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Dec.16

Dept. of State explaining the superficial political events (resignation of Rushdi,⁷ conflict between Rushdi and Brunyate, etc.). He also told me that on Friday Dec. 6, Saad Zaghlûl had left a petition addressed to the Entente[?] agents in Egypt. He had refused to receive Zaghlûl, had written a letter to him telling him that as a diplomat he could not receive him on business concerning internal politics. Mr. Gary showed this letter to Wingate who professed to be greatly pleased. The French agent (Pontalis) is to give a dinner to the Sultan in a week or so which will take off the sting of the criticism of Mr. Gary.

Finally I pointed out to Mr. Gary that the Nationalists were appealing to Pres. Wilson under the self determination clause, that they were bound to get at him and force him to an expression of opinion on Egyptian independence.

The President is perfectly sincere in his ideal of universal self determination of all peoples as a cure for war. If left uninformed of the truth about the Egyptian Nationalist plea, he might very well reach a false conclusion based purely on ideal principles. One expression of such a conclusion would be fatal to American interests and to the prosperity and happiness of the Egyptian people. It would jeopardize the future of British American friendship. It was his (Mr. Gary's) duty to his country and to the President to give Mr. Wilson the truth that he might resist with a good conscience the appeal of the Nationalist Party. If he (Mr. Gary) did not do this, he had failed utterly to fulfill the purpose to which he was sent to Egypt.

Mr. Gary then suggested to me that I write him a despatch to the State Dept. on the situation (between 200 and 400 words) along the lines of my reiterated views. This I promised to do and get to him by 1 p.m. tomorrow.

I have this afternoon drafted such a telegram which I will complete tomorrow.

Mr. Gary is an ordinary sharp american politician and I have no confidence that he will ever send the cable in question. If he does not, other means must be found to pass the truth about Egypt to the proper American authorities.

⁷ Hussein Rushdy Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt