolness toward

\* Borden Papers. Folder 59. Correspondence with Christie (2). (Document 148403-12).

him in 1922-23 that Christie had resigned from the Department,<sup>\*</sup> and at that time they had little connection or collaboration. But on his reappointment he seems to have made the adjustment and to have been useful to Mr. King, even though it is possible that Christie's activities were confined once more to pieces of research, memoranda, legal commentaries and possible occasional consultations. In later years Mr. King expressed in Parliament and elsewhere his eulogies and appreciation of Christie's services.

Almost immediately after his reappointment to the Department, as Counsellor, Christie renewed his

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\* See Chapter 27, "Loring Christie", in Part I.

former conference attendance. He attended a Conference on Transatlantic Air Services held in Ottawa from November 22 to December 2, 1935, and resumed from December 5 to December 12 in Washington. At the Sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations, held in Geneva from June 30 to July 4, 1936, at which the Italo-Ethiopian dispute was the main subject of discussion, Christie joined Dr. W.A. Riddell as technical advisers to the Canadian Delegation.

In 1939, on the illness which ended in death of Sir Herbert Marler at the very outbreak of the Second World War, Christie was urgently appointed (September 25, 1939) as Canadian Minister to Washington, a post of key importance at that critical time both to Ottawa and to London, and where he already had so many old influential American friends.

By coincidence, his old friend Lord Lothian was almost simultaneously appointed British Ambassador to Washington; and as co-belligerents in the neutral United States, they had a common and mutual task.

#### Philip Kerr

There seems to be no question that, of all the intimate political friends that Loring Christie had and profited by, besides Sir Robert Borden himself, one of the most important was Philip Kerr, later to be Private Secretary to Mr. Lloyd George, and then, as Lord Lothian, to be British Ambassador in Washington.

What discussions on Imperial and Commonwealth policy Christie and Kerr had in London in the mid-twenties, Christie faithfully reported and commented on to Sir

Robert Borden and often to the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen. And he told Sir Robert that, if he wished, he could pass any of Borden's ideas discreetly to Philip Kerr, who had the ear of Mr. Lloyd George. In this way, even while out of office, Christie tried to act as a shadow-kind of go-between. It is impossible, without very intimate study, to ascertain how far this effort had any political effect. Borden of course also knew Philip Kerr intimately, and during the war years was a close collaborator with Mr. Lloyd George; so that Christie's association with Kerr was usefully supplementary.

There is an almost uncanny parallelism in their two lives. Both Christie's and Kerr's paternal forebears were Scottish; both their mothers were English. Christie was born in 1885, less than three years after Kerr. Christie studied at Amherst and Harvard; Kerr studied at Birmingham and Oxford. Christie became editor of the Harvard Law Review (1907-09); Kerr became editor of the South African paper The State about the same time, and then founded and edited The Round Table in 1910, and Christie joined The Round Table editorial board, with Kerr, around 1925. Christie became a Legal Adviser in the United States Department of Justice, 1911-1913, after legal practice from 1909 in New York; Kerr became Adviser and Secretary to Lord Milner in South Africa, and in 1909 made his first visit to New York. Christie became Special Adviser to the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden (1913-1923); Philip Kerr became Private Secretary and Adviser to the British Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George (1916-1921). Both Christie and Kerr attended the preliminary Peace



meetings in England, with their respective Prime Ministers, Borden and Lloyd George or Balfour; and though Borden returned home, along with President Wilson, both Christie and Kerr attended in 1920 the Peace Conference at Versailles on their respective delegations. Christie accompanied Mr. Arthur Meighen, and Kerr accompanied Mr. Lloyd George at the Imperial Conference in 1921, when the question of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was discussed. Christie rejoined the Department of External Affairs under Mr. Bennett and Mr. Mackenzie King in 1935; Kerr became Under-Secretary for India in 1931 under Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.

Both of them were appointed to Washington in 1939 - Christie as Canadian Minister, and Kerr, then Lord Lothian, as British Ambassador. Lothian died there en poste on December 12, 1940; Christie took ill with thrombosis in November, 1940, and died en poste in April, 1941, four months after Lothian. Thus, during the first war years, both were closely associated in the same post and same cause as "belligerent" ambassadors to the then neutral United States. Their identity of background and experience, and identity of Commonwealth and American interests, were remarkable.

Even as early as 1909, Lord Grey had been impressed with the youthful (27) Philip Kerr, and in a private longhand note of November 3 recommended him to Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

A nephew of the Duke of Norfolk's, Philip Kerr by name, is staying with me. He impresses me as perhaps the most intelligent and the most attractive

of the young men who have visited me at Government House.

He remains here till Monday next. I hope it may be possible for you to give him a good interview. You will like him. He is one of Milner's Transvaal kindercarten. He proved most useful, working behind the scenes, in counteracting opposition to unification of S.A. He is a Roman Catholic, and therein coupled with his relationship to the Duke of Norfolk, perhaps lies a possibility of his usefulness to you. He is clever and discreet. I urged him when at Winnipeg to endeavour to ascertain the R.C. and Protestant limits within which a future settlement of the pressing educational question of Manitoba can be looked for. . .

I think it is possible that Kerr might be of use to you in representing your views in London and perhaps even at the Vatican? (1)

Promptly the same day, Laurier acknowledged this note, saying to Earl Grey: "I have already heard of Mr. Kerr, through Fitzpatrick, who spoke to me of him in exactly the same terms as you. I will be most happy to meet him. . ."(2)

This interest of Kerr's in Canadian affairs continued for decades to follow, and Loring Christie's intimacy kept it alive until the end of their lives. Mr. Mackenzie King himself drew attention to this in his tribute to Loring Christie. He said, on February 17, 1941: "Mr. Loring C. Christie was a close personal friend of Lord Lothian for nearly a quarter of a century. . . Mr. Christie was appointed to the post of Canadian Minister to the United States shortly after the outbreak of war, and within a month or two of the arrival of Lord Lothian as British Ambassador. Like him, Mr. Christie has

(1) Grey of Howith Collection. Vol.4. Sec.42. 1909.  
(Document 001237).

(2) Ibid. (Document 001239).

had long experience in responsible administrative posts and possessed a wide and intimate knowledge of the United States, where he was already on terms of personal friendship with the leading figures in the United States Government." (1)

Minister to the United States

Christie presented his Letters of Credence to President Roosevelt on September 25, 1939. His appointment was almost in the nature of an emergency. Canada had just entered a state of hostilities with Germany, the United States was a neutral and its Neutrality Act interposed difficulties in essential cooperation and supply problems between Canada and the United States, and the diplomatic problems in this connection were extremely acute. At that very moment of urgency, Sir Herbert Marler was incapacitated by a fatal illness, and his place had to be filled at once. Mr. Christie was at that time in closest charge of the "American desk" in Ottawa and was most familiar with the legal and diplomatic problems; it was almost natural to throw him into the breach by sending him to the crucially important post at Washington, and no time was lost by Mr. King. His intimacy with the British Ambassador, Lord Lothian, who was faced with the same problems of circumventing the United States Neutrality Act, and his acquaintance with American officials and Departments, were of course additional recommendations for the position.

Mr. Mackenzie King told the House: "After a

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941. p.815.

distinguished academic career at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, and later at Harvard University in the United States, Mr. Christie was appointed by Sir Robert Borden, at the age of twenty-eight, to the post of Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs and took part, with his chief, in the work of the Imperial War Conferences of 1917 and 1918 in London, and the Peace Conference at Paris in 1919. He attended the International Labour Conference at Washington in the same year, and was on the Canadian Delegation to the first Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva in 1920. He was Technical Adviser to the Canadian Delegation at the Imperial Conference in London in 1921, and to the Delegation to the Conference on the Limitation of Armaments which met in 1921-22 at Washington. During the latter part of this Conference, indeed, he acted as Secretary-General of the British Empire Delegation, and carried out his work in a manner that earned him the high praise of Mr. Balfour who headed the British Delegation.

"In 1923 Mr. Christie severed for a time his connection with the Department of External Affairs. He returned, however, in 1935. During the ensuing four years which preceded the outbreak of war, he attended a number of international conferences, either as technical adviser or as government representative. He also was immediately concerned with the more difficult problems coming before the Department of External Affairs. His intimate knowledge of constitutional and international law and of international affairs and his sound judgment were of the

greatest possible assistance during those troubled years. When the war finally broke over the world and a vacancy occurred in the post of Canadian Minister to Washington, I decided that, of all the Canadians available, Mr. Christie was by training, experience and character, outstandingly qualified to represent the Canadian Government in Washington."<sup>(1)</sup>

The appointment of Christie to Washington was generally acclaimed. The Ottawa Journal, retrospectively, said: "It was to Mr. King's great credit that he sent Loring Christie to Washington as Canadian Minister. Mr. King knew (as the late Dr. Skelton knew) that despite opposition in some quarters, Christie held qualifications for the post possessed by perhaps no other Canadian. Only the tragedy of stricken health deprived him of the opportunity to justify brilliantly the faith in his abilities held by all who were privileged to know him."<sup>(2)</sup>

Although Christie was personally popular and enjoyed many deep and enduring friendships, and although his work as Minister at Washington received much praise after his death, there is some indication that he did not enjoy a full success either in relation to his Ottawa chief, Mr. Mackenzie King, or some of his colleagues in Washington. He not only was a highly sensitive and apparently rather an introspective man, but possibly by personal nature, touchy.

