



WESTMUNC 2016

JOINT CABINET CRISIS: WORLD WAR I (ALLIES v. CENTRAL POWERS)

ABOUT WESTMUNC

The 2016 West Model United Nations Conference (WestMUNC) will be held on Saturday, September 24, 2016 at [Mills High School, 400 Murchison Drive, Millbrae](#). The conference will start at 10 a.m. and end at approximately 6 p.m.

There is a delegate fee of \$5, which will cover limited food. If you are in the San Mateo Union High School District, please turn in your money before the conference to your club president; otherwise, please bring the money on the day of. Visit [westmunc.com](#) or email [westmunc2016@gmail.com](#) for more information.

SCHEDULE

10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Registration
10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.	Opening Ceremony
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Committee Session 1
1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Committee Session 2
3:45 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Break
4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.	Committee Session 3
5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Closing Ceremony

Schedule is subject to change. Please visit [westmunc.com](#) for the most updated schedule.

YOUR CHAIRS

ANDREW BATTAT is a senior at Burlingame High School and there he is an Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper as well as President of the school's Model UN club. He also participates in the school's theatre program. He has had a passion for politics and debate ever since he was a kid arguing with his parents around the dinner table and plans to continue debate in college. [andrewbattat@gmail.com](#)

MICHAEL CHANG is a senior at Mills High School and currently co-president of the Mills MUN Club. He is passionate about MUN and has helped develop a program for middle school students to develop their public speaking skills and learn about MUN. Michael enjoys laughing and eating cookies while listening to Tough Cookie. He also enjoys funk or classical music. [changmichael64@gmail.com](#)

ANTON BOBROV ([antonbobrov1999@gmail.com](#)), **ROBERT HUANG** ([robert.huang2000@gmail.com](#)), **NICK HUDSON** ([rnickhudson@gmail.com](#)) and **LARISSA QIAN** ([larissaqian@yahoo.com](#)) will be on the Crisis Team for this committee.

Please email your chairs for any committee-specific questions.

POSITION PAPERS

Position papers are due Monday, September 19 at 11:59 p.m. Please email your position paper to both of your main chairs with the subject line "Position Paper - [Your Name and Assigned Country]." Please limit your position paper to three pages, with additional room for works cited.



WWI: ALLIES v. CENTRAL POWERS

ANDREW BATTAT AND MICHAEL CHANG

ANTON BOBROV, ROBERT HUANG, NICK HUDSON AND LARISSA QIAN

INTRODUCTION



The late 19th and early 20th century created an atmosphere that was ripe for war. The war was sparked by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg on June 28th, 1914. Ferdinand was the heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne until he was shot dead by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the Black Hand secret society.

The Black Hand was a terrorist organization whose mission was Serbian unification. More specifically, their goal in the assassination was to break off Austria-Hungary's South Slav provinces so they could be combined into Yugoslavia. Austria blamed Serbia for the death of Franz Ferdinand on June 28th and declared war on Serbia.

At this point, a timeline of events is helpful:

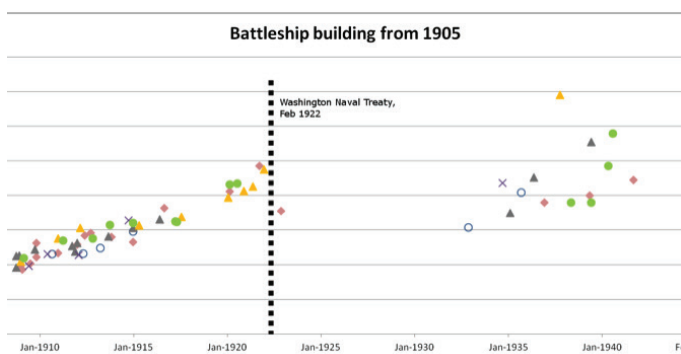
July 28, 1914	Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated by Serbian nationalists
July 28, 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
Aug. 1, 1914	Germany declares war on Russia
Aug. 3, 1914	Germany declares war on France
Aug. 4, 1914	Germany declares war on Belgium
Aug. 4, 1914	Great Britain declares war on Germany
Aug. 6, 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia
Aug. 6, 1914	Serbia declares war on Germany
Aug. 11, 1914	France declares war on Austria-Hungary
Aug. 12, 1914	Great Britain declares war on Austria-Hungary
Aug. 22, 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Belgium
Aug. 23, 1914	Japan declares war on Germany
Aug. 25, 1914	Japan declares war on Austria-Hungary
Nov. 1, 1914	Russia declares war on the Ottoman Empire
Nov. 5, 1914	France and Great Britain declares war on the Ottoman Empire



