

GOVERNMENT



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DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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Historical Background

The growing importance of Canada in world affairs during the forty years after Confederation made it desirable, by the early 1900's, that it should adopt an organized method of conducting its affairs with other countries.

The first suggestion that a separate department be established for this purpose came from Sir Joseph Pope, then Under-Secretary of State, in 1907. In a memorandum to a Royal Commission on the Civil Service, he recommended a more efficient method of dealing with the external affairs of Canada.

His memorandum noted that there did not exist a complete record of correspondence on any matter of external bearing. Individual departments concerned with such matters communicated with other governments through the Governor General, without reference to one another. This practice, on more than one occasion, caused inconsistencies to be brought to the attention of the Canadian Government by foreign governments.

In May 1909, Parliament authorized the establishment of a "Department of External Affairs". The title indicates that it deals with Canada's relations with other governments within the British Commonwealth as well as with foreign powers. The Act creating the Department placed it under the Secretary of State, with an Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to rank as the permanent deputy head of the Department.

Before the establishment of the Department, a High Commissioner had been appointed to represent Canada in London (from 1880) and an Agent General in France (from 1882), neither of whom had diplomatic status. In addition Canada was represented abroad in the closing years of the nineteenth century by trade commissioners and immigration officials. They were appointees of individual departments of the Canadian Government and did not enjoy diplomatic status. Negotiations with foreign countries were conducted through the British Foreign Office and dealings with other parts of the Empire through the Colonial Office, with Canadian representatives frequently included in negotiations. Canadian interests abroad were handled by British diplomatic and consular authorities. All communications to other governments were made through the Governor General, who at that time represented both the King and the Government of the United Kingdom.

The establishment of the Department brought no constitutional change. The Governor General continued to be the official channel of communication. But whereas individual departments formerly had sent despatches directly to other governments through the Governor General and incoming communications had been received through him, all despatches were henceforth sent to the Governor General through the Secretary of State as head of the Department. Incoming communications were referred by the Governor General's secretary to the Secretary of State and in some cases to the Prime Minister before being passed on to the government department concerned. Each department dealing with other countries thereafter provided the Department of External Affairs with full information. Thus the Department acted as a centralizing agency through which all communications passed.

In 1912 an act was passed placing the Department directly under the Prime Minister, and from April 1 of that year he held the additional portfolio of Secretary of State for External Affairs. The appointment of a separate minister for the Department was considered from time to time, but no action was taken until March, 1946, when a bill was introduced to repeal the section of the Act of 1912 which provided that the Prime Minister was to be the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The bill was passed on April 2 and five months later, on September 4, 1946, the announcement was made of the appointment of the first separate Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Early Years

The Department began with a modest staff consisting of the Under-Secretary, two chief clerks and four clerks. The first decade of its existence was a period of inconspicuous development.

The first important step came in 1919 when Canada won separate representation as a nation at the Paris Peace Conference. This achievement marked the end of the traditional "diplomatic unity of the Empire" and the beginning of Canada's growth as a power in international affairs.

The gradual recognition of Canadian autonomy in international affairs and the growth of Canadian responsibilities abroad made expansion inevitable. After 1920 it became increasingly apparent that Canada's interests could no longer be conveniently handled by the British diplomatic and consular authorities. The new Department began to develop into an agency for the direct administration of Canada's external affairs.

In 1921 the Office of the High Commissioner in London was placed under the control of the Department. "In 1923, Canada, for the first time, asserted and exercised its right to negotiate and sign its own treaties: this was in connection with a Halibut Fishery treaty with the United States." In 1925 a Canadian Advisory Officer was stationed in Geneva to represent Canada at various conferences and to keep the Canadian Government informed of the activities of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office.

A further advance in the Department's development came as the result of an agreement reached at the Imperial Conference in 1926, by which the Governor General ceased to represent the Government of the United Kingdom and became the personal representative of the King. This brought about two changes: (1) as the United Kingdom Government was now without a representative in Canada, it appointed a High Commissioner to represent it at Ottawa; (2) after July 1, 1927, correspondence from governments was addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs instead of to the Governor General.