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941, p.816.

(2) Ottawa Journal, Editorial, April 9, 1914.

Soon after his arrival in Washington, Christie, already divorced from his first wife\* (née Marie Armstrong, sister of Harold Armstrong who became Mr. Meighen's Private Secretary for a brief period), and about a year after her death, married on March 23, 1940, Miss Marian Trumbull, who had been acting as his Social Secretary at the Legation in Washington.

#### Illness

In May, 1940, Christie fell ill with hepatitis.\*\* Later came more serious afflictions. Within a year of his appointment, on May 22, he underwent a major gall-bladder operation at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, which left him in a weakened condition. Then on November 28, just after his marriage, he was stricken with thrombosis of a coronary artery and was taken to the Rockefeller Institute Hospital in New York. For a time he showed signs of recuperation; but remained in hospital convalescing through to February, when he planned to return to the Legation at Washington. However, he suffered a set-back, and remained.

During the period of his fatal illness,

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\* By his first wife, Christie had a son Paul, who in 1940 was a student at the University of Toronto. Sir Robert Borden was his godfather.

\*\* Speaking in the House of Commons on August 6, 1940, the sharp-tongued and sometimes sarcastic Mr. Pouliot said: "I was in Washington early in May and called at the Canadian Legation where I was told that the Minister was suffering from jaundice, probably because he had been too close to the Japanese or Chinese Embassy!" (H. of C. Debates, August 6, 1940, p.2533).

Christie asked to be allowed a period of leave or dislocation which, because of the critical demands on the Canadian Legation at that time, would permit of the appointment immediately of a substitute Minister; and Mr. Mackenzie King accepted this offer and appointed Mr. Leighton McCarthy, K.C., to the post in Washington, at the same time expressing in the House of Commons his sincere respect and concern for Christie. When Christie was obliged to relinquish his post, and entered hospital, Mr. Mackenzie King said: "May I say that I have been amazed, and I might add, in the circumstances, not a little pained to observe recently slighting and belittling references to Mr. Christie. Men who spend their lives in the public service, even in the most responsible posts, are rarely well known to the general public. By the very nature of their work, they do not come in contact with the public, and uninformed persons know little of the contribution they are making to the solution of difficult questions, or the administration of public affairs."<sup>(1)</sup>

During Christie's fatal illness, the Winnipeg Free Press of February 19, 1941, wrote editorially:

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 19, 1941, p.815.

It is scandalous that Canadian newspapers of rank should seek to disparage Mr. Christie by belittling him as "an obscure official" of the Department of External Affairs, and that sort of thing. If the history of Canada for the last twenty-five years is ever accurately written, Loring Christie's name will be bracketed with that of Sir Robert Borden as joint originators of policies which contributed powerfully to Canada's emergence into nationhood. When he went to Washington as Minister, he was not going into strange territory; but was returning to a field with which he became familiar by means of years of service in the United States Department of State in a position of responsibility with which he was entrusted despite his Canadian citizenship. Part of the equipment which he carried to Washington was personal acquaintance with American public officials of high position - including one, Franklin D. Roosevelt.\*

Death

In April Christie's condition rapidly deteriorated, apparently from the result of another blood-clot in March; and he did not survive this attack. He died at the Rockefeller Hospital on April 8, 1941, at the age of 56. (1)

"His going now", commented the Ottawa Evening Journal, "in the noon-day of his life, is a heavy loss for Canada. For this country has grave need, as democracy will always have need, for men of the heart, intelligence and ideals of Loring Christie. There is compensation only in the thought that the example of high character and devotion

\* File 46-L-40.

(1) File 46-L-40.



is something that remains, weaving itself into the stuff of a country's voyage through history." (1)

The New York Times emphasized Christie's value in Canadian-American relations, due to his special background: "The close ties that bind this country to Canada were symbolized in the career of Loring C. Christie. He was a Canadian by birth; an American by training; a Canadian-American in the range of his interests, and his loyalties. Born in Nova Scotia, he received his law degree at an American University; he began the practice of his profession with a law firm in this city, and, so interchangeable are Canadians and Americans in their adaptabilities and their points of view, that for two years he served as an assistant to the Solicitor-General of the United States. It was not until 1913, when he was a little under thirty that he returned to his own side of the border, to begin there a distinguished career that led ultimately to his appointment as Minister to the United States. . . .

"His untimely death at 56 robs this country of a stalwart friend, Canada an able statesman. Secretary Hull speaks for our own people when he expresses his sorrow over the loss of a good neighbour whose insight and experience gave him a deep appreciation and understanding of the problems confronting the two countries." (2)

After Christie's death, Mr. Mackenzie King said: "In the passing of Mr. Christie, Canada has lost an

(1) Ottawa Journal. Editorial. April 9, 1941.

(2) New York Times. April 10, 1941.

exceedingly able and devoted servant whose influence made itself felt in the shaping of national affairs and international relations during two very critical phases of our history.

"In Mr. Christie's death, the diplomatic service of Canada has lost one who had contributed largely to its development, and whose premature passing will be felt as a great loss not only in Canada but also in the United Kingdom and the United States." (1)

And the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. R.B. Hanson, added these words: "Through his training, his association, and his wide experience, Loring Christie had obtained a knowledge of constitutional and international matters possessed by very few. His unquestioned ability usefully to employ that knowledge in the service of his country was well recognized. During the Peace Conference, in the capacity of Technical Adviser to the Canadian Delegation, he came to be regarded in the same light as his intimate friend Philip Kerr, the invaluable assistant to Lloyd George at that time. Reference to Mr. Christie as a highly efficient public servant and as a beloved companion are frequent and numerous throughout the pages of the Memoirs of Sir Robert Borden, whom he served so well." (2)

(1) W.L.M. King: H. of C. Debates. April 8, 1941.p.2251.

(2) Hon. R.B. Hanson (Leader of Opposition), April 8, 1941. p.2252.

Christie's body was removed from the Rockefeller Hospital in New York to the Maine Receiving Vault at the Arlington National Cemetery, where it remained for some time, until finally, on August 4th, interred in the Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington. Mr. Merchant Mahoney, writing from the Washington Legation on April 15th to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, said:

Mr. George T. Summerlin, Chief of Protocol of the Department of State, was notified by telephone and was told he would be kept informed of whatever arrangements would be made in this connection. In discussing the steps which should be taken on the demise of a Minister, a day or so before, it had been learned that normally a service would be held in Washington, and this service would be a State Funeral with an armed guard supplied by the United States War Department. In the present instance, however, officials in the Department of State felt that in view of the fact that, although Mr. Christie had been the titular head of the Legation, he was not "en fonction", the State funeral might be dispensed with. While Mr. Wrong was in New York, it was arranged, through the good offices of Mr. Pierrepont Moffat, and in accordance with the wishes of Mrs. Christie, that a private service would be held at noon on April 9th in the Maine Receiving Vault at the Arlington National Cemetery and that the remains would be placed in the vault temporarily, pending final arrangements for interment. (1)

#### Bibliographical Note

After Mr. Christie's death, his widow after lengthy correspondence with the Department, arranged to transfer the bulk of his papers (except personal correspondence) to the Department. Although some twenty officers in the Department (whose names can be

(1) File 46-L-40 (Christie).

found in the correspondence on file) had some association with these papers, The principal work of sorting and indexing them was performed by G. de T. Glazebrook and F.H. Soward. Their analysis of the papers are found on file 46-L-40. They have also been card-indexed. Most of the papers have subsequently been refiled in the appropriate Department subject files. Mr. Soward's analytical list, dated July 11, 1949, covers thirty-six principal topics dealt with by Christie between the years 1918-1919 and 1939. (As indicated in the text of the present chapters (Part I and Part II) on "Loring Christie", correspondence has also been found in the Borden Papers and the Meighen Papers in the Public Archives; the Mackenzie King papers have not yet been opened for inspection).

K.P.K. December 3, 1958.

II.



1043  
1045

10.

EXPANSION OF DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

1925-1941.

Expansion of DepartmentNew Staff

During the Pope epoch, the officer strength of the Department had remained constant at three, although the clerical staff, including the Passport Branch, had necessarily increased as a result of the First War and its busy aftermath. The Prime Minister's Office, by 1925, had expanded and contained Private Secretaries and clerical personnel nominally belonging to the Department of External Affairs.

