

Outline of events which led to Canada's autonomy

World War One

- gained political independence from Britain
- went from colony to nation
- proved to be valiant fighters; well respected amongst other nations
- Canada developed a voice in the Imperial Cabinet
- militarily, Canada proved to be creative and respected
- as a result of the war, Canada became more confident about its nationhood and it set the tone for greater international involvement in the interwar period

League of Nations

- founding member of the League
- signed as an independent nation
- received its own seat
- joined International Labour Organization
- as a result, Canada developed a reputation as being a sound, rational and internationally socially conscious nation

Chanak Affair, 1922

- demonstrated that Canada would not be at the beck and call of Britain
- set precedent for entry into World War Two
- as a result, Canada has autonomy in declaration and involvements in war

Halibut Treaty, 1923

- first independent treaty Canada signed
- establishes path to economic independence of Canada
- as a result, Canada is able to determine the terms of its treaties

King-Byng Crisis, 1926

- A constitutional crisis that pitted the power of the Prime Minister against the power of the Governor General
- King won the election campaigning on the issue and no governor general again publicly refused the advice of a prime minister

Imperial Conference, 1926

- recommended that British Parliament pass an act to eliminate Britain's authority to make laws for Canada except in areas agreed on by both countries
- established Canadian embassies

Statute of Westminster, 1931

- gave Canada and other Commonwealth Dominions legislative equality with Britain
- clarified powers of Canada's parliament
- gave full legal freedom except in areas of their choosing
- Canada could not agree between federal and provincial governments about how to change Canada's constitution, thus deciding to leave this with British Parliament

Changes under Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent

- Supreme Court of Canada became highest court for Canadian cases, 1949
- British North America (No. 2) Act allowed for Canada to amend portions of the constitution without British Parliament, 1949
- First Canadian-born Governor General, Vincent Massey, 1952

Patriating the Constitution, 1982

- The British North America Act (renamed Constitution Act, 1867) led to full Canadian sovereignty with the Constitution Act, 1982.