

Ch. 16 World War I Section 1 notes

I. Nationalism and the System of Alliances (*pages 499–500*)

A. Liberals during the first half of the 1800s hoped that the formation of European nation states would lead to peace. However, the imperialist states that emerged during the second half of the 1800s became highly competitive over trade and colonies.

B. Two main alliances divided Europe: The **Triple Alliance** (1882) was made up of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy; and the **Triple Entente** (1907) was made up of France, Great Britain, and Russia.

C. During the early 1900s, several crises erupted, particularly in the Balkans, which created a great deal of anger and tension between the nations of the two alliances. Each nation was willing to go to war to preserve its power.

D. European ethnic groups, such as Slavs in the Balkans and the Irish in the British Empire, dreamed of creating their own national states, which also increased tensions in Europe

Discussion Question #1

How did the growth of nation-states lead to increased competition and tension in Europe?

II. Internal Dissent (*page 500*)

A. Another source of strife in Europe was dissent within nations. As Socialist labor movements became more powerful, they used strikes to achieve their goals, which led to unrest.

B. Conservative national leaders feared that revolutions would break out. Some historians believe that these leaders may have been willing to go to war in order to suppress internal dissent.

Discussion Question #2

What was a primary source of internal dissent in Europe during the early 1900s?

III. Militarism (*pages 500–501*)

A. After 1900 there was a huge increase in the size of European armies, which increased tensions among nations.

B. Conscription—compulsory service in the military—was common in Europe before 1914. Between 1890 and 1914 European armies doubled in size. The numbers of soldiers in European armies were: Russia, 1.3 million; France and Germany, 900,000 each; Britain, Italy, and Austria-Hungary, 250,000 to 500,000 each.

C. Prior to 1914, European countries aggressively prepared for war. This militarism led to the increased power of military leaders, who created complex war plans.

D. Because powerful military leaders did not want to alter their war plans, they greatly limited the choices of political leaders in time of international crisis.

Discussion Question #3

What were three effects of increased militarism in Europe during the early 1900s?

IV. The Outbreak of War: Summer 1914 (*pages 501–502*)

A. While militarism, nationalism, and the desire to control internal dissent all had a part in starting World War I, the outbreak of fighting stemmed directly from events in the Balkans in 1914.

- B.** States in southeastern Europe had long struggled for independence from the Ottoman Empire. Russia and Austria-Hungary competed for control of these new states. In 1914, **Serbia** wanted to form a large Slavic state in the Balkans. Serbia was supported by Russia and opposed by Austria-Hungary.
- C.** Many Europeans were afraid that this conflict in the Balkans would lead to war.
- D.** In June of 1914, **Archduke Francis Ferdinand** of Austria-Hungary and his wife were killed by the Serbian terrorist **Gavrilo Princip** in the city of Sarajevo. The Serbian terrorists wanted **Bosnia** to become independent from Austria-Hungary.
- E.** The Austro-Hungarian government wanted to declare war on Serbia but was worried that Russian would come to Serbia's aid. Austrian leaders asked for help from its German allies. **Emperor William II** agreed to give Germany's full support. In July, 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
- F.** Russia responded by supporting Serbia. **Czar Nicholas II** ordered partial and then full **mobilization** of the Russian army. Austria-Hungary and Germany considered the mobilizations acts of war.
- G.** The Germans warned the Russians to halt mobilization, and the Russians refused. Germany then declared war on Russia on August 1. Because Russia and France were allies, Germany had planned its strategy against Russia and France, which was to defeat France first and then attack Russia with full force. This plan, designed by **General Alfred von Schlieffen**, was called the Schlieffen Plan. Germany declared war on France on August 3.
- H.** The Germans demanded that Belgium—a neutral country—allow German armies to pass through on the way to France. This action led Britain, who was allied with France and Russia, to declare war on Germany. By August 4, World War I had begun.

Discussion Question #4

When Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated, the conflict appeared to be only between Serbia and Austria-Hungary. Yet this event led to World War I, which involved all the great European powers. How did the system of alliances in Europe contribute to this progression of events? Describe what happened.

Answers:

- 1. (Nations became focused on their own self-interest, which led to competition with other nations. Imperialist expansion led to rivalries for trade and colonies. Nation-states formed alliances and were prepared to go to war if necessary to preserve their power and that of their allies.)*
- 2. (strikes by Socialist labor movements)*
- 3. (The size of armies doubled between 1890 and 1914, countries focused on preparations for war, and military leaders became more powerful and had more control over political decisions.)*
- 4. (The system of alliances brought many more countries into the conflict. By pledging to support Serbia, Russia caused Austria-Hungary to get support from its ally, Germany. Austria-Hungary then declared war on Serbia. Russia responded by mobilizing its army. Germany and Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia. Since France was an ally of Russia, the Germans invaded France. This action caused Great Britain, an ally of France and Russia, to declare war on Germany)*