When Dr. Skelton took charge of the Department as new Under-Secretary, his first act was to make a handwritten private sketch of the Department's organization as he then found it. This is reproduced below: <sup>(1)</sup>

Department of External Affairs 1925.Main Office - Ottawa

Secretary of State for External Affairs:	(Prime Minister)
Under-Secretary:	O.D. Skelton - General administration Correspondence Questions of policy
Assistant Under-Secretary:	W.H. Walker - General administration Correspondence (Acting) Questions of policy Special: Passports Consular Service Confidential Prints
Counsellor:	J. Desy - Legal & Protocol, Treaties League of Nations Questions Commercial?

(1) Departmental file 1-EA-57.

Administrative:

F.M. Baker, Chief Clerk (1890): General Manager of Office.

J.F. Boyce, Secretary-Clerk: Assists in supervision with special charge of incoming and outgoing correspondence. Book index.

Accounting:

F.M. Baker, Accountant.

Miss K.A. McCloskey, Accountant Grade 1. (1909). In actual charge of the accounting work of all branches of the Department, including offices abroad; purchasing; Civil Service matters.

Miss M. Mahoney, Clerk Gr.3 (1916). Assistant to Miss McCloskey, ledger, especially offices abroad.

Miss G. Bearman, Sten.Gr.2. (1919). Stenographer, pay lists, checking accounts, Passport returns.

Miss L. Sibley, Sten. Gr.2. (1919). Stenographer, typist, monthly statements to Auditor, temporary certificates.

Miss M.A. Dillon, Clerk Gr.1 (1919). Prepares bank deposits. Supplies. Printing and Stationery. Requisitions. Public Works and Cartage. Checking passport returns.

Miss Somerville, Temporary, relieving Miss Sibley (ill) and checking passports.

Library and Translation:

J.A. Leblanc, Sr. Translator and Librarian (1910) Translator (French); in charge of Library, and distribution, Canada and London Gazette.

Miss B. Dion, Clerk-Sten. (1924). Stenography and library work. Also assists Mr. Desy.

Secretarial and Stenographic:

- Miss M.A. McKenzie, Sten. Gr.3 (1924)  
Correspondence and filing for Under-Secretary.  
Summaries and reports. Translations.
- Miss E. Turriff, Sten. Gr.3 (1916)  
Correspondence for U.S.S. and Asst.U.S.S;  
Coding; was special clerk for Sir Joseph Pope.
- Miss A. Flanagan, Sten. Gr.3 (1916)  
Correspondence for U.S. and Asst. U.S.S.  
Work similar to Miss Turriff's
- Arthur Hall, Sten. Gr.2 (1919)  
Correspondence for Mr. Walker;  
Treaty Book & L. of N. documents
- Miss G. Murphy, Sten.Gr.2 (1916)  
Assists Mr. Walker on Confidential Prints.  
(resigned)

Filing:

- W. White, Clerk Gr.3 (1909 Post Office, 1914 E.A.)  
Analysis and card index of files.
- Miss G. Rankins, Clerk Gr.3 (1909).  
Register of correspondence;  
Reminders to Departments.
- G. Champagne, Sr. Clerk, Gr.2 (1911)  
Files, correspondence
- Miss B. Joss, Sten.Gr.2 (1918)  
Index to Confidential files.  
Substitute for any of above.

Typists:

- Miss E. Palmer, Sten.Gr.3 (1894, E.A.1912).  
Types file index and general,
- Miss A. Palmer, Sten. Gr.2 (1923)  
Copying and general routine.
- Miss Bourgault: Typist (1920).



Messengers:

J. Losty, Confidential Messenger (1914)  
Senior messenger.

G. Champagne Jr., Messenger-Clerk (1917).  
Messenger; cash; mimeograph.

J.E. Pillion, Messenger-Clerk (1922).

The history of the Department, as regards general staff, during the next fifteen years was one of gradual expansion, but not a spectacular expansion. ~~until the outbreak of the Second World War~~ A memorandum prepared by Dr. Skelton on June 5, 1925, a few weeks after he became Under-Secretary, shows that "the estimates for that fiscal year (1925-26), provided for 25 permanent and two temporary employees in the External Affairs Department, plus seven permanent and fourteen temporary in the Passport Office, which is a branch of the Department but separately housed. This makes a total of 48 employees in the Department in Ottawa." (1) The estimates for 1939-40 show 34 permanent and 14 temporary employees in the central offices of the Department at Ottawa, plus 14 permanent and 4 temporary in the Passport Office, or a total at Ottawa of 66. In itself, this was a very small increase for a period of fifteen years. The number of officers increased only from three to fourteen in Ottawa. The principal expansion which took place during Dr. Skelton's term of office, however, was in the opening and manning of posts abroad.

Deputy Minister's Role in Staff Appointments.

It was, in accordance with usual practice, the

(1) Departmental file 1-EA-57.

task of the Under-Secretary to make recommendations to his chief, for Cabinet approval, concerning additions to his staff. He, better than any other, knew what the office duties and needs were; yet as additions involved enlarged estimates and appropriations, such recommendations - after being cleared through the Civil Service Commission - had to be approved by Cabinet Orders-in-Council.

In a letter to John E. Bisson of the University of Virginia, dated April 24, 1957, Mr. Glazebrook wrote:

Any expansion of the Department was a matter of government policy, to be decided primarily by the Prime Minister as Secretary of State for External Affairs, in consultation with the rest of the Cabinet where necessary. Whether the initiative as to any particular expansion came from the Under-Secretary as a recommendation to the Prime Minister, or from the Prime Minister as instructions to the Under-Secretary, could be determined, if at all, only by a detailed examination of records in the Department or in the papers left by Mr. Mackenzie King, though it is clear from such documents as have been consulted that the initiative frequently came from the Under-Secretary.

It was the responsibility of the Under-Secretary to plan and arrange for the execution of and <sup>any</sup> decision as to expansion of the Department. During the period in question, considerable expansion took place, though the natural development was somewhat checked by the depression of the 1930's.

Prof. Taylor Cole has commented: "Obviously, a great deal of the actual supervision of the employees for whose acts the minister must assume political responsibility falls into the hands of the deputy minister. The Civil Service Act (1918) specifically provides that the deputy minister of a department, who is appointed by the Governor-in-Council during pleasure, shall 'subject to the directions of the head of the department, oversee and direct the officers, clerks, and employees of the department', and 'give his full time to the civil service.'

However, the deputy ministers in the larger departments can keep themselves informed of only the major personnel developments and must depend upon subordinates for most of the direction." (1)

It was mainly, therefore, to Dr. Skelton himself, as Under-Secretary, that the responsibility and credit for the building-up of the Department and the Foreign Service between the two Wars were attributable. The Prime Minister, Mr. King, made reference to this in the House in 1941. "The Department makes known its needs by applying to the Civil Service Commission. Those who wish to enter the department send in their applications. When the time comes for an examination, they take the examination. The examinations are not confined merely to those which are written. There are oral examinations, and the Deputy Minister of the Department has acted with other members of the public service as an examiner with a view to sizing up some of the qualifications of candidates which might not be apparent through the written examination. . . The late Dr. Skelton, having held at one time the position which he did at Queen's University, having taken the interest that he did at all times in students, made a point of endeavouring to discover young men in different parts of the country who would be well suited to the Canadian public service. He did what he could to encourage the best of them to try the examinations and, as far as he could, enlisted their services subsequently." (2)

(1) Taylor Cole: The Canadian Bureaucracy (1929). p. 40.

(2) H. of C. Debates. February 25, 1941. p. 1009.

Dr. Skelton was an extremely modest man, who preferred to work behind the scenes, and who was as self-effacing as he could be. He was also an indefatigable and conscientious worker, but lacked the propensity for delegating work to others, or the desire to build up a corps of assistants beyond what was absolutely necessary, preferring to deal, so far as physically possible, with all matters, both political and administrative, himself. In this he constantly over-worked himself. For the first year or two, therefore, with the exception of the appointment of Mr. Desy as Counsellor, he did not encourage expansion of the Department. How far he was also inhibited by the economically-minded and Parliamentary-sensitive Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, is difficult to assess.

However, with the beginning of full diplomatic representation abroad in 1927, it was found to be necessary to strengthen the headquarters staff at home; and from then on additional officers were gradually acquired, some for Departmental service at home, and several for training for the new posts abroad. A system of special Foreign Service examinations was introduced as a means of obtaining the most qualified men.