Remember, our simulation is beginning on July 29th, 1914. Only Austria-Hungary has declared war on Serbia. To declare war on a country you must do so in committee (we will go over on the day of the conference how delegates will do this). This is your simulation, delegates. Learn the history, but do not necessarily follow it.

To understand why so many European nations became entangled in what started as an Austria-Serbia conflict, it's important to understand the atmosphere of Europe at this time—not just among governing bodies but among the people themselves. Europe at this time had been engaged in an era of intellectual insecurities as a result of rapid philosophical discoveries being made at this time. Long held certainties, such as the power of reason to understand the universe and the power of science and technology to improve human lives, were being challenged by philosophers, such as Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud, who argued that there were limitations to man's understanding of himself and the world. These ideas helped spur many others, all of which made both men and countries uncertain about their place in the world. Many of the factors that increased tensions among nations in Europe—alliances, militarism, and imperialism—were fueled by this uncertainty and an overall lack of communication. These reasons along with rapid technological advancements and nationalism led to one of the bloodiest wars in European history.

MILITARISM AND ARMS RACE



Tension had been building for over a decade before war broke out due to the rapid buildup of weapons and navy. This arms race began during

the late 1890s when Germany began to develop a naval force large enough to challenge the British Navy. Threatened, Great Britain began to spend more on strengthening their own navy. Accompanied by the naval race was an arms race. France also decided to increase the pace of their own armament production.

IMPERIALISM

To understand the cause of escalating tensions to a world war, it is important to note the role of imperialism as both a motive for expansion, decay, and overexpansion of empires in constant conquest of gain. This is most evident through the scramble for Africa of the 19th century and Germany's limited role. Shortly after the colonization of the Congo region by Belgium's Leopold II, the leaders of Europe in 1885, fearing a global war over the valuable land to the south, organized the Berlin Conference agreeing to "justly" divide Africa resulting in large territorial holdings for Britain, France, Belgium, but small claims for the growing German empire.

The German Kaiser decided Germany should strive to become a world power and should have overseas colonies. Britain, in comparison, at this time controlled nearly one fourth of all the world's landmasses. The once powerful Ottoman Empire declined opportunities to gain control of the coveted Black Sea, a major shipping route to Russia which the Russians had desired to take in order to expand control of their trade. To the west, after taking over Bosnia, Austria was looking for an excuse to declare war against Serbia and to take over the Balkans because it would provide access to the Mediterranean Sea and provide other advantages. To respond to all these rising threats Germany came up with the Schlieffen Plan. Under this plan, in the event of a Continental war, they would quickly attack and defeat France, then turn their forces on Russia (which they thought) would be slow to get its troops ready for war. Russia's plan was to overwhelm Germany's and Austria's armies by sheer weight of numbers (what they lacked in technology they made up for in men). These plans made the ensuing war escalate much faster and become much deadlier than if they never existed.



ALLIANCES

Prior to the start of war in 1914, Europe was divided into two main rival alliances in what would become the "Triple Alliance" (Germany, the Austro-Hungarian empire, and Italy) and the Triple Entente (France, Russia, and Great Britain). The German empire, which unified in 1871 following the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War, was growing in both strength and ambition, disturbing the European balance of powers. As a result of this threat, France and Russia allied together in 1894, pushing Germany into a closer alliance with the Austro-Hungarian empire. While Great Britain was initially neutral, its desire to maintain the balance of power in Europe caused them to align with their traditional rivals, France and Russia. During this time, the Ottoman empire was crumbling and ultimately allied itself with Germany due to its promise for financial and infrastructure support. Prior to the war, Bulgaria had not officially allied itself with either side, but it is important to note that Bulgaria eventually allied itself with the Triple Alliance in 1915. Lastly, due to its territorial conflicts with the Austro-Hungarian empire and Ottoman empire, Serbia naturally sided with the Allied powers.

