

(12881)

Berkeley Hotel,

Berkeley Street, W.
January 20th, 1918.

Sir:

On the occasion of the interview which you were good enough to grant us on the 18th instant, we understand you to reply, with reference to the recognition on the part of the British Government of the independence of Finland, that whilst not yet feeling able to recognize that independence de jure, the British Government yet hoped to be able to do so before long, and that the British Government were prepared meanwhile to recognize the Finnish Government de facto and enter into direct relations with the latter. If this impression of ours is in accordance with facts, we venture to infer that the British Government would be disposed to recognize a de facto organ for the representation of the Finnish Government in London. The creation of such an organ is all the more important as the Russian Diplomatic and Consular representatives in England, once the British Government has de facto recognised the Finnish Government are not in a position to attend to such practical and routine matters relating to Finland as may present themselves. In case the British Government is in agreement with the view we have had the honour of putting forward, we beg to say that we are recommending to our Government Captain L. Norrgren, now of the Russian Consulate -General in London, as in our view a suitable person for attending to such matters relating to Finland as have hitherto been the province of the Russian Consulate -General; and we take the liberty of asking whether Captain Norrgren's candidature would command itself to the British Government. We believe that Lord Edward Gleichen would be in a position to give the necessary information concerning Captain Norrgren.

In this connection we beg leave to say that with a view to remedying as far as possible the very grave situation in Finland as regards food supply, this Delegation has framed the project of establishing a Finnish Relief Committee in England; and we venture to hope that the British Government may see no objection to such a course being taken and kindly extend to the proposed Committee the necessary facilities.

We are,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

Eug Wolff,

Lorenzo Kihlman. Rudolf Holsti.

Delegates of the Finnish Government.

The Right Honourable
A.L. Balfour, Esq., O.M., M.P.