



# CANADIAN COURIER



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## A CLEAR PERSPECTIVE on PEACE

**L**ORD LANSDOWNE'S peace letter to the Daily Telegraph is one of the sensations of the war. Let us examine it seriously.

We cannot dismiss this letter by calling its author a pacifist. All men who are not jingoes are not, therefore, pacifists. Neither will it be settled by calling him a Tory of the old school. There are thousands of such Tories in the trenches.

Twenty-four million men are at war. Most of these have been fighting for years. The war began in a great fire. It has become a world conflagration. And there is no world fire brigade to put it out. All the neutral nations added together, excluding China, which is nominally at war, do not constitute one-tenth the population, area and resources of the world which is now deep into the struggle of almost a prehistoric age. What effect these years of underground, sub-aqueous and aerial war have had upon the armies engaged is drastically set forth in the extract from "Under Fire," on page 16 of this issue. It is still further illuminated by Max Nordau, writing in the December Forum:

Besides ceasing to be a free citizen and a civilized man, the soldier has lost also, during the years of the campaign, all the benefits of a hundred thousand years of intellectual and moral evolution of mankind. Struggle for life is no more spiritualized and symbolic; it has taken its literal sense and its most brutally pristine form. He is the hunted beast that his remotest ancestor has been, ever on his guard against the claws and fangs of the giant tiger of the tertiary period and of the monstrous cave bear. Death constantly lurks about him. His enemy is not a beast of prey, but another brute, more ferocious still, the watchful foe, intent upon massacring him. His only idea must be to kill in order not to be killed.

One belligerent nation only has escaped this. The United States is now in the first flush of war; unexhausted, rich, eager, resourceful, filled with crusading desire for the enthronement of liberty, which, had it been expressed in action when the Lusitania was sunk, must have ended the war before this. All the other nations are in various stages of war-weariness. No one denies it. The singing era has gone. We no longer vent our superfluous enthusiasm in patriotic concerts. The French have stopped singing La Marseillaise; the Germans do not sing Deutschland Uber Alles; the Tommies have quit Tipperary; Canada only now and then pipes up with The Maple Leaf, or O Canada. Only the United States is singing itself to war. And war may tucker the songs out of them before it is over.

In the face of this almost universal sickness of war, Lord Lansdowne says:

In my belief if the war is to be brought to a close in time to avert a world-wide catastrophe it will be brought to a close because on both sides the peoples of the countries involved realize that it already has lasted too long. There can be no question that this feeling prevails extensively in Germany, Austria, and Turkey. We know beyond all doubt that the economic pressure in those countries far exceeds any to which we are subject here. Ministers inform us in their speeches of the constant efforts on the part of the Central powers to invite peace



talk. If the peace talk is not more articulate, and has not been so precise as to enable his Majesty's Government to treat it seriously, an explanation is probably to be found in the fact, first, that German despotism does not tolerate independent expressions of opinion, and, second, that the German Government has contrived, probably with success, to misrepresent the aims of the allies, which are supposed to include the destruction of Germany and the imposition upon her of a form of government to be decided by her enemies, her destruction as a great commercial community, and her exclusion from the free use of the seas.

Lansdowne admits that Germany cannot defeat the Allies. What he claims is that the Allies and the Central Powers, together may, if they fight long enough, wear out the world. What he wants is a restatement of war aims, when he says:

An immense stimulus would probably be given to a peace party in Germany if it were understood: (1) that we do not desire the annihilation of Germany as a great power; (2) that we do not seek to impose upon her people any form of government other than that of their own choice; (3) that, except as a legitimate war measure, we have no desire to deny to Germany her place among the great commercial com-

*A NATION managed by thugs has neither right nor power to rule the world. But three and a half years of war has not removed the Thug-management which it took 50 years to build up. And if Lord Lansdowne is to be believed it will take longer than the period of this war to do it.*

By THE EDITOR

munities of the world; (4) that we are prepared when the war is over to examine in concert with other powers a group of international problems, some of them of recent origin, which are connected with the question of the freedom of the seas; (5) that we are prepared to enter into an international pact under which ample opportunities would be afforded for the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.

**F**OUR Christmases will have come with 1917 since the war. Four times the world has expected peace by Christmas. But the era of peace comes and comes again and there is no peace.

If we can't get peace by Christmas, 1917, can't we get at least a clear definition of what we expect to do by means of war? What is it? Crush Germany? Impossible. Even a small nation cannot be crushed. You cannot kill a nation. Dethrone the Hohenzollerns? That is Germany's own business. If Germany prefers Kaisers, let her have them till German social democracy abolishes the lot. But it's no business of ours to create democracy for Germany. We have trouble enough with our own. Some Germans may still imagine that it is their business to abolish democracies as dangerous to civilization. But of course they won't be allowed to do it. That's democracy's own business.

All right. We are still fighting Germany. The outlook is that for a long while to come  
(Continued on page 13.)