NATIONALISM

Nationalism, the extreme form of patriotism and the belief that one's country is superior to all others, was ubiquitous in the late 19th and early 20th century Europe. While inherently harmless, nationalism becomes harmful when it is linked to hatred of another's national identity. As the six great powers—Germany, Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, and France—became increasingly competitive during their industrial revolutions, each nation sought to be the best of the great nations, both economically and militarily. This rivalry ultimately deluded Europeans into believing the cultural, economic, and military supremacy of their own nation. In the event of war, the Britons believed in their superior naval fleet, while the Germans counted on their military efficiency and Schlieffen Plan, whereas the Russians relied on their 1.5 million men standing army and the French on their concrete fortresses and defenses.

In addition to these opinions of supremacy in the great powers, another form of nationalism materialized in the Balkans, neither economically nor militarily motivated. Serbia was declared an independent state in 1878 under the Russian-sponsored Treaty of San Stefano. Once Serbia defeated Bulgaria in the Balkan Wars in 1913, Serbia was the leading power in the Balkans. Its goal was to unite the Slavic people in the Balkans to create a large Slavic kingdom. Russia, whose population was comprised of mainly Slavs, supported Serbia's goal. However, Austria-Hungary, who annexed Bosnia in 1908, was in the way of expansion. By the early 20th century, both Austria-Hungary and Russia were trying to influence the Balkan region for their interests, leading to increased tension. When Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist, assassinated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, German-backed Austria issued an ultimatum to Russian-backed Serbia.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

Tactics: Trenches

World War I saw great changes in military strategies, most famously trench warfare. Though entrenchments were first used by the French in the Crimean Wars from 1854-56, trench warfare was most extensively used on the Western Front during the Great War.

Trenches of the Great War, unlike their predecessors, stretched out for miles and were a few miles, even a few hundred yards, away from friendly and hostile trenches. Because weaponry became more lethal and explosive, they had to be dug tens of feet deep. Entrenchments proved to be effective defenses against chargers; machine gun nests would swiftly mow down advancing enemy troops, who were clearly exposed and in sight.

Troops who were stationed at trenches were quartered for months and were subjected to abysmal living conditions. Makeshift subterranean housing was damp and unsanitary, and it often meant soldiers were exposed to insects, diseases, and fungi. Soldiers often got trench foot, caused by the prolonged exposure to damp socks and boots. Those with foot wounds would get infections, which



would need to be treated promptly.

Because both sides made very incremental advances and retreats, the Western Front was in stalemate from 1914 to 1918. With the introduction of tanks in the battlefield, against which machine guns were ineffective, trenches were more easily breached and the Allies were able to make headway westward.

Tactics: Structural Reorganization and Expansion

The Germans, British, and Americans were noted for reorganizing and expanding their armies. Typically, armies were divided into regiments, which were further divided into companies, which consisted of platoons. However, with the advent of World War I, more troops were needed in the frontlines and a more rapid chain of command was needed. Consequently, armies expanded by creating new battalions and regiments and reducing the number of men in companies, normally one-hundred, to about twelve. With greater manpower and an element of efficiency in leadership, armies were able to adapt to the harsher battle conditions and fight more effectively.

Chemical Warfare

Chemical warfare in the form of poison-tipped projectiles and toxic gases—essentially small in scale—have been in use for millennia, but modern chemical warfare entered the scene in World War I. Chemicals, notably chlorine and sulfur mustard, caused many deaths and many more casualties. Troops often incurred long-term injuries from exposure to chemical weapons.

The following are the most common weapons developed before and during the start of the war:

Chemical Warfare: Phosgene

Phosgene (COCl_2), a gas at room temperature, is a choking agent widely used during the war. Appearing colorless or as a white or pale yellow cloud, it has a noxious, unpleasant odor in large concentrations. When one is exposed to phosgene, depending on concentration and duration, one can

experience a burning sensation in the throat and eyes, asphyxiation, lesions on the skin, nausea, and vomiting. If exposed to high concentrations, pulmonary edema, or fluid, could form in the lungs within two to six hours of exposure and can cause death. With proper treatment one may make a full recovery, but one may get chronic bronchitis or emphysema.

