An immense crowd was expected and an immense crowd came. By 7:30 o’clock the hall was crowded and from that time till 8:30 many others came in. When the meeting was over the surging crowd of humanity quietly melted away, each one talking to his companion, whether friend or stranger, about the situation.

On one side of the hall a platform had been erected for the use of speakers. On it were seated Vice-President F. M. Hatch, Col. Z. S. Spalding, W. R. Castle, Chief Justice A. F. Judd, P. C. Jones, W. C. Wilder, and W. G. Smith.

F. M. Hatch, president of the Annexation Club, was the first speaker, and he opened the meeting with a rousing speech. He said:

FELLOW CITIZENS: You have been invited to meet to-night to consider our present political situation. We are confronted by the declaration of Secretary Gresham that our royalty must be restored and our Government destroyed. A kind Providence has given us this opportunity to be heard before final action will be taken upon this issue. At present we are proceeding merely upon the newspaper reports which have been received here and which certainly we have a right to discuss. We do not know what action will be taken by the President or by Congress. Certainly any action taken by the Congress of the United States of America can not be resisted by anybody in this community. Let us not be misunderstood or misrepresented by a hostile press; we do not meet here to-night to defy the power of the United States, that would be absurd, gentlemen, nor to vilify those at present in charge of the Government of the United States. [Cries of “Hear! Hear!” and applause.]

But we meet with the hope that our words will be heard by Congress before action is taken by that body. There are certain features in the letter of Mr. Gresham to the President which show that he is proceeding upon a false assumption. Let us hope that the distinguished Secretary has been misinformed up to this date. It is certainly our prerogative to point out the false assumptions and to challenge them. Now, chief among those false assumptions is the one which seems to underlie the whole letter, that there has been submitted to the arbitration of the President of the United States the question whether or not we had a right to establish a government in this country. Gentlemen, I challenge that assumption. [Great applause, cheers, and cries of “You’re right.”] The assumption is false in every respect. [Cheers and applause.]

Let me briefly point out why. Two parties can make a contract, but it requires the consent of three to make a valid arbitration—that of the two parties in interest and the arbitrator. The parties must clearly define the subject-matter of the arbitration. It is absurd to contend that there could be any arbitration by inference or implication. First, has there been any issue framed; has the Provisional Government submitted to the decision of anybody its right to exist? [Cries of “No!” “No!”] Not one word or one act can be produced in support of that contention. Gentlemen, from the nature of things, a government which started in revolution, though now the government de jure as well as de facto, could not submit the question of the legality of its existence to any arbitration because its right lay in its might. Having satisfied our consciences as to the justness of our cause we depend upon our might, and are answerable to no other power. [Applause.] I brand as false the claim that we have put in issue the question whether or not we were proceeding legally or not in overturning a corrupt and rotten monarchy. [Great applause, cheers, and cries of “Hear!” “Hear!”] Second, has the President of the United States, up to this point, pretended to have been acting in a judicial capacity? I say his acts do not justify such assumption. An arbitrator or judge would not interfere with the existing status of the parties. The President of the United States immediately upon gaining his seat lowered the American flag and thereby changed the status of the parties. [Cries of “Hear!” “Hear!”] That was not the act of a judge, gentlemen. Again, has he notified anybody that he was proceeding with a judicial investigation? Has he given any notice that a hearing would be had on such a date? Has he notified anybody the witnesses were being examined? Has he given anybody an opportunity to cross-examine those witnesses or to confront them? Has he given anybody on our side an opportunity to cross-examine those witnesses or to confront them? Has he given anybody on our side the opportunity to be heard? [Cries of “no, no; he never has!”]

Now, we do not need the legal knowledge of that distinguished judge, who is now Secretary of State, to know that no arbitration could stand for a moment in law, however insignificant the matter, which was conducted ex parte, without an opportunity to be heard; without an inspection of the evidence which has been produced, or opportunity to cross-examine the witnesses. How was the late arbitration conducted in Paris? Did a number of gentlemen get together on the Bering Sea question and in private decide upon that matter? Did they send a private agent off to Bering Sea to look about and scratch the back of the seals [laughter], interview the neighbors and make a report? [Laughter, cheers, and applause.]

Gentlemen, it can hardly be contended that the Provisional Government and we representing the supporters of that Government have submitted our right to