#### Examination System

Both senior appointments, over which the Prime Minister - Secretary of State for External Affairs would normally be consulted, and junior clerical appointments which may or may not have been referred to the Prime Minister, had to be made with the approval of and under the direction of the Civil Service Commission, and normally candidates for appointment - unless being transferred from another government department - had to pass Civil

Service Commission examinations, except, in the early years, in certain senior appointments. (Loring Christie and John Read, who were legal specialists, inside the Department, underwent no examinations; and in the outside service, men like Walter Riddell, Hume Wrong, Laurent Beaudry, Pierre Dupuy, and Thomas Stone took no examinations). The general examination requirement was a valuable deterrent of "patronage", which was virtually non-existent concerning the Department of External Affairs permanent staff.\* Although in the clerical and lower grades, employment had been based on Civil Service Commission competitive examination or qualifying test ever since 1908, and had thus escaped the evil of political patronage and the spoils system with corresponding insecurity, the admission of recruits to the officer-ranks of the so-called Foreign Service, by special examination under the Civil Service Commission but arranged by the Department itself, was a relatively late innovation, commencing in 1925. Even then it was based on immediate need for one or two special officers at a given time. Jean Desy, invited to join the Department as a senior Counsellor, is said to have taken a perfunctory Civil Service Commission examination, although its nature and scope are not clear. E.D. McGreer and J.S. Macdonald passed a competitive examination, although there were only two positions to be filled in 1927.

\* (Political patronage did appear, however, in the appointment of certain Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, and possibly a few of the first Heads of new Missions, before there was a cadre of trained career officers.)

It was not until a decade later, when a larger number of junior officers were required for training within the Department and gradual promotion, or appointment to posts abroad, that the system was put on a more regulated basis.

In 1938 regulations for Third Secretaries were drawn up by Dr. Skelton, and before promulgation, were circulated for comment to Christie, Keenleyside, Macdonald, John Read and Miss McCloskey. They were promulgated on July 15, 1938, and were as follows:

Third Secretary Regulations

1. The normal method of entry into the Service is by appointment to the position of Third Secretary following competitive examination by the Civil Service Commission.
2. Successful candidates are appointed as Temporary Third Secretaries, in the Department of External Affairs. The temporary or probationary period will as a rule not be less than one year or longer than two years, but this general rule is subject to Treasury Board regulations regarding the proportion of temporary and permanent members in any branch or unit, and to provision of the necessary authorization in the Estimates. Temporary Third Secretaries who are not made permanent at the end of their probationary period will cease to be members of the Service.
3. In addition to specific assignment of duty in the Department and to assistance to a senior officer, temporary Third Secretaries are required during this period:-
  - (a) To satisfy the Department of an adequate speaking and writing knowledge of English or French - whichever is not their mother tongue.
  - (b) To initiate or continue as may be required the study of a foreign language.
  - (c) To acquire a thorough practical knowledge of codes and cyphers, and to become familiar with the general accounting rules and filing methods in force.

4. Third Secretaries, including in some cases, temporary Third Secretaries, may be transferred to posts abroad at any time.

5. In view of the desirability of ready transfer, Third Secretaries should not enter upon marriage without the authorization of the Secretary of State or Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

O.D. Skelton (1)

Ottawa,  
July 15, 1938.

Mr. H. Wrong, Assistant Under-Secretary, gave to the Standing Committee on External Affairs in 1946 a review of the slow expansion during and after the Second World War. The figures for all ranks of personnel employed in Ottawa, and including the Passport Office, were as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Permanent</u>	<u>Temporary</u>	<u>Total</u>
August, 1939	51	17	68
" 1940	54	148	202
" 1941	54	149	203
" 1942	52	154	206
" 1943	54	155	209
" 1944	54	169	223
" 1945	54	184	238

It will be seen that the total strength remained almost static throughout the war years, except for the expansion of the temporaries immediately after August, 1939. At the end of the war there was a fresh and rapid intake of new officers and clerical staff.

In addition to those figures for Ottawa only, Mr. Wrong gave a review of the personnel employed in Canadian Missions abroad, which included "certain local employees who were not of Canadian nationality - people such as messengers. We have to engage them locally, in

(1) See footnote next page.

(1) Footnote:

It is interesting to note J.S. Macdonald's comments, which however were not adopted:

"Paragraph 2. Two years is definitely too long a period of probation; it is stretching things too far to take two years out of the life of a young man if he is not going to be accepted. In any case it is easy to determine a man's qualifications by the end of six months. In my opinion one year should be the maximum probationary period, and half that time would be quite sufficient.

"Paragraph 3. Third Secretaries can only acquire a knowledge of codes, cyphers, accounting and filing as part of a regular assignment. They should be given assignments in these branches as opportunity offers, not expected to acquire the knowledge, as of a language, on their own.

"Paragraph 5. In my view this paragraph should be eliminated. Why should a Third Secretary be compelled to ask anybody's permission, except the bride, as to whether he may get married or not? If mobility is the object sought it would be more logical to require that any Secretary secure permission before he may become a father, or foster father." (File 2-EA-57).



some cases, although our general policy has been, certainly as regards positions such as confidential employees, always to employ Canadians":

<u>Date</u>	<u>Permanent</u>	<u>Temporary</u>	<u>Total</u>
August, 1939	60	46	106
" 1940	56	55	111
" 1941	50	98	148
" 1942	44	98	142
" 1943	55	198	263
" 1944	74	125	199
" 1945	82	178	260

Mr. Wrong pointed out that the biggest increase was between August, 1944, and August, 1945, when 61 persons were added to the strength abroad, as a result of the liberation of Europe and the beginnings or opening of Missions on the continent of Europe as well as certain establishments which became Missions, in other countries. (1)

The war, commencing in the following year, scarcely changed these basic regulations; but the sudden pressure of extra work, the rapid expansion of diplomatic Missions abroad, and other special requirements in the Department, in war agencies, and in the Prime Minister's Office, caused some variation in practice. Foreign Service Officers already made permanent were not allowed to leave the Service to enlist or take military or naval service. They had to be supplemented, in the senior grades, by war-time Special Assistants, some of whom returned to their original tasks, professions or businesses after the war's end, and a few of whom remained on the permanent strength of the Department as senior officers after 1945. At the end of the war, the manning of the many new diplomatic

(1) Minutes of Select Standing Committee on External Affairs, March 21, 1946, pp.10-11.

posts recently set up created a problem of scarcity which was met by recruitment of candidates for examination from among serving officers overseas who had the necessary educational qualifications of a university background and degree. In all cases, by Civil Service regulations, preference was given to "veterans" or ex-service men.

As already stated, the first examination for a diplomatic appointment was held in 1925, resulting in the appointment of Mr. Jean Desy as Counsellor in the Department, three months after Dr. Skelton had vacated the position of Counsellor to become Under-Secretary.

A second set of examinations was held in 1927, resulting in the appointment of E.D. McGreer as Second Secretary and J.S. Macdonald, formerly in the Tariff Section of Trade and Commerce, as Third Secretary.

In 1928 the third set of examinations, for which it is believed there were nearly 60 candidates across Canada, brought in, to fill three vacant positions, L. B. Pearson as First Secretary, K.P. Kirkwood as Second Secretary, and H.L. Keenleyside as Third Secretary. A fourth successful entrant, P.E. Renaud, was appointed to a further vacancy, as Third Secretary, six months later.

Thereafter, examinations were held at regular intervals as the need of officers arose, and one or two additional successful candidates were appointed each year for service either in the Department or at the new posts abroad.

In 1947 women were admitted to examinations for entry into the diplomatic service,<sup>(1)</sup> although it is believed that before that date the late Miss Marjorie McKenzie, Dr. Skelton's Private Secretary, wrote and passed, on more than one occasion, the written examinations, more for her own satisfaction than for any other reason, although she did not aspire to be granted any Foreign Service Officer rank, until she was appointed as an F.S.O.1 in 1946.<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) File 1-EA-1957,

(2) In a profile sketch of Miss McKenzie, Miss Carolyn Cox wrote: "Back in 1930, as a tour de force, she wrote the departmental examination for Third Secretaries, just to see what she could do, though knowing that no woman was eligible for appointment, and equally certain she herself could never either manage or endure the social requirements of a diplomat. She wrote a brilliant paper." (Toronto Saturday Night, March 17, 1945).

Foreign Service Officers in Ottawa

Under the new regime of Dr. Skelton as Under-Secretary, W.H. Walker continued as Assistant (and occasionally Acting) Under-Secretary; and because of long past experience in the Governor General's Office and from the first days (1909) of the External Affairs Department, his services were invaluable.

The Legal Adviser, Loring C. Christie had left the Department in 1923. Another legally-minded Counsellor was appointed in 1925 to partially fill the gap. On July 16, 1925 Jean Desy, LL.D., LL.L., K.C., after acting as "technical adviser" to the Canadian Delegation to the League of Nations in Europe, joined the Department as Counsellor at a salary of \$4,200, which was raised on October 1, 1937, to \$4,920. He had been a Professor of International and Constitutional Law and Political History at the University of Montreal, and Professor of History at the University of Paris. Desy remained in Ottawa for three years, until he was transferred as Counsellor to the Paris Legation in September, 1928. He subsequently became Ambassador to France, after heading diplomatic Missions in the Netherlands, Belgium, as Minister, and

as Minister and Ambassador  
Brazil/and Italy as Ambassador.