Chemical Warfare: Sulfur Mustard

Originally produced to cure psoriasis, a skin disease, sulfur mustard ($\text{C}_4\text{H}_8\text{Cl}_2\text{S}$) was repurposed as a chemical weapon. An odorless gas, sulfur mustard is not lethal (with only a 5% fatality rate) but has serious side effects. It can travel long distances by air and can be dissolved into water. Twenty-four hours or less after exposure, one may develop yellow blisters and respiratory problems and experience nausea, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of eyes, and decreased production of blood cells in bone marrow. Possible long-term effects due to prolonged exposure to sulfur mustard include permanent blindness, chronic respiratory conditions, respiratory infections, and scars as a result of second-degree and third-degree burns. There is no antidote, and medical treatment is imperative.

Chemical Warfare: Chloroacetophenone

Commonly known as tear gas, chloroacetophenone ($\text{C}_8\text{H}_7\text{ClO}$) causes irritation of the eyes, respiratory tract, and skin. This chemical may induce welts on the skin and cause an accumulation of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema). Rarely, blindness and various respiratory complications occur. Fatalities associated with tear gas are rare. There is no antidote.

Chemical Warfare: Chlorine

Chlorine gas (Cl_2) is a toxic yellow-green gas whose harmful properties were first discovered by German military researchers. When exposed to chlorine, one may experience coughing, wheezing, nausea and vomiting, pulmonary edema, blurred vision, and blisters. If chlorine makes contact with damp skin or tissues, it forms an acid that inflicts



more injury. No antidote exists.

Weapons

Throughout World War I, bolt-action rifles and machine guns were commonplace in battlefields. Machine guns were crucial in the defense of trenches and were housed in nests or pillboxes. Additionally, anti-aircraft guns were developed to counter airborne assaults.

Artillery became more explosive and powerful during World War I. Howitzers and mortars were more common in the battlefield, especially in the trenches in order to pound through the earthworks and cause damage to enemy trenches. Artillery would be used to weaken trench defenses and commanders would subsequently command their troops to advance only to be caught in barbed wire obstacles and be mowed down by regrouped machine gunners and trench defenders.

Grenades became increasingly popular in one-to-one combat. Though ineffective against groups of hostile troops, grenades were quite effective in wiping out or disabling several troops in battle.

Flamethrowers saw their first usage in combat during World War I. They often were used to break up formation and burn opponents while support troops gunned the enemy down. Flamethrowers were also somewhat effective against tanks as it significantly increased the heat inside and overheated drivers and passengers alike.

Vehicles

World War I saw many advancements in modes of transport, including the first use of airplanes, aircraft carriers, and later tanks. Airplanes were particularly useful in bombing raids on land or against other carriers. Dogfights were also common as pilots engaged in combat against their enemies.

Tanks were later introduced to the field as a solution to entrenchments. Easily going over barbed wires and trenches and deflecting bullets with ease, tanks were versatile and effective vehicles of war. Early tanks didn't resemble modern tanks and lacked

a rotating turret that shot explosive rounds. However, outfitted with machine guns on the sides, the tank was indeed a formidable war machine.

COUNTRIES

United States of America

The United States had been, since the late 1800s, isolationist, or largely uninvolved in international affairs. Its geographic location between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, along with George Washington's plea to policymakers to abstain from any extensive political, even economic, relations with other nations, established its largely unchanged foreign policy for decades.

With the invention of such rapid transport vehicles as steam-powered ships, U-boats, and airplanes, long-distance travel was able to bridge the thousand mile gaps between Europe and America and Asia and America. Nevertheless, the US, under President Woodrow Wilson, would only declare war with ample provocation.

The Central Powers were concerned with the US's armaments and provisions trade with Allied forces; consequently, German ships and U-boats targeted all ships regardless of nationality, including American ships. This could be one contributing factor to America's declaration of war.

Bulgaria

For Southeastern European states, World War I began in October 1912, when the Balkan states fought the Ottomans for Ottoman controlled land in Europe in the First Balkan War. Bulgaria wanted Macedonia and Thrace, but other Balkan members disputed the division of the land. As a result, after the Ottoman Empire's defeat, the Balkan states continued fighting in an intra-allied conflict in the Second Balkan War. Ended in 1913 by the treaties of Bucharest and Constantinople, the Second Balkan War resulted in a loss of 56,000 Bulgarian soldiers and Bulgaria's chances of expanding into Macedonia.



Although at the start of war in 1914, Bulgaria's government declared neutrality, Tsar Ferdinand and Prime Minister Vasil Radoslavov favored the Central Powers while many Bulgarians supported their ethnically Slavic allies in Russia. However, Russia, in order to follow its own national interests in maintaining its presence in southeastern Europe, supported Serbia. Yet Bulgaria remained a strategic target for both the Entente and the Central Powers. It borders Constantinople, which was next to the passage from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and Russia's only maritime access, and could allow the Entente to attack Constantinople. For the Central Powers, an alliance with Bulgaria could allow land communication with Ottoman Empire and an attack on Serbia. Accordingly, Bulgaria would enter on whichever side could guarantee its interests in Macedonia.

Serbia

A Slavic nation with an animosity for the oppressive, ethnically diverse Austro-Hungarian Empire, Serbia was home to the Black Hand, a terrorist group aimed at spreading nationalistic zeal and combatting oppression from the empire. One member of the Black Hand, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, which lit a spark that catalyzed war in the region.

Serbia shared its fervent nationalism with such neighboring countries as Montenegro, Yugoslavia, and Greece and eventually allied with said states against the Austro-Hungarians and its eastern European allies.

Belgium

A biethnic, neutral country, Belgium was not a part of any alliances formed before the war. Though it was a relatively wealthy nation with burgeoning industry, it did not expand or improve its military. This left Belgium vulnerable to attacks from neighbors located west and east. Germany was an especially dangerous army since it boasted the most troops and greatest militarism efforts. Many parts of Belgium, those of Dutch descent, were pro-German whereas those of French origin, most of whom were in the highest echelons of the small

military, were pro-French. Ultimately, these differences in opinions caused tensions to rise.

United Kingdom

In the 19th century, Great Britain enjoyed a period of economic dominance through industry, trade, and land. The only military conflict Great Britain experienced in the 19th century was the Crimean War, in which they were victorious against Russia, leaving a long lasting sour relationship that brought both countries to the brink of war multiple times. Throughout the 19th century, Britain was focused mainly on territorial expansion and experienced a peaceful century of economic advancement. However with the turn of the century, Great Britain fought in the Boer War in which they were also victorious, but at a great cost. In the beginning of the 20th century, the British empire also saw the independence of its Australian colonies and Ireland seeking home rule. Despite its neutrality in continental conflicts, Great Britain was threatened by Germany's territorial gains and ambitions, seeing Germany as a disturbance to the balance of powers. It is important to note that in historical context, Great Britain, despite its neutrality, eventually joined the war in reaction to Germany's invasion of neutral Belgium.

Italy

In the time period before the start of war, Italy was desperate to modernize its economy and infrastructure to become a world power in Europe after the unification of its formerly separate states in 1861. However, in its desperation, it largely ignored the South, focusing on building railways connecting to the rest of continental Europe and initiating new industry solely in Northern Italy. In 1887, along with Italy's increased military expenditures and expansion to protect itself from nearby Austria-Hungary, Prime Minister Francesco Crispi led Italy to join the Triple Alliance in order to strengthen the country's relationship with Germany. Furthering the country's ambition to become a world power, Italy wanted to rebuild the once powerful Roman empire and sought to colonize unclaimed lands, specifically Ethiopia.



However, in the First Italo-Ethiopian War, Ethiopia, with the help of what would become the Triple Entente, defeated Italy in an embarrassing loss. By 1900, the newly united Italy remained poor and its government weak due to the struggle between the government and the Roman Catholic Church. The Church, holding strong influence and respect among the public, instructed Italians not to participate in the government due to the Church's bitterness over the loss of some land during the unification.

