

News Release

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PUBLICATION OF FIRST VOLUME OF HISTORY OF DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced the publication of the first volume of the official history of the Department of External Affairs, Canada's Department of External Affairs: The Early Years, 1909-1946, by John Hilliker. The volume, which appears in the Canadian Public Administration Series of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, is published by McGill-Queen's University Press. The book is also published in French by les Presses de l'Université Laval.

The volume covers the administrative growth of the department from its formation in 1909 through the major changes brought about by the Second World War. After an introductory chapter dealing with the conduct of external relations before 1909, the book examines three distinct phases of the department's development. Although the department had modest beginnings under the

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first under-secretary, Sir Joseph Pope (1909-1925), it was seen by his successor, O.D. Skelton, as an important instrument for the assertion of Canadian autonomy. Skelton presided over the establishment of the first Canadian diplomatic missions abroad, and was responsible for the creation of a foreign service to staff them. With the outbreak of war in 1939, both the responsibilities and the size of the department increased greatly. As a result, the headquarters underwent substantial organizational change under Norman Robertson, who became under-secretary after Skelton's death in 1941. Taken together, the criteria for recruitment introduced by Skelton and the reorganization which took place under Robertson gave the department many of the features which have characterized it as a branch of the Canadian government. The further development of the institution will be examined in a second volume covering the years 1946-1968.

Since the External Affairs portfolio was held by the prime minister during much of the period covered by volume 1, the book contributes to an understanding of the operation of the Canadian government as a whole as well as of a single department. It also examines the policy-making process and therefore is addressed to readers interested in international relations as well as in public administration.

John Hilliker is Head of the Historical Section in the Department's Academic Relations Division.