All official external communications now are channelled through the Department of External Affairs, although decisions may be made by the Government or by the departments directly concerned. There is usually no direct intercourse between governments of other countries and federal departments (other than External Affairs) or provincial governments. Communications requiring action by provincial governments are passed on by the Department of External Affairs to the Office of the Secretary of State for Canada, whence they are forwarded to their destination. Replies from provincial governments utilize the same channel.

Representation Abroad

Before 1926, Canada had no diplomatic representatives abroad, although, as early as 1920, it was announced that a minister would be appointed to Washington. The appointment was made in 1926, and the first Canadian legation was opened in Washington early in 1927. This was followed in 1928 by the appointment of a Canadian minister to serve in Paris and, in 1929, by the opening of a legation in Tokyo. At about the same time, the United States, France and Japan opened legations in Ottawa.

The expansion of the service was interrupted by the depression of the 1930's. The three years of rapid expansion from 1926 to 1929 were followed by a decade of consolidation. The next step in the exchange of diplomatic representatives with other countries was taken when Belgium sent a minister to Ottawa in 1937; in January 1939, Canada appointed a minister to Belgium and the Netherlands.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, it became imperative that Canada should have more intimate contacts with other members of the British Commonwealth and with many foreign countries as well. The day after Canada's separate declaration of war on September 10, 1939, it was announced that the Canadian Government would send high commissioners to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ireland. The Commonwealth governments reciprocated. With the appointment in 1941 of a high commissioner to Newfoundland (a step that recognized the importance of that country to the defence of Canada), the list of Canadian representatives to Commonwealth countries was complete, except for India.

The increasing magnitude of Canada's war effort and its growing international commitments led to a rapid increase of diplomatic exchanges with foreign countries.

In 1942, Canada sent ministers to the U.S.S.R. and China. During the war, a single Canadian minister was accredited to a number of Allied governments then functioning in London: Belgium, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Norway, Poland and Yugoslavia; Canada also received ministers from each of them. After the liberation of France, this minister moved to Paris, with the rank of ambassador. Separate missions are now established in the capitals of all these countries.

Diplomatic relations with Latin America were another wartime development. In 1941, Canadian legations were opened in Brazil and Argentina, and these countries sent their first ministers to Ottawa. Diplomatic representatives were sent to Chile in 1942, to Mexico and Peru in 1944 and to Cuba in 1945. The decision to open missions in Latin America was based not only on the development of intra-American trade but on the conviction that a closer understanding was necessary to the solution of common problems.

Canada's external affairs service continued to expand since the war, embassies were opened in a number of countries and High Commissioners were exchanged with India and Pakistan.

During and after the war, Canada participated in the general trend toward the elevation of legations to embassy status. In 1943, most of its large missions abroad became embassies. Since then certain of the new missions listed above were opened as embassies, while others, such as the missions in Italy and Switzerland, were raised to the rank of embassies later.

Membership in the United Nations has increased Canada's responsibilities outside its own borders and Canada has been represented on various organs of the United Nations from the beginning. After Canada's election to the Security Council in September 1947, a Permanent Canadian Delegation was established in New York in January 1948, and later in the year a small office was opened in Geneva, the European headquarters of the Organization.

In May 1952, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization established a permanent Council in Paris. Canada established a delegation at that time to represent it both on the NATO Council and on the Council of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation. In addition to representation on these permanent international bodies, Canada has sent representatives to a large number of international conferences in recent years and members of the Department have served on international committees.

Members of the Department also have been participating in the supervision of the armistice settlement for Indochina which had been reached at the Geneva Conference in July 1954. Unlike many other countries, Canada developed its diplomatic service before establishing a consular service. The first Canadian consulates were opened in 1940 and 1941 in Greenland and in St. Pierre and Miquelon, in order to allow the Canadian Government to keep in touch with developments in the critical sea approaches to the northern coasts of America. These were both temporary wartime offices, though the office in Godthaab did not close until 1946.

In 1943 a consulate general was opened in New York to co-ordinate and supervise Canada's increasing interests in that area of the United States. A vice-consulate was opened in Portland, Maine, in 1945, and a consulate general in Chicago in November 1947. Since that time there has been a further expansion of consular offices in the United States, as listed below.

