

sented at Washington, to meet at twelve o'clock that I might for him simultaneously present through them to their governments a proposition in which the President expresses not only his willingness but his desire to enter into agreement with every other nation great or small—enter into agreement with every other nation that so far as our nation and that contracting nation is concerned there will be no war, no declaration, no commencement of hostilities until the question in dispute has been investigated by an international tribunal and its report made known. (Applause). I can speak of this proposition with more propriety and with more enthusiasm from the fact that it has already, in its essence, received the endorsement of a great Peace Congress, held in the City of London nearly seven years ago, where twenty-six nations were represented. And I am glad on this occasion to acknowledge my indebtedness to our distinguished visitor, Lord Weardale, for the efficient services rendered in securing the endorsement of this idea almost seven years ago. (Applause).

Relation of Public Opinion to War

I believe, my friends, that this proposition is as long a step in the direction of peace as has ever been proposed. It does not mean to take the place of arbitration treaties; make all you can; submit to arbitration every question which you can agree to submit; but when you are through you will find, at least we have found thus far, that there are certain questions that are excepted. And they are so important that they themselves become the cause of war. And it is the purpose of this plan to close the gap and to leave no question to become a cause of war. (Applause). It is the belief of the President, it is his earnest hope, that when these treaties have been made, or agreements if you prefer to call them such, agreements between this nation and all the other nations severally, by which there will be investigation before hostilities begin, it is his belief, it is his hope, that war will become practically impossible. The time that will be allowed gives chance for investigation, for the separation of questions of fact from questions of honor, and it gives a chance also for the operation of public opinion which is increasingly for peace. When men are mad they talk about what they can do; when they are calm they talk about what they ought to do. (Applause). And it is the purpose of this plan to provide a time for passion to subside; for reason to regain its throne, and it is the hope of those who believe in the plan that when it is adopted between this nation and other nations it will then be adopted between other nations