In the years leading up to WW1, Italy, despite its status in the Triple Alliance, wanted to remain neutral, arguing that the alliance was for defensive purposes only.

Austria-Hungary

The Austro-Hungarian Empire was formed by the union of the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary under the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. During its existence, the empire was the second largest European country, after Russia, and a major world power. Despite its industrial and political power, the empire consistently faced internal problems of nationalism due to its large number of ethnic groups.

A major example of difficult ethnic relationships would be that of the Czechs and Germans in the Austrian part of the empire. While Germans dominated both in language and culture, the industrialized and prosperous Czechs resented the Germans and sought equality with both the Germans and the Hungarians in the empire. However, despite these ethnic tensions, it was widely recognized in the empire that imperial rule protected them all from even worse oppression. Yet, ultimately the growth of Yugoslavism among the southern Slavs, along with the growth of Serbia in the Balkans, threatened the unity of the empire. In 1914, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb started World War I.

Russia

With the advent of the world's greatest war on the horizon, the Russian empire, under the stewardship

of Tsar Nicholas II, eagerly sought the possible glory of victory and the opportunity to increase their holdings both in Europe and Asia. This desire to expand is mostly attributed to the Ottoman Empire's failure to hold on to land, as seen with the loss of Crimea to the Russians. Therefore as Nicholas I claimed that "the Ottoman empire [was] the sick man of Europe," the Tsar sought to gain where the Sultan had lost. This included much land south of Rostov including the Caucasus region and the Black and Caspian Seas. Seeing the rise of instability in the Ottoman rule because of the Young Turks movement, Russia began to aggressively pace itself in order to gain economically and politically from the conflict. German-Russian relations worsened as Germany sent aid to the Turks reorganizing and modernizing their military, something Russia deemed intolerable.

Unfortunately, much of Russia's planning fell short as it faced an embarrassment at the advent of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905, marking a loss of a major European power to a non-European rival. This in turn led to other failures of the Tsar, forcing Nicholas II to create a democratic parliament called the Duma, birthing a rise of radicalism and instability. The situation was not helped by the lack of modern industry with the empire being largely agrarian and the population illiterate, superstitious, and highly resistant to change. Because of a lacking industrial sector and a massive population the empire was faced with a shortage of armaments. To the other countries of Europe, Russia appeared to be daunting with its continental span connected touching the waters of the Atlantic via Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean through the Black Sea, and the Pacific Ocean in the East. Within this massive landmass the empire held the largest standing army of Europe yet most of these men were mostly uneducated, under armed, and poorly trained.

Romania

Having recently gained independence from the shrinking Ottoman empire and controlling significant territory under a rising nationalist tide, including geographic parts of Western Ukraine, Bulgaria, Hungary, Modern Romania, and Moldova, Romania was strategically located for



high abundances of necessary natural resources including extensive natural gas and oil storages and arable land.

In 1881 Romania established a constitutional monarchy under the rule of King Carol I. Much of Romania's history had been sheltered from European influence due to the constant rule of the Ottoman Turks. Much of this missed culture included the rise of Renaissance ideas and art, humanism, the reformation, and the enlightenment. For these reasons Romania was estranged by the powers of Europe. Nevertheless, Romania was geographically located in a strategic area which Carol wished to expand. The province of Transylvania was of high importance to the King as it contained a small majority of ethnic Romanians ruled by a minority of Magyars (Hungarians) within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Because of this, Carol leaned toward the side of the allies in hopes of gaining territory, understanding that he would be fighting a two front war. Under his rule, the Romanian army was sizeable, holding over one million men, comparable to the other powers.

Ottoman Empire

Once the largest and greatest superpower the world had ever seen, the Ottoman Turks held major territorial claims in Asia, and Northern Africa as well as important strategic access to the Black Sea encompassing hundreds of different ethnic groups from various religions under the rule of a single a Sultan. As the world entered the 20th century the Ottomans became faced with the reality of imperial overextension especially in Europe. Many issues faced the the power both domestically and internationally.

As a general trend, Christian minorities began outpacing the Turkish majority both economically and demographically, creating an environment of hostility and instability. Additionally by the end of the 19th century the Turks began exercising growing military rule in European lands bordering the Austro-Hungarian empire, Balkan regions of Albania, Greece and Bulgaria forcing the migration of millions of Muslims from Europe. This was again exacerbated by the first Balkan War in which

Turkey continued to lose territory, granting independence to more nations including Romania as the Turkish empire failed to suppress a rising nationalistic tide.

As the Ottomans lost control of their land holdings, the Sultan began to lose control of his own government. In the late 19th century a group of young Ottomans, who had been educated in European universities, launched a short-lived revolution: they overthrew the sultan, drafted a liberal constitution and backed a moderate leader to rule as a constitutional monarch. This did not last though as internal struggles fueled the fire for instability leading to another rise of democratization by the Young Turks in 1908, establishing a parliament above the sultan limiting his absolute power and therefore the empire itself.

By the early 1900s the empire was crumbling and the European powers all desired to gain from the Turks. Control of the Bosphorus would give Russia's strong Black Sea navy access to the Mediterranean. Conversely, Britain and Germany hoped the Ottomans could hold their empire together and continue serving as a buffer against the territorial ambitions of Austria-Hungary and Russia. To serve these agendas, European leaders particularly those of Britain, France and Germany all sought some form of Ottoman alliance in the early 1900s. This was evident to the Germans as they improved relations and began construction on the Berlin-Baghdad railway, creating a direct connection for international trade through Europe.

Germany

Germany before the First World War was imperialistic, militaristic, and autocratic. It had just been unified in 1871 from 25 German-speaking states and the German nationalists were particularly passionate. Under strong leadership, Germany was economically and technologically above the world, backed by the superior army and navy of Prussia, its most powerful member-state. The unification led to a spike in industrial growth and railway construction, coal production and iron ore mining, and steel and agricultural production.



In addition to the rapid industrialization of Germany, Otto von Bismarck, Germany's chancellor, skillfully manipulated diplomatic relationships, forming an alliance with Austria-Hungary, and worked to isolate France. Even with an increasingly aggressive France, the Germans were able to build up their military and prepare for war. Fearful of a two-front war with France and Russia, Germany developed perhaps the most important military strategy in the war, the Schlieffen Plan. It was a plan to quickly surround the enemy in an invasion of France. Germany hoped to swiftly end the war by taking over France by mobilizing its entire army before Russia could mobilize.

France

In 1848, Louis-Napoleon was elected as French President and by 1852, he became an autocratic monarch. Louis-Napoleon, or Emperor Napoleon III, only wanted to expand the French empire, often with debilitating consequences for his people. Additionally, Napoleon III fought a war with Prussia, and within six months France was defeated, surrendering Alsace-Lorraine. However, by 1914, France had become a great power, having allied with Russia in 1892 in the Franco-Russian alliance, and with Britain in the "Entente Cordiale" in 1904, forming the Triple Entente. France had also begun the militarization of the country before the war. Between 1872 and 1905, a series of laws created a mandatory three-year military service. With these conscription laws, the army modernized.

From 1906 to 1911, the "offensive à outrance" (offensive to excess) theories began to gain popularity. Yet this offensive theory was supported with rationale. Belgian neutrality meant that Germans would have to take initiative, and that a French-Russian offensive was even more desperately needed to counter the Schlieffen Plan. Moreover, the French Army Air Service (Aéronautique Militaire), formed in October 1910, led the world in aircraft design, and by 1912, they had five squadrons (escadrilles); by 1914 at the brink of war, they had 132. The French had doubled the expenditure on its navy between 1910 and 1914. By 1914, they had 19 battleships, 32 cruisers, 86 destroyers, 34 submarines, and 115 torpedo boats.

Last, by 1914, they had 777,000 French troops and 46,000 colonial troops, with another 2.9 million mobilized as the fear of war with Germany increased.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How does your country/leader's relationship with other countries/leaders influence your policy (both in your committee and the enemy's)?
2. What are your country's objectives and motivations for fighting?
3. How will your leader's policies in the war influence your support back home (support from the government and the people)?
4. Would it be best to broker peace during a prolonged stalemate or after a decisive victory?



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