The external service of Canada consists today of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa and the following establishments abroad:

- (a) Embassies in: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France. The Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Haiti, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia;
- (b) Legations in: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Iceland, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden;
- (c) High Commissioners' Offices in: Australia, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom;
- (d) Consulates General in: Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle, Manila (Phillipines);
- (e) Consulates in: Detroit, Sao Paulo (Brazil)
- (f) Honorary Vice-Consulate in Portland, Maine
- (g) Military Mission in: Berlin
- (h) Canadian Permanent Missions to the: United Nations (New York and Geneva).
- (i) Canadian Permanent Delegations to the: North Atlantic Council and Organization for European Economic Co-operation (Paris).
- (j) Canadian Commissioners: International Supervisory Commissions for Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

Functions of the Department

The main functions of the Department of External Affairs are:

- (a) the supervision of relations between Canada and other countries and of Canadian participation in international organizations; the protection of Canadian interests abroad;
- (b) the collation and weighing of information regarding developments likely to affect Canada's international relations;
- (c) correspondence with other governments and their representatives in Canada;
- (d) the negotiation and conclusion of treaties and other international agreements;
- (e) the representation of Canada in foreign capitals and at international conferences.

Departmental Organization in Ottawa (see attached chart)

The headquarters of the Department in Ottawa is the East Block of the Parliament Buildings.

The staff is headed by an Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs with a Deputy and four Assistant Under-Secretaries. These are assisted by officers of various ranks classified by the Civil Service Commission as Foreign Service Officers. Foreign Services Officers at diplomatic posts abroad are formally designated, according to their rank from senior to junior, Ambassadors, Ministers, Counsellors and First, Second and Third Secretaries. Those serving at consular posts are called Consuls General, Consuls and Vice-Consuls.

With the rapid expansion of Canadian representation abroad, the work of the Department in Ottawa has increased correspondingly. It is at present carried on in eighteen divisions organized largely on a functional basis, a section for political co-ordination and a press office. The Deputy and Assistant Under-Secretaries are each responsible for supervising the work of a group of divisions.

There are four geographical divisions: the Commonwealth and Middle East, European, American and Far Eastern Divisions. These deal with all matters not the primary concern of one of the other divisions of the Department. In addition, they are consulted on the political aspects of matters that are primarily legal, economic, consular, etc., and they have a general responsibility for co-ordinating the various aspects of Canadian policy with respect to the countries and areas under their jurisdiction.

The United Nations Division deals with matters relating to the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies. Its chief function is to co-ordinate the work of the other divisions of the Department and other departments of the Government in United Nations matters.

The Economic Division deals with all financial, commercial and general economic questions possessing international implications. It is therefore responsible for the work of the Department in connection with commercial and financial treaties and agreements; treatment of foreign assets in Canada and of Canadian assets abroad; programmes of assistance to foreign countries; foreign loans; international civil aviation; telecommunications; shipping; and exchange and balance-of-payments problems. Co-ordination of policy is secured by co-operation with the Departments of Finance, Trade and Commerce, National Revenue, Agriculture and Transport and with the Bank of Canada. Relations with certain international agencies in the economic field are also the responsibility of the Economic Division.

The Protocol Division deals with all matters of diplomatic protocol, precedence, privileges and immunities. It attends to the accrediting of Canadian diplomatic and consular representative abroad and to the acceptance of the credentials of similar representatives of other countries in Canada. It arranges for visits to Canada of distinguished foreign visitors and for the extension to them of government hospitality. It deals with foreign honours and awards.

The function of the Legal Division is to supervise the legal side of Canada's relations with other states. It examines the constitutional position in Canada with respect to all international undertakings, maintaining close liaison with the Department of Justice on questions of this nature. Its duties also include the registration of treaties and international agreements and the publication and presentation of these to Parliament. It assists in the preparation of treaties and in their subsequent interpretation and application.

The relation between foreign policy and defence policy necessitates close liaison between the Department of External Affairs and other departments of government, particularly National Defence. The Defence Liaison Divisions are responsible for this aspect of the Department's work. Thus, these are the divisions primarily concerned with the work of the Department arising from Canada's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, though much of the work on some aspects of NATO questions is carried on by other divisions. They are also responsible for such questions of defence relations between Canada and the United States as concern the Department - for example, the work of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. One of the members of this body is a senior officer of the Department, and the Department provides the secretary of the Canadian Section of the Board. In addition, the Defence Liaison Divisions deal with most problems of a diplomatic or political nature created by the presence of Canadian forces in other countries, and they handle other defence matters not specifically allocated to other divisions.

The Defence Liaison Divisions co-ordinate the work of the Department in relation to the Cabinet Defence Committee, the Chiefs of Staff Committee and various other committees concerned with defence matters, which facilitate the co-ordination of foreign and defence policy at every level. The Secretary of State for External Affairs is a member of the Cabinet Defence Committee, and the Under-Secretary normally attends meetings of the Committee. The Under Secretary also attends meetings of the Chiefs of Staff Committee and is a member of the senior interdepartmental bodies that examine and advise on various aspects of defence questions. The Department is represented at meetings of the Vice Chiefs of Staff Committee and provides the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee and a member of the Joint Planning Committee. Officers of the two Defence Liaison Divisions co-operate closely with the intelligence and planning agencies of the armed forces in the preparation of papers for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff.

The Consular Division is responsible for the conduct of all consular matters. It instructs Foreign Service and Consular Officers in consular duties when they are serving at home and directs them in such duties when they are serving abroad.

The Personnel Division is responsible for the training and posting of personnel, both to various divisions in Ottawa and to the missions abroad. Its responsibilities include all matters affecting disposition, training, promotion and the general administration of personnel affairs. The Personnel Division arranges the representation of the Department on examining boards set up by the

Civil Service Commission for the recruitment of staff for the Department; interviews candidates for positions in the Department; maintains personnel records and is concerned with a variety of matters relating to the welfare of members of the Department.

The Information Division of the Department has two main responsibilities: to provide information on Canada's external policies and the work of the department; and to convey to the citizens and governments of other countries a knowledge and understanding of Canada and the Canadian people. Within Canada the Information Division makes available current and background information on government policy on international issues of concern to this country, and on the activities of the department in general; deals with requests from government departments, educational institutions, business, private organizations and the Canadian public for information pertaining to Canada's external relations; and produces and distributes to interested organizations and individuals a variety of publications such as the texts of Statements and Speeches, Monthly Bulletin, Reference Papers, feature articles and occasional booklets or folders to meet specific needs. The Division also assists Journalists and other visitors from foreign countries to obtain information on Canada. Outside Canada, the Information Division is responsible for the coordination of Canadian information activities and, in most countries, also has direct responsibility for the conduct of these activities which include the dissemination of general and specific information concerning our economic and cultural interests as well as our external policies. The Division has specific responsibility for liaison with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and for the maintenance of certain aspects of cultural relations with other countries. It also has responsibility for liaison with the Information Services of the United Nations in New York, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Paris, and of the Colombo Plan in Colombo and, through the Interdepartmental Committee on Information, with other government departments concerned with distributing Canadian information abroad - the National Film Board, the International Service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Gallery, two divisions of the Department of Trade and Commerce (Trade Publicity and the Exhibition Commission), and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

The administrative work of the Department is handled by three divisions - Finance, Supplies and Properties, and Establishments and Organization. Chief among the responsibilities of the Finance Division are the preparation of the main and supplementary estimates for External Affairs, administrative work in connection with Canada's part in the setting up of international conferences, and the review of monthly financial accounts from the posts abroad. The Supplies and Properties Division arranges the purchase of sites and buildings and construction or leasing of office or residential accommodation at the posts abroad, and prints and distributes circular documents and a variety of publications produced by the Information Division. The work of the Establishments and Organization Division includes the handling of pay and allowances, leave and attendance, and superannuation, operation of mail and diplomatic bag

services, registry, and the preparation of departmental regulations.

The Historical Research and Reports Division is responsible for the provision and maintenance of libraries and archives in the Department in Ottawa and in posts abroad. It is also responsible for the preparation of historical reports.

The Communications Division is responsible for the despatch, receipt and distribution of communications by telegram and teletype between Ottawa and Posts abroad.

The Press Office handles inquiries from the press. It is responsible for the arrangement of Departmental press conferences. The Press Office co-operates in the publicity arrangements for visits of distinguished foreign officials, and assists Canadian journalists visiting other countries.

The primary function of the Political Co-ordination Section is to conduct the Department's liaison with the CBC International Service. It provides the CBC-IS with information and guidance on Canadian foreign policy and with suggestions for broadcasts.

"The Inspection Service was formed for the purpose of arranging for the periodic visits of liaison teams to Posts abroad so that the work and performance of each Post may be reviewed in relation to the requirements of the Department. The Inspection Service is responsible also for making recommendations for more efficient and economical operation of the Service as a result of the liaison visits and for seeing that such recommendations, when approved, are implemented".

Posts Abroad

Canada's diplomatic missions and consular offices abroad form an integral part of the Department. Heads of diplomatic and consular posts report to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and receive their instructions from him.

The diplomatic staff of an embassy or a legation consists of the Ambassador or Minister assisted by one or more foreign service officers, who are also assigned consular duties to the extent required by the volume of consular work. Where separate consular offices exist they operate under the general supervision of the head of the diplomatic mission in the country, while receiving instructions in matters of detail from the Consular Division in the Department.

Part of the work of a post is to distribute information about Canada. In a few centres this is done by full-time information officers; elsewhere it is undertaken by other officers. Where there are no diplomatic or consular representatives the trade commissioner or other Canadian government officials stationed in the country does this work.

In some cases officers of other departments of the Canadian Government -- commercial, military, naval, air or others -- are attached to the missions. Though responsible to their own departmental heads in Ottawa

they also work under the general supervision and direction of the head of mission.

The work of a mission abroad is:

- (a) to conduct negotiations with the government to which it is accredited;
- (b) to keep the home government fully informed of political and other developments of significance in the country in which it is serving;
- (c) to watch over Canada's interests in the country;
- (d) to serve Canadians in the country;
- (e) to make information about Canada available.

A constant flow of despatches keeps the missions and the Department in Ottawa in close touch on all such matters.

Qualifications for the Service

Those entering the external service of Canada do so on a career basis under the merit system. Only British subjects who have resided at least ten years in Canada are eligible for admission.

The basic qualification for the diplomatic service is a university degree with, preferably, post-graduate study. Examinations are held annually by the Civil Service Commission and consist of three parts: a written test, a rating on the basis of education and experience and an oral examination. The written test for the position of Third Secretary or Foreign Service Officer, Grade 1, consists of essay and précis writing and papers on Canadian and international affairs. The oral examination is designed to disclose personal suitability and knowledge of modern languages.

As in other government departments veterans are given preference in all appointments.

The more senior positions of High Commissioner, Minister and Ambassador are filled by appointment. Appointees are normally "career men" who have come up through the Civil Service, but in some cases distinguished citizens are appointed directly from private life.

Since shortly after the Second World War, women have been admitted to the Canadian diplomatic service on the same basis as men. In February 1956, there were 25 women officers in the Department.

As Canada's interests multiply in the international field, the work of the Department continues to grow. To meet these increased responsibilities, the Department had in Ottawa and abroad in February 1956 a total of 341 officers and 810 clerical and stenographic personnel. In addition, missions abroad employed a total of 546 locally-engaged employees, 249 as office staff and 297 in other capacities.

Administrative Staff

"Appointments of clerks and stenographers to the rotational administrative staff of the Department are made through the Civil Service Commission on the basis of results obtained in competitive examinations conducted periodically by the Commission. Members of the rotational staff are appointed initially to positions in Ottawa; after a period of satisfactory service, they normally become available for a foreign posting. All are accepted in the Department on the understanding that they are prepared to serve in Ottawa or at any post abroad as required. A tour of duty at a foreign post varies from two to three and one-half years depending on the climatic and living conditions at the post concerned".

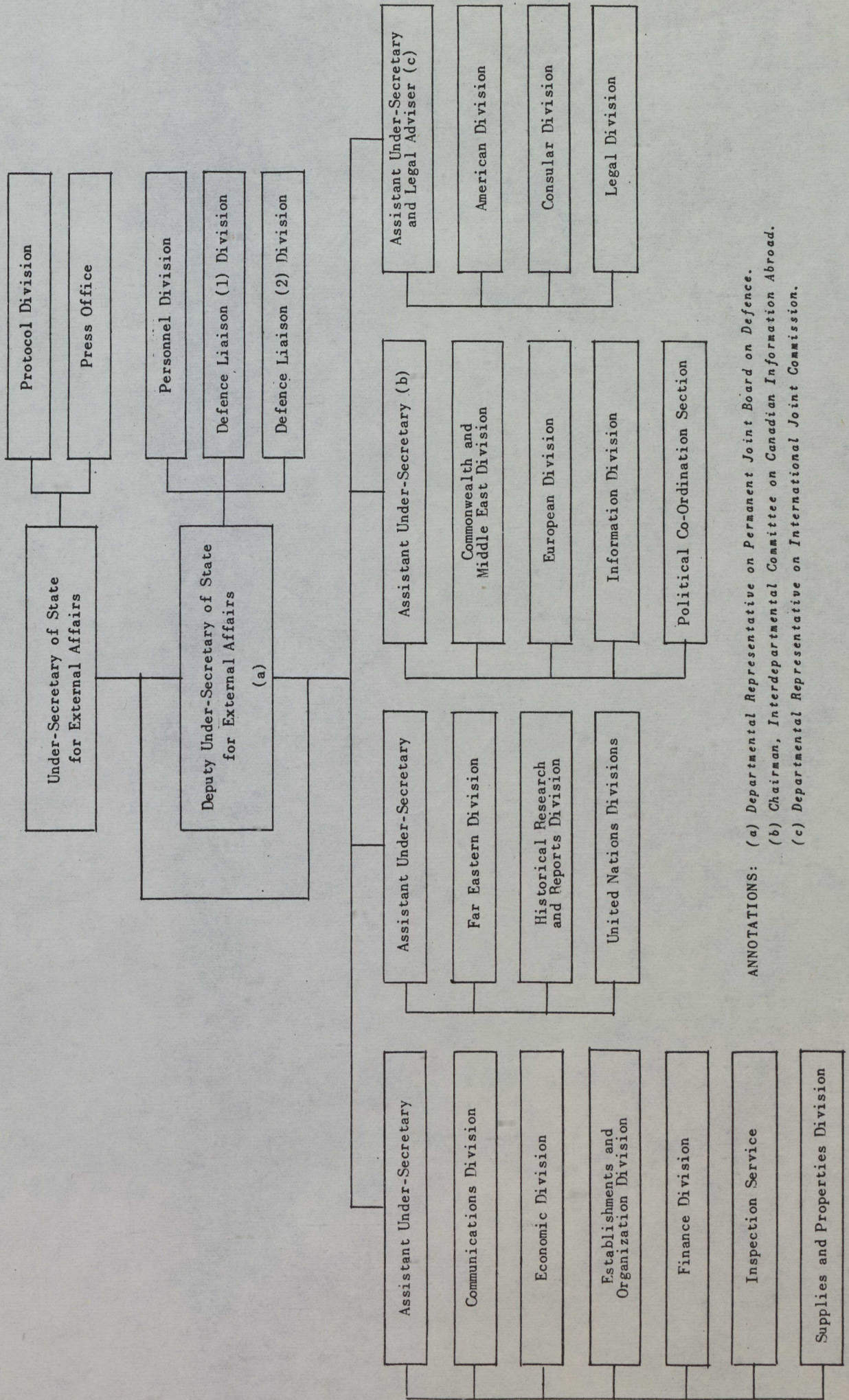
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Administrative Staff

"Appointments of clerks and stenographers to the clerical staff of the Department are made by the Civil Service Commission on the basis of competitive examinations conducted periodically by the Commission. Members of the staff are appointed initially to positions in Ottawa, with a period of probationary service. They normally become available for a foreign posting. All are selected in the Department on the understanding that they are prepared to serve in Ottawa or at any post abroad as required. A tour of duty at a foreign post varies from two to three and one-half years depending on the climatic and living conditions at the post concerned."

1960

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS



ANNOTATIONS: (a) Departmental Representative on Permanent Joint Board on Defence.
 (b) Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Canadian Information Abroad.
 (c) Departmental Representative on International Joint Commission.

