

Unit 2: World War I

Lesson 2: Short Term Factors Leading to WWI, The July Crisis

Question: What were the short-term factors leading to World War I?

Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Bosnia (Austria-Hungary) by Gavrilo Princip of the Black Hand.



Austria-Hungarian reaction & Germany's Blank Cheque



Activated Alliances & War

A. Assassination

- i. Serbian secret society: “Union or Death”
AKA: the Black Hand



- 1. member of this group assassinated the heir to the Habsburg empire (Austria-Hungary), Archduke Ferdinand on June 28th, 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia.

a) the Black Hand wanted A-H Serbs in Bosnia to join with Serbia.

i) Franz Ferdinand favoured reforms that would give more rights to Slavic people within Austria-Hungary

ii) these reforms may have helped prevent the Austrian-Hungarian Serbs from demanding union with Serbia and the Black Hand from achieving their goal.

A. Assassination

ii. Austria-Hungarian Reaction

1. Serbian threat

a) AH saw Serbia as the motivator of Slavic nationalism and separatism within its empire.

b) The government of AH believed that by invading Serbia, Serb nationalism would be destroyed.



Princip being led off by authorities.



Gavrilo Princip

2. Germany's Blank Check and the ultimatum

a) AH issued an ultimatum to Serbia after consulting Germany and receiving a blank check of support.

b) the ultimatum containing 10 demands was designed to be so severe that Serbia would not be able to accept it and would have to mobilize for war.

Ultimatum demanded that the Serb government:

1. Stop all publications attacking Austria,
2. Suppress the Black Hand and all other anti-Austrian terrorist groups,
3. Stop schools teaching anything that would make pupils hate Austria,
4. Dismiss any civil servants or army officers who were anti-Austrian
5. help the Austria government suppress all anti-Austrian terrorist groups,
6. Allow Austrian police to help in an investigation of Serbia's links to Franz Ferdinand's assassination,
7. Arrest two officials who were believed to have helped plan the assassination,
8. Stop Serbs smuggling weapons from Serbia into Bosnia,
9. Stop criticising Austria,
10. Accept all the above points without delay.

c) Serbia accepted most of the conditions except for part of demand 6, leading the Kaiser of Germany to say that “every reason for war drops away.”

d) Austria-Hungary invaded on July 28, 1914



"At 11:10 A.M. on July 28, 1914, Count Leopold von Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, sent the following telegram from Vienna to M. N. Pashitch, Serbian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. This declaration of war was received at Nish at 12:30 P.M."

[Telegraphic]

Vienna, July 28, 1914

The Royal Serbian Government not having answered in a satisfactory manner the note of July 23, 1914, presented by the Austro-Hungarian Minister at Belgrade, the Imperial and Royal Government are themselves compelled to see to the safeguarding of their rights and interests, and, with this object, to have recourse to force of arms. Austria-Hungary consequently considers herself henceforward in state of war with Serbia.

COUNT BERCHTOLD

B. Activated Alliances

i. Russia & France

1. Serbia counted on Russia for its support.

a) Russia looked bad in two previous engagements in the Balkans

i) Balkan Crisis of 1908 that saw AH take over Bosnia-Herzegovina and the many Serbs within.

ii) Balkan Wars of 1912-13; Serbian claims for Albania were stopped by AH



2. Russia counted on French support
 - a) French were willing to help Russia as they feared of being isolated against Germany
3. Russia mobilized its army along the borders of Austria-Hungary and Germany, expecting Germany to mobilize to help its ally, AH.

ii. Germany

1. Schlieffen Plan
 - a) Unalterable plan based wholly on fighting a two front war
 - b) France showed no sign of going to war to help Russia.
 - c) Essential Problem:
 - i) Plan was based on taking France out first, before Russia had time to fully mobilize. Russia was already mobilizing.
 - ii) Plan was based on going through neutral Belgium. Belgium refused German entry. Germany would have to invade Belgium.
2. Germany demanded Russia stop its mobilization and when it didn't, declared war on August 1, 1914.
3. Germany was convinced France would join the war with Russia, so declared war on it on August 3, 1914.

iii. Britain

1. Had no formal military alliance with any country.

a) Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary sought to preserve “splendid isolation” and did not give any indication whether they would support France or Russia militarily

b) Germany underestimated British neutrality and assumed it would not come to the aid of France.

i) British were deeply attached to France with a navy agreement

1) British would defend the north Atlantic coast while French patrolled the Mediterranean Sea.

ii) Britain had guaranteed Belgium neutrality in the Treaty of London of 1839

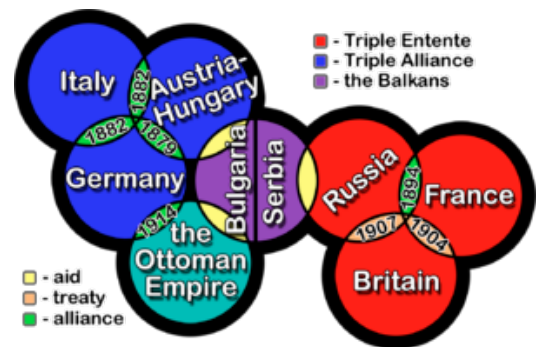
c) Britain declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914.

To Sum up: The Firestarter

- June 28, 1914, Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austria-Hungarian Empire was assassinated by a member of the Black Hand
- Black Hand was a Serbian nationalist organization attempting to get independence from Austria-Hungary.
- Austria-Hungary used the assassination as a reason for war against Serbia
- Austria Hungary declared war against Serbia on July 28th, 1914

Result of Austria-Hungary's Declaration of War Against Serbia

- Russia declared war on Austria-Hungary
- Germany and Austria Hungary declared war on Russia
- Germany declared war on France, which is already mobilizing to help Russia
- Britain did not immediately join the war until Germany entered neutral Belgium
- Italy refused to enter the war citing that Austria-Hungary was the aggressor and that the Triple Alliance was a defensive alliance.



1914 Division of Alliances: Allied and Central Powers

- **Allied Powers:** France, Britain, Russia and Serbia (Overrun in 1915)
 - Allied powers were joined by 18 other countries including:
 - Canada (automatically at war because of Britain's declaration)
 - Japan was bound by a 1902 naval treaty with Britain and saw this as an excuse to take German colonies in the Far East.
 - Italy joined in 1915 to get territory from Austria
 - USA joined in 1917 due to U-Boat attacks
 - **Central Powers:** Germany, Austria/Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria (joined in 1915).
- The Allied Powers were superior in manpower and resources, but the Central Powers had better training and weapons.
- The British controlled the seas while the German army was the best and highly mobile by rail.
- German commanders also directed the other three armies. Due to geography, Allied coordination was difficult.