The first to join the Department under the new  
examination/<sup>system</sup> was E. D'Arcy McGreer, on August 22, 1927,  
as Second Secretary. He was later posted to the Canadian  
Advisory Office in Geneva, under Dr. W.A. Riddell, in  
August, 1928, and to Paris in October, 1929. McGreer had  
studied at McGill University, and after military service  
in the First War, had studied at Edinburgh University  
in Economics and Literature, and again at McGill, where  
he took his B.A. and M.A. in 1923, and took a diploma on  
a Province of Quebec Scholarship at the Institut des  
Hautes Etudes Internationales, University of Paris, in  
1925, and at the Academy of International Law at The Hague  
in 1926. He had been an Assistant High School Master in  
Montreal (1926-27) before joining the Department.

J. Scott Macdonald, who had been in the Department  
of National Revenue, 1914-26, and the Department of Trade  
and Commerce (Tariff Section), 1926-28, joined the De-  
partment of External Affairs on January 16, 1928, as  
Third Secretary; and on August 1st, 1929, he was promoted  
to Second Secretary. He had taken a B.A. at Queen's Uni-  
versity in 1923, followed by a B. Com. in 1927. His special  
knowledge of tariff and related economic aspects of ex-  
ternal business resulted in his specializing in this  
field of the Department, and he became chief of the  
Economic Division set up in 1946.

In the (second) 1928 departmental examination,  
out of some sixty candidates, three successful ones  
received immediate appointments.

Lester Bowles Pearson was appointed First Secretary in Ottawa on August 13, 1928. Treasury Board Minute P.C. 22/1297 of July 20, 1929, indicates that he was "loaned to the Canadian Legation at Washington on the 1st of June, 1929, for a short period"; he spent the months of June and July, 1929, there, and then returned to the Department. Pearson, after military service in Europe and the Near East, had studied at Oxford and Heidelberg, and had been an assistant Professor of History at ~~Victoria College~~ Toronto University, ~~for which he subsequently~~ ~~became Chancellor~~. His subsequent career is well known.\*

Pearson entered the External Affairs Department by competitive examination in 1928 while the Liberals were in power. But it was Conservative Premier R.B. Bennett who gave him his first start on his brilliant career. When Conservative Trade and Commerce Minister H.H. Stevens broke with Mr. Bennett on profits made by big business, the Price Spread Committee of the House of Commons was set up as a result. A civil servant was needed to act as Secretary of the Committee, and Mr. Bennett appointed Pearson, then a relative junior in the Department of External Affairs, who had a broad economic and historical background. When the Committee was raised to the status of a Royal Commission, he was continued as its Secretary. At the close of this task, the parliamentarians voted Pearson a special honorarium of \$1000;<sup>(1)</sup> and on Mr. Bennett's recommendation he was awarded an O.B.E. As a civil servant he was not eligible for any extra payment, but the Commission were so impressed with his work that they in-

\* (His son, Geoffrey A.H. Pearson, joined the Department in August, 1952).

(1) H. of C. Debates, July 3, 1935. Vol.IV, p.4206.

cluded the sum as a recommendation in their report and it received parliamentary sanction.

A year or more before the outbreak of World War II, Pearson returned to Canada on furlough from being a member of the staff of a Canadian Mission in Switzerland. Prime Minister King sent for him. King had recently returned from his visit to Berlin and his audience with Hitler which persuaded him that Hitler did not harbour designs of war. He asked Pearson's opinion based on his observations in Switzerland. Pearson told the Prime Minister that he was convinced that war was inevitable. Mr. King was not too tolerant of opinions contrary to his own, and was not impressed with Pearson's judgement, and for some time after that, External Affairs jobs assigned to Pearson were not of top importance.<sup>(1)</sup> However, Mr. King relented when events proved him to have been wrong, and after that he gained an increasing respect and personal liking for Pearson. According to United States Minister Pierrepont Moffat, Mr. King praised Pearson to him, and Moffat gained the impression that Pearson, along with Norman Robertson, were his favourites among the senior officers of the Department after the death of Dr. Skelton.<sup>(2)</sup> If Bruce Hutchison is to be believed, King endeavoured to persuade Pearson, who had succeeded Robertson as Under-Secretary, to enter politics and accept a Cabinet position as Secretary of State for External Affairs, but Pearson declined. Later, on September 4, 1946, Mr. King passed the portfolio to Mr. St. Laurent, Minister of Justice, but when it seemed likely that Mr.

(1) Ottawa Journal, January 17, 1958.

(2) The Moffat Papers, p. 373. (January 9, 1942).

St. Laurent would become Prime Minister he was determined to take Pearson into his Cabinet, as a colleague rather than as an official assistant. In due course, Pearson found himself unable to refuse the invitation of Mr. St. Laurent to whom he was devoted and in whose policies he believed.<sup>(1)</sup> On September 10, 1948, Pearson left the Civil Service, after twenty years service, and became Secretary of State for External Affairs, two months before Mr. King resigned as Prime Minister.

Hugh L. Keenleyside was appointed Third Secretary on September 1, 1928, and worked in the Department until the following year, when he was sent out as Second (and soon afterwards First) Secretary and Chargé d'Affaires to open the new Legation in Tokyo, prior to the arrival of the first Canadian Minister, the Hon. (later Sir) Herbert M. Marler. Toronto-born in 1898, he was a graduate of the University of British Columbia, B.A., LL.D, and of Clark University (M.A., Ph.D.) and had taught at Brown University, Syracuse University, and the University of British Columbia. He was the author of a standard work - "Canada and the United States" and contributed extensively to journals of history and political science. While in Japan, he co-authored with Thomas, a book "The History of Japanese Education". On Keenleyside's return from Japan, he was seconded to the Prime Minister's Office from January to October, 1936, and in June, 1941, he was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary.

(1) B. Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, pp.425, 435.



Kenneth P. Kirkwood, by Treasury Board Minute P.C. 6/1789 of September 29, 1928, was "appointed to the Department as Second Secretary from the 1st of September, 1928", and was "assigned to the staff of the Canadian Legation at Washington for a short period." He was transferred back to the Department in Ottawa on April 1, 1929, but a few months later (August 14) he was posted to the new Legation in Tokyo as Third Secretary (shortly afterwards re-instated to Second Secretary) where he remained until December, 1938, when he was transferred to The Hague.

John E. Read held a temporary appointment as First Secretary (without examination) in 1928, from June 16 to September 30. He returned on May 20 (or 28) 1929, as Legal Adviser, remaining in the Department until 1946.\*

Judge John Erskine Read, Q.C., B.A., D.C.L., LL.D.,  
\*\*  
was a Maritimer, born in Halifax on July 5, 1888; he received his education at Dalhousie University (B.A. 1909), Columbia University and Oxford University (B.A. 1912, D.C.L. 1913). He was called to the Bar of Nova Scotia in 1913, and was created a K.C. in 1925. From 1913 to 1920 he practised law, and in 1920 became Professor at Dalhousie Law School, where he became Dean from 1924 to 1929. He served in the First World War with C.F.A. 1914-18, was wounded and was invalided out of the service with acting rank of Major. From 1929 to 1946 he was Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs,

\* (His son, T.H.W. Read, joined the Department in July, 1947)

\*\* See Footnote next page.

## \*\* Footnote:

It is said that Mr. Read was a close friend of Mr. R.B. Bennett, Both their families, Maritimers, had received grants of land because members had seen service with Wolfe; their families lived not far apart; and Mr. Bennett's name, Richard Bedford Bennett, was derived from a John Bedford Read after whom he was named. (Confidential memorandum by Miss M. McKenzie, December 15, 1953, on file 1-EA-1957).

and as such acted as Agent of the Government of Canada in the "I'm Alone" arbitration, and Trail Smelter arbitration, and was Canadian Counsel in references to the International Joint Commission. He was a member of the Canadian Delegation to the Conference on Dominion Legislation held in 1929, and to the Imperial Conference of 1930, where he assisted Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, and of 1937; he was also Deputy Secretary of the Imperial Economic Conference held in Ottawa in 1932, and an alternate Canadian Delegate to the First General Assembly of the United Nations in London in 1946. In 1946 he was appointed Canadian judge of the International Court of Justice The Hague.

On September 23, 1929, Norman A. Robertson, who had been at the Washington Legation for a few months, entered the Department in Ottawa as Third Secretary. Born in Vancouver on March 4, 1904, he was a graduate of the University of British Columbia in 1923, a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, 1923-26, and a graduate of the Brookings Graduate School in Washington, 1927-28. He was a lecturer in Economics at the University of British Columbia and at Harvard University. From 1933 to 1934 he obtained leave of absence from the Department to serve as Special Lecturer in the Department of Government at Harvard University. From 1939 to 1946 he was a member of the Foreign Exchange Control Board, and Economic Advisory Committee. Being senior officer and Counsellor in the Department at the time of Dr. Skelton's death on

January 28, 1941, he was immediately appointed Acting Under-Secretary, and this position was <sup>subsequently</sup> ~~forthwith~~ confirmed and made permanent. On September 4, 1946, he was appointed High Commissioner in the United Kingdom, and was re-appointed to that post on June 1, 1952, after an interval of serving as Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet from March 15, 1949. He was appointed Ambassador to the United States in 1957.

Paul Emile Renaud, Ph.D., joined External Affairs, after qualifying in the 1928 Foreign Service Officer examination, as Third Secretary of the Canadian Legation, Washington, in September, 1929. The next month he was transferred to the Canadian Advisory Office at the League of Nations in Geneva, where he remained for ten years. In January, 1939, he was appointed Second Secretary and occasionally Chargé d'Affaires at the new Canadian Legation at Brussels and, on the invasion of Belgium in 1940, followed the Belgian Government to France, Portugal and London; he returned to Ottawa in January, 1941. Born in 1897, he studied at the College of Montreal, 1911-18, obtaining a B.L. in Letters and Science, Ste. Marie College, Montreal; 1918-19, in Philosophy, and the University of Montreal (B.A.) in 1919-20. He was admitted to the Montreal Bar in 1921; and between 1920 and 1923 took degrees of M.A., B.C.L., and LL.M. He then studied at the University of Paris, LL.D. in Law and Economics, and the University of London, Ph.D. in Law, Economics and Politics, and became Professor of Diplomatic History and Political Science at the University of Montreal in 1928-29.

\* On February 25, 1941, Mr. Green, M.P., speaking in the House of Commons, said: We seem to have recruited a number of remarkably able young men, one of the ablest perhaps being the acting under-secretary of state, Mr. Norman Robertson, who sits before the Prime Minister at the present moment, and who is a distinguished graduate of our university of British Columbia". (H. of Commons Debates, 1941, Vol.1, p.1008).

In 1930 Mr. Laurent Beaudry, formerly First Secretary at the Washington Legation since February 21, 1927, was transferred to the Department in Ottawa as Counsellor, at a salary of \$6000 (which was more than Mr. W.H. Walker was receiving, \$5220).

On October 13, 1930, H.F. Feaver joined the Department as Third Secretary, and on the same date Alfred Rive also joined as Third Secretary.

Thus, up to the end of 1930, a nucleus of trained offices was being formed in the Department in Ottawa, numbering thirteen, less Mr. McGreer, Dr. Keenleyside and Mr. Kirkwood who moved overseas after a short spell in Ottawa. It was not long before public notice and interest was being taken in this embryonic corps of young diplomats, "Dr. Skelton's boys". Almost all of them subsequently rose to become ambassadors, with the exception of Mr. Beaudry who resigned on account of ill-health, and Mr. Read, who became Canadian Judge on the International Court of Justice ("World Court") at The Hague. Besides Ambassadorships, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Wrong, and Mr. Robertson, were for periods Under-Secretaries of State for External Affairs. Mr. Beaudry was Assistant and later Associate Under-Secretary in Ottawa for a time. Dr. Keenleyside was an Assistant Under-Secretary until proceeding to Mexico as Ambassador and then becoming Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources; and Mr. Pearson ultimately became Minister of External Affairs, M.P., and a Privy Councillor, President of the United Nations Assembly (1953-34), recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, and Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada. (1)

(1) See Annexes I., II., and III.

By way of recapitulation of the foregoing notes, the following particulars were provided by the Personnel Division concerning the staff between 1929 and 1939. (1)

At December 31, 1929, there were, exclusive of non-career Heads of Mission, 19 (Foreign Service) Officers on the strength of the Department. Of this number, 7 were employed at Ottawa, and the balance at the posts in London, Paris, Geneva, Tokyo and Washington.

At December 31, 1939, there were, exclusive of non-career Heads of Mission, 32 officers on the strength of the Department. Of this number, 14 were employed in Ottawa, and the balance at London, Paris, Geneva, Tokyo, Washington, Brussels and The Hague.

The list, showing the year they joined the Department and, where applicable, the date of separation by death, resignation or retirement, up to and including 1939, is given below:

Foreign Service Officer Strength, 1930-1939.

June 1, 1909	Sir Joseph Pope (retired 1925).
June 1, 1909	W.H. Walker (died April 26, 1933).
April 15, 1913	L.C. Christie (resigned 1923) (re-joined 1935).
April 21, 1921	M.M. Mahoney (died . . .)
Nov.2, 1922	P. Dupuy
1922	Lucien Pacaud (resigned 1931)
July 15, 1924	O.D. Skelton (died January 28, 1941)
Jan. 1, 1925	W.A. Riddell (retired . . .)
July 16, 1925	J. Desy (retired 1958)
Feb. 24, 1927	T.A. Stone (resigned April, 1935) (rejoined 1939).
Feb.21, 1927	L. Beaudry (resigned . . .)
Apr. 1, 1927	H.H. Wrong (died January 24, 1954)
Aug.22, 1927	E.D. McGreer
Jan.16, 1928	J.D. Macdonald
Aug.13, 1928	L.B. Pearson (appointed to Cabinet September 10, 1948)
Sept. 1, 1928	K.P. Kirkwood
Sept. 1, 1928	H.L. Keenleyside

(1) Memo by J.M. Cook, Personnel Division, January 20, 1956. (File 2-EA-57).

May 13, 1929	N.A. Robertson
May 28, 1929	J.E. Read (resigned to become Justice at World Court, 1946).
Aug. 1, 1929	K.F. Crowther (resigned December 1, 1932)
Oct. 1, 1929	P.E. Renaud
Oct. 13, 1930	A. Rive
Oct. 13, 1930	H.F. Feaver
May 1, 1931	G.P. Vanier (retired . . . )
Dec. 15, 1932	H. Allard
Aug. 28, 1934	L. Mayrand
Aug. 28, 1934	C.S.A. Ritchie
Aug. 28, 1934	R.M. Macdonnell
Sept. 1, 1934	L.C. Christie (rejoined) (died 1941)
1936	F.M. Stanton (resigned Nov. 1, 1939)
Oct. 14, 1937	J.W. Pickersgill (appointed to Cabinet June 12, 1953)
Dec. 8, 1937	J.A. Chapdelaine
Dec. 15, 1937	M.H. Wershof
July 19, 1938	J.A. Gibson (resigned)
July 27, 1938	E.B. Rogers
Jan. 5, 1939	E.M. Reid
Sept. 6, 1939	T.A. Stone (rejoined)
1939	C.F. Fraser (retired)
1939	E.H. Norman (died 1956)

Linguistic Distribution

There still remained a predominance of English-origin to French-origin personnel in the Department in Ottawa. Though this was perhaps not so true in posts abroad.\* Some reasons for this disproportion, in the Civil Service generally, have been summarized by Prof. Taylor Cole (The Canadian Bureaucracy) as follows:

"(1) the standards of the French-Canadian educational institutions were inadequate and did not train many for technical positions except law, medicine or theology; (2) practically all positions in the public service require some knowledge of English, whereas many

\* The U.K. and U.S.A. were obviously English-speaking posts and so were the High Commissioners' Office in the Commonwealth. The Paris post was mostly manned by French Canadian staff, and was successively headed by M. Febre, M. Roy, Gen. Vanier, M. Jean Desy, and M. Pierre Dupuy. Gen. LaFleche, Justice Turgeon, M. Vaillancourt were among French Canadian Heads of Mission; Dr. H. Laureys, Belgian-born, was another French-speaking Ambassador. (See Skilling, pp. 267, 271.)

do not require a knowledge of French, in which the French-Canadian is usually more proficient; (3) the French-Canadians often have little interest in administrative work or they lack background and experience in positions of authority; (4) the French Canadians of the professional classes often have no desire to leave their work and environment in the Province of Quebec to accept office in Ottawa. (According to Minister of External Affairs St. Laurent, "The French-speaking Canadians very often prefer living in Montreal, Quebec City, Three Rivers or Sherbrooke in the traditions of the province than living in Ottawa". (Toronto Evening Telegram, June 4, 1947, p.21); and (5) French-Canadians who are qualified for the higher administrative posts are in particular demand in private industry, which offers them special inducements." (1)

At the end of the Second War, by 1945, there was the additional factor that, as preference of Civil Service employment was given to veterans, the intake of new personnel happened to be larger among English-speaking Canadians who had had military service than among French-Canadian veterans.

Nevertheless, the Department maintained a careful balance, and, proportional to the employed population of Canada as a whole, was not perhaps unduly discriminatory. In due course (1947), the position of Associate Under-Secretary was created, and filled by a French-Canadian, (Laurent Beaudry), just as in 1925, Jean Desy had become

(1) Taylor Cole: Canadian Bureaucracy, p.92.



Counsellor under Dr. Skelton. McGreer, a half French Canadian from Montreal, and Paul Renaud, had been early recruits to the Department, in 1927, and 1929, followed by H. Allard, L. Mayrand, J.A. Chapdelaine and others. In subsequent years the intake of Foreign Service Officers into the Department through Civil Service Commission examinations was not proportionally imbalanced as between two linguistic groups.

In principle, this matter of "racial" distribution had relatively little importance in the actual work of the Department, because every Foreign Service Officer candidate was required to be proficient in both languages. On the other hand, almost all departmental correspondence, as in other Canadian Government departments, was conducted in English, (partly because of Ottawa's location within the English-speaking province of Ontario and the English-speaking majority in Canada as a whole; and partly because of Canada's most intimate external relations with the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Commonwealth countries).

#### Women Staff

Although the ranks of the clerical staff had, as has been shown in Part I, been increasingly filled by women ever since the commencement of the Department and particularly through the period of the First World War and its aftermath, the entry of women into the more senior grades as Foreign Service Officers was delayed for

many years - in fact until after the Second World War was over; and therefore the story of their brilliant participation in the Department and diplomatic service does not enter into the present survey.

It was a trend of the times during the nineteen twenties and thirties that women more and more entered the ranks of business and commerce, industry and some of the professions. Their training and educational facilities were widening, and the number of women graduates of Canadian colleges and universities showed an increasing upward curve. The nature of office work, depending so largely on the digital skills of typists, attracted women both to business life and government offices. The change in modes of married life, with more apartment dwelling and pre-prepared foods, less house-keeping demands, and high living costs, brought wives out of their homes into accessory remunerative employments to aid their husbands' budgets. The rise of a class of "bachelor girls" in a condition of superfluity or non-dependence, led to wider female employment, often at rates of pay lower than the similar tasks performed by men and thus advantageous to employers, (until the claims of equal pay for equal work made themselves felt). Thus the Civil Service became well filled with women, and the government offices, including the Department of External Affairs, was, in the clerical level, largely female. The war years accentuated this trend.

Prof. Taylor Cole has commented on the position of women in the Civil Service in the war years, 1939-45.<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Taylor Cole: The Canadian Bureaucracy, p. 110.

During the war, while so many men were under arms or on special service, women were recruited in all fields of life, including the public services. The regulation requiring the resignation of female employees in the Civil Service from their jobs upon marriage were relaxed; many married women temporaries were engaged. The percentage ratio of women to men in the Civil Service generally increased. At the end of the war, many of the wartime departments reduced staffs, or if still expanding, gave preference to veterans. "In the demobilization of establishments and in the reduction of staffs, a larger number of women have been retained among the temporary employees than was expected at an early stage in the war. At the same time there has been no basic departure in theory from early post-war rules regarding the release of women."<sup>(1)</sup>

It is not necessary to enumerate the women who served in the Department of External Affairs during the Skelton epoch, as was partly attempted in Part I relating to the Pope Epoch. One or two names, however, may be referred to.

Because from the commencement of Dr. Skelton's incumbency, throughout his period of office until his death, and thereafter in special and valuable duties in the Department, Miss Marjorie McKenzie played a quiet but influential role in the Under-Secretary's Office. A special reference to her is justified.

She was born in 1897 at North Bay and was educated at local schools. She first entered on a teaching career,

(1) Ibid.

serving in public schools in Northern Ontario between 1915 and 1919. She continued higher studies while engaged in teaching and took her B.A. degree from Queen's in 1920. After graduation she spent some three years as a proof-reader for a Kingston firm, the Jackson Press, and in 1924 was chosen by Dr. Skelton as his Secretary while he was Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Queen's. When Dr. Skelton accepted Prime Minister King's invitation to head the Department of External Affairs, Miss McKenzie came with him as Private Secretary. Working with him, she was of great aid to him in his planning to give the small Department a new importance and development in size and scope. Familiar with many facets of the Department, and with most of the correspondence she handled for Dr. Skelton, she was frequently consulted by its officials on a wide variety of subjects.<sup>\*</sup>

She attended the Imperial Conference in London of 1926, and also took part in the Conference on Dominion Legislation in 1929, from which came the Statute of Westminster. She was present at the Coronation ceremonies in London in 1937, and at the ensuing Imperial Conference, acting as delegation secretary. She was a member of the delegation staff at the Quebec Conference in 1943. She had associations with most of the prominent figures in Canada during her active period in the Department. While at Kingston she tutored one Harry Crerar in German for an Imperial Staff College examination; he later became General Crerar, one of only five Canadians to hold that rank.

<sup>\*</sup> See Carolyn Cox: "Safekeeper of the Secrets and Conscience of External Affairs." Toronto Saturday Night. March 17, 1945.

She continued to serve as Secretary to the subsequent Under-Secretaries, Norman A. Robertson and Lester B. Pearson. In 1946 she was appointed as a Foreign Service Officer in the Department in Ottawa. Later she was a senior member of the Historical Research <sup>and Reports</sup> Division, a field in which she had great gifts and a deep personal knowledge of the Department from 30 years of intimate experience. In addition to her official duties, she wrote during her lifetime considerable poetry, much of which appeared in Canadian publications. In her last years she endured continuous ill-health, although courageously she did not let this diminish her friendships, departmental co-operation and unremitting office work. She died in hospital on November 21, 1957, at the age of 61. (1)

A number of other women began to enter the ranks of the Department in more senior positions than those of stenographers and typists; some of these <sup>women</sup> ~~ladies~~ were university graduates. A number of them were promoted to officer grade from their previous clerical positions; a few after 1947 entered the Department as Foreign Service Officers by Civil Service examination or by special appointment (e.g. Miss Elizabeth MacCallum). Miss K.A. McCloskey was promoted to <sup>be</sup> a Vice-Consul in New York (1945); Miss Gladys Bearman was promoted to be a Vice-Consul in San Francisco (1948); Miss Bessie E. McGregor was promoted to be Vice-Consul in Havana (1946), and Attaché at the Brussels Embassy in 1955. A list of these women

(1) Ottawa Citizen, Ottawa Journal, November 21, 1957. Department of External Affairs Bulletin, February, 1958.

who subsequently attained officer rank in the Department and Foreign Service is given in Annex IV. Miss MacCallum and Miss Meagher, holding the grade of Counsellor, became Chargés d'Affaires and de facto Heads of Mission in Lebanon and Israel respectively.

#### General Observations

From one point of view, the staff expansion of the Department during the period 1925-1941 may be regarded as having still been relatively slow, except in the war-time augmentation, in the routine clerical ranks, by temporaries. In the between-the-war years, the expansion in the more senior grades was gradual, and the new appointees year by year had to become assimilated and trained to their unfamiliar tasks.

As Prof. Mansergh has commented, "Departments of state cannot be satisfactorily created. If they are to discharge their duties effectively they must gradually assemble knowledge and establish precedents to guide their actions. In the field of external affairs particularly, a wise judgement demands not only a study of the merits of the issue at stake but an accumulation of experience built up through many years. From the point of view of the dominion governments all this reinforced the desirability of proceeding slowly, of building up a cadre of experienced officials at home and diplomatic representatives abroad before assuming the full responsibilities of independence in foreign policy. But such sobering, gradualist considerations were not wholly congenial to nationalist opinion and they were counterbalanced by the

urgency of international problems the resolution of which often demanded the immediate discharge of those fundamental, external responsibilities which dominion governments had now assumed." (1)

To this observation may be added the comment of Dr. Skilling, written in 1944:

"The first important steps designed to strengthen the staff were taken in the three years 1927, 1928 and 1929, when many of the persons who now hold leading positions entered the Department. With their joining the diplomatic service a beginning had been made in creating 'a small staff of young men, well educated and carefully selected'." This initial expansion was closely linked with the establishment of the first three Legations. No further significant additions were made, however, during the five years of the Bennett regime, and the Department remained understaffed during the first years of Mr. King's tenure of office.

"For a long time, too, the Department retained something of its earlier character as 'a kind of adjunct to the prime minister's office,' and successive prime ministers turned to it for advice and assistance on major questions of internal, as well as external policy. As a consequence, Dr. Skelton was frequently described as a kind of 'deputy prime minister' and his staff sometimes referred to as 'an invisible government' on Parliament Hill. However great the value of such services to Canada, it is probable that this practice impeded the development

(1) Nicholas Mansergh: Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-39. pp.71-72.

of a department distinctively concerned with the conduct of external affairs and delayed the growth of representation abroad. Although a separate cabinet secretariat now exists, senior members of the Department, such as the Under-Secretary, continue to act in an advisory capacity to the Prime Minister and serve on important committees dealing with internal affairs, and a few junior members are assigned to the Prime Minister's Office for service."<sup>(1)</sup>

From another point of view, the expansion of the Department in staff during the Skelton epoch while perhaps inadequate for the growing amount of work to be done (which had increased "twenty times"), was a considerable advance over the more static period of Sir Joseph Pope. A momentum was getting under way. The number of senior officers, quickly trained by the pressure of events, was augmented through the decade and a half of the present review. The Department was beginning to fulfil Joseph Pope's aspiration for a corps of trained men in international affairs, "officers trained for the purpose, whose business shall be to deal with such questions and such questions alone." Thanks largely to Dr. Skelton's acumen, a group of able, even brilliant, men had been recruited, by the time the Second World War broke out. "In External Affairs, the control-room of the expanding power-house", commented Bruce Hutchison, "the science of government held no more competent practitioners than Lester Pearson, who had yet to master his later profession of politics; Hume Wrong, whose mind worked like a flawless and flashing machine;

(1) Skilling: Canadian Representation Abroad. p. 262.



Norman Robertson, an unfailing inventor of solutions for insoluble problems; Arnold Heeney, Escott Reid, and a younger generation of unsuspected talent, now nearing the top." (1)

And in the House on February 18, 1941, Mr. Mackenzie King declared: "The result of Dr. Skelton's example and influence is that today in the Department of External Affairs, in London, in Washington, and elsewhere throughout the world this nation is served by men who, thinking nothing of public acclaim, of personal distinction, or of public reward, have laboured without ostentation, steadily and silently, for the great cause which has been entrusted to their hands." (2)

On January 28, 1941, Dr. O.D. Skelton, who had been Under-Secretary since 1925, died of a heart attack, brought on, it was believed, by excessive strain and over-work. In the emergency, Norman A. Robertson, who had been working most closely with Dr. Skelton, was temporarily named Acting Under-Secretary; and shortly afterwards his appointment to the position was confirmed and made permanent.

(1) Bruce Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, p.266.

(2) H. of C. Debates, February 18, 1941, p.818.

ANNEX

1. List of Under-Secretaries of State for External Affairs.
2. List of Assistant Under-Secretaries.
3. List of F.S.O's. ultimately becoming Heads of Mission.
4. List of women becoming F.S.O's.

ANNEX IUnder-Secretaries of External Affairs

Although this survey covers only the period of Dr. O.D. Skelton (1925-41), it may be useful to record the succession of Under-Secretaries of State for External Affairs to present date:

- Sir Joseph Pope - From June 1, 1909 to March 31, 1925. (Died at Ottawa December 2, 1926).
- Dr. Oscar D. Skelton - From April 1, 1925, to his death, January 28, 1941.
- J.S. Macdonald - Acting USSEA April-July, 1937
- Norman A. Robertson - From January 29, 1941, to September 16, 1946.
- Lester B. Pearson - From September 17, 1946, (appointed September 4) to September 10, 1948; resigned and was sworn in as Minister September 10.
- Escott Reid - Acting USSEA from September 11, 1948 to April 14, 1949.
- Arnold D.P.Heeney - From March 15, 1949 to April 15, 1952.
- L. Dana Wilgress - From June 1, 1952, to August 1, 1953.
- H. Hume Wrong - From August 1, 1953, to January 1, 1954.
- R.A. MacKay - (Acting USSEA) From January 1, 1954 to August 6, 1954. Associate USSEA August, 1954.
- Jules Leger - From August 7, 1954.

Assistant Under-Secretaries

- W.H. Walker - Recognized as Assistant Under-Secretary in a Treasury Board Minute on Salaries, in 1912.
- L.B. Pearson )  
H.L. Keenleyside) - Named Assistant Under-Secretaries on June 24, 1941.

In later years there was created a panel of three Assistant Under-Secretaries:

- Laurent Beaudry -
- Escott Reid - Assistant USSEA April, 1947;  
Deputy USSEA September, 1948.
- W.D. Matthews - April, 1947. Died March 14, 1959.
- H.O. Moran - April, 1949.
- M.H. Wershof - January, 1949.
- R.A. MacKay - Assistant USSEA September, 1952;  
Deputy USSEA January, 1954;  
Associate USSEA August, 1954.
- R.M. Macdonnell - September 1, 1952.
- J.W. Holmes - October, 1953.
- J.A. Chapdelaine - January, 1954.
- J.B.C. Watkins - June, 1954.
- M. Cadieux - December 1, 1956.
- D. LePan - April 1, 1957.

Subsequent Heads of Mission

Of the Foreign Service Officers serving within the Department of External Affairs between 1925-1930, i.e., the "first originals" - the following climbed the promotional ladder until they reached the topmost diplomatic rung, of Minister, Ambassador or High Commissioner, (list alphabetical):

- |                     |                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jean Désy           | - Minister to Belgium and the Netherlands; Minister and Ambassador to Brazil and Italy; Ambassador to France.                             |
| P. Dupuy            | - Minister and Ambassador to the Netherlands; Ambassador to Italy; Ambassador to France.<br>and Ambassador                                |
| H.F. Feaver         | - Minister/to Denmark.                                                                                                                    |
| H.L. Keenleyside    | - High Commissioner to Newfoundland; Ambassador to Mexico.                                                                                |
| K.P. Kirkwood       | - Chargé d'Affaires to Poland; High Commissioner to Pakistan; Ambassador to Egypt; Minister to Lebanon; High Commissioner to New Zealand. |
| M. Mahoney          | - High Commissioner to Ireland.                                                                                                           |
| J.S. Macdonald      | - High Commissioner to Newfoundland; Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Brazil and Austria.                                                        |
| E.D. McGreer        | - High Commissioner to South Africa; Chargé d'Affaires to Poland; Minister to Denmark; Ambassador to Greece.                              |
| L.B. Pearson        | - Ambassador to U.S.A.                                                                                                                    |
| P.E. Renaud         | - Ambassador to Chile.                                                                                                                    |
| Dr. W.A. Riddell    | - Canadian Advisory Officer, Geneva.                                                                                                      |
| A. Rive             | - High Commissioner to New Zealand; Ambassador to Ireland.                                                                                |
| N.A. Robertson      | - High Commissioner to London (twice); Ambassador to U.S.A.                                                                               |
| T.A. Stone          | - Minister to U.S.A.; Minister to Sweden and Finland; Ambassador to the Netherlands.                                                      |
| Maj.Gen.G.P. Vanier | - Minister to France, Belgium and the Netherlands (London); Ambassador to France.                                                         |
| H.H. Wrong          | - Ambassador to U.S.A., and to U.N.                                                                                                       |

ANNEX IV

The following ladies in the Department subsequently obtained ~~Foreign~~~~Service~~ Officer rank, (the order is alphabetical):

Miss Kathleen Bingay - Assistant to the Legal Adviser until she married Mr. A. Davidson Dunton, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the C.B.C.

Miss Gladys M. Bearman, in the Department from 1919, was Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer from 1924 to 1947, and was appointed Vice-Consul to San Francisco in 1948, and A.O.1. in 1953.

Miss Laura Beattie, in the Department of Public Information from 1942-43, W.I.B. and C.I.S. from 1943 to 1947, was absorbed into the Department in February, 1947, and made Information Officer (I.O.4) in 1955.

Miss H.D. Burwash, from the W.T.P.B. in 1942-43, became a Clerk Grade 4 in the Department in June, 1943, and F.S.O.2 in October, 1947, and Second Secretary at Oslo in 1949, and in Paris in 1954.

Miss Frances Carlisle joined External Affairs in , and after serving as Press Officer, was appointed to Mexico as Second Secretary until her marriage to Mr. H.O. Moran, Canadian Ambassador to Turkey.

Miss Mary Dench, a Clerk Grade 4 from November, 1943, became I.O.1 in 1947, then I.O.3 and A.O.2.

Miss Agnes Ireland joined the Department in 1943 as Clerk Grade 4, and was appointed Third Secretary in Wellington in 1947, and Second Secretary in New Delhi in 1954, as F.S.O.3.

Miss M. Higman, a Clerk Grade 3 from October, 1945, went to Buenos Aires in 1946, and was appointed an External Affairs Officer (E.A.O.1) in July, 1957.

Miss Olive E. Hobbs, a Clerk Grade 1 from November, 1941; became an E.O.1 in April 1956, and was appointed Vice-Consul at Hamburg in 1956.

Miss Elizabeth P. MacCallum joined the Department as a Principal Clerk and Special Assistant on the Near East in July, 1942, and was made an F.S.O.2 in October, 1947. She had a temporary duty in Athens July-November, 1951, acting as Chargé d'Affaires part of the time. Subsequently she gained the rank of Counsellor and was first Head of Mission (Chargé d'Affaires) of the new Canadian Legation at Beirut.

Miss K.A. McCloskey, who entered the Department in 1910, and was appointed Vice-Consul to New York in 1943.

Miss Marjorie McKenzie, to whom reference is made elsewhere, joined the Department in 1924 as Private Secretary to the Under-Secretary, and was appointed an F.S.O.2 in 1946, and later F.S.O.4.

Miss B. Margaret Meagher, entering the Department as a Clerk Grade 4 in August, 1942, served in Washington, as Third and Second Secretary in Mexico in 1945, and First Secretary in London, subsequently was appointed Head of Mission (Chargé d'Affaires) at Tel Aviv, Israel, and in September, 1958, Canada's first woman Ambassador.

Miss Bessie E. McGregor joined the first Washington Legation as Librarian in March, 1927, and then served in Mexico and Havana, where she was appointed Vice-Consul. She was promoted to A .O.1 in September, 1953, and became an Attaché at the Brussels Embassy in 1955.

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