

Remarks of Jackson H. Ralston.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The president has kindly referred to my association with the first case in the Hague Court. I had not intended to speak of that. I may say, however, that it had seemed as if there was practically a boycott put upon the Hague Court, for several years had gone by before its doors were opened to any case. They were opened, however, by the Pious Fund Case, which involved an issue between the United States and Mexico. I may say that when this Government said to Mexico that the matter should be put up to some special tribunal or to the Hague Court, Mexico very promptly said, "Let us go to the Hague Court."

I did not rise, however, to speak about that or any other case, but I wanted to discuss another matter within the very few minutes I shall occupy your attention. The American Peace Society is eighty-six years old, as we are told. Within that time it has, of course, done a great work in the way of education, in the way of propaganda, and for many years to come it will be possible to continue that work. But something more, in my judgment, is necessary. Propaganda work has, after all, a certain academic nature. It does not appeal to the imaginations of men; it does not appeal to their hearts to a large degree, and it is not that concrete, practical application which so often appeals to the American mind. It is a good thing by way of preparing the groundwork; but if we would exercise anything like an important influence on the events of to-day, more than mere propaganda, in my judgment, is needed. There are concrete, practical questions coming up all the time, and we are not altogether meeting them. You may address multitudes of men gathered together in different places on the subject of peace, and they will applaud you for a moment, and they will go away and forget in the course of a very short time the substance of what has been said to them. You must ask men to do something. You must have their energies directed to certain important, definite propositions. That, at least, is my judgment with regard to the matter.

What are these things to be? The general nature of some of them has been indicated by the speeches that have been made. Others will suggest themselves to you. It is, or ought to be, made absolutely illegitimate for a nation to sell armament to another nation. I look upon it as a high crime to sell armament to a nation which is at war. It ought to be illegitimate for one nation to be able through its citizens to subscribe to the bonds of another nation engaged or proposing to engage in war, knowing that the bonds are issued for that purpose.

These things, as I see them, appeal to me as being absolutely necessary. I have yet, however, to see that

any member of Congress has addressed himself—I mean through the introduction of bills in Congress—to those things which, to my mind, have a supreme value from the standpoint of peace. I think this should be done. We must, I say, be able to throw the whole body of peace sentiment in favor of practical, concrete propositions which may be brought before Congress. You don't know how many real peace people there are in the world until you present to them a practical proposition.

Let me close what I have to say by calling attention to the fact that, while in the House of Representatives we have our Military Committee and Naval Committee, we have no Peace Committee to which such propositions should properly go and by which they should properly be considered. I conceive of nothing more useful, so far as general propaganda is concerned, than to have a Peace Committee in Congress, whether it be on the nomination of this society or of members of Congress, and this committee should be authorized to advise the House of Representatives relative to all propositions having a practical bearing upon the general